

2004

Designates classes celebrating reunion in 2003: 1944, 1949, 1954, 1959, 1964, 1969, 1974, 1979, 1984, 1989, 1994



Norman F. Johnson, MD '52

#### 1949

**Stuart Cohan**, of Houston, TX, writes: "I retired from practice and am now teaching students and residents, three half days a week, at the University of Texas Medical School in Houston."

#### 1952

**Norman F. Johnson**, of Pasadena, CA, was honored by friends and associates, this past November, for practicing medicine for 50 years. Dr. Johnson is known as "The Tulip Man," because of his love of the flower and as "The Little Car Man," which is in reference to his collection of midget cars, one of which he rides every year in the Sierra Madre Fourth of July Parade. Dr. Johnson writes, "Unfortunately, I was able to attend only one class reunion, number 15, in 1967 and the only classmate I've been in contact with over the years is **Ed Konwinski, MD**. He and I were in the same army unit in WW II, but didn't know it until a few years ago when he visited me. Also, I receive an annual Christmas card from my roommate in Syracuse, **Roy Walchenbach, MD, '53**, and the children of **Irv Blaisdell, an E.N.T. Clinical Professor**." Dr. Johnson and his wife, Ann, have six children and five grandchildren.

#### 1953

**Roy Walchenbach**, of Pittsfield, MA, writes: "My daughter, Amy, is currently enrolled in the nurse practitioner program at Marymount University in Arlington, VA, working on her masters degree in nursing."

#### 1955

**William H. Hartmann**, writes: "Retired January 2004, as executive vice-president from the American Board of Pathology. I will continue to live in Tampa, FL."

**Monroe Richman**, of Koloa, HI, writes: "Anyone coming to Kawai, call (808) 742-9204—two free dinners!"

#### 1957

**Marvin A. Leder** of New York City received his third "Physician Recognition Certificate" from the American Diabetic Association.

#### 1958

**Martin Nusynowitz**, of Houston, TX, writes: "I was included in "Best Doctors in America for Nuclear Medicine and Endocrinology" and *Who's Who* for 2004. I am still working as professor; Radiology, Internal Medicine and Pathology, at University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston."

### Gregory A. Threatte, MD '73

#### Diagnostic Diplomat

In April of 1968, two days after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a member of Sigma Nu fraternity at Colgate University fired a starter's pistol at two African-American students who happened to be walking by. The event initiated considerable campus protest, culminating in a sit-in demonstration protesting fraternities with racially exclusive membership policies. The protest, which shut down campus for several days, was the first of many campus demonstrations around the country that spring.

For Gregory Threatte, MD '73, one of several dozen African-American students at Colgate at the time and a leader of the protest, it would be the beginning of a long career looking out for the interests of African-American students at predominantly white academic institutions. Whether it was in medical school at Upstate, as director of clinical chemistry at Georgetown University, as the president's deputy for minority affairs at Upstate, or simply as a member of the Upstate faculty, Dr. Threatte has always made himself available to help minority students.

"I have this big brother mentality. If ever anybody's in trouble, they can call me and I'll be glad to help out," says Threatte, who joined the Upstate faculty in 1986 and is now chair of the Department of Pathology.

Threatte started tutoring as a medical student, continued during his residencies in anatomic and clinical pathology, as well as his fellowship in hematology research. "By the time I joined the faculty at Georgetown, I'd already taught all sections of the pathology course," he jokes.



Gregory Threatte at Match Day with Toshia Brown '04 and Aashiyana Koreishi '04.

Threatte became a physician almost by default, he says. A physics major at Colgate, he realized in his senior year he didn't want to pursue graduate school in physics because "graduate school in physics looked like graduate school in math and math was the part of physics I didn't like," Threatte recalls. He applied to two medical schools. "One of them actually interviewed me, and the rest is history," he says.

Following his first year of medical school, Threatte took a summer job working in the pathology department at a hospital in rural Southeastern Pennsylvania. The hospital had three pathologists who rotated among three weekly assignments. "One did whatever surgicals came in; the second would do autopsies and deal with lab problems; and the third one would sit in the coffee shop for the week," says Threatte. "The next week they'd switch. When asked at the end of the summer whether he was interested in going into pathology, Threatte answered, "Well, I really don't like coffee that much."

By the end of his third year, however, it began to make sense. "Most of the

practicing physicians were general practitioners who'd had four years of medical school, a rotating internship and no residency training. Whenever they had a diagnostic dilemma, they'd go up to the coffee shop and get a consult from the pathologist. That's when I began to realize that pathologists sit in the middle of the diagnostic arena. The lab results we put out and the

biopsy and surgical reports we put out are sort of the database of medicine," says Threatte. "That's what appeals to me."

During more than 25 years in the Upstate Department of Pathology, Threatte has held numerous leadership roles. He led the department in enhancing the automation and computerization of the clinical chemistry section, led the expansion of the University Pathologists Laboratory, and spearheaded the department's outreach program into smaller communities of Central New York.

"Dr. Threatte is probably the best generalist pathologist in the department," says Frederick Davey, MD '64, retired Upstate pathology department chair. "He has broad knowledge in the pathophysiology of disease as well as keen insight into instrumentation of clinical laboratories."

Not to mention his teaching skills. "Dr. Threatte has the ability to make difficult concepts much easier to understand and has devoted much of his time to teaching students who find the study of pathology a challenge," says Davey.

"He was often selected 'Best Teacher' by

the second-year class for his efforts in the Pathology 200 course."

In January, Threatte was named chair of the Upstate Department of Pathology. He is in charge of the administration of 19 pathologists, pathology PhD faculty, the pathology laboratories and services at Upstate, and the pathology residency program. In addition, he is medical director of the University Pathologists Laboratory and director of laboratories at hospitals in Carthage and Lowville, New York. And his door is still always open to minority students who need a listening ear.

"One of the reasons I stepped down as deputy for minority affairs in 1992 is that I'm more interested in outcomes than in titles or roles," he says. "I'd rather do this on my own time, on my own terms."

Whatever the method, he's left quite a legacy. At Georgetown, the Student National Medical Association gives the Gregory A. Threatte Award to the graduating senior each year judged most effective at helping other students. In 1994 *Black Issues in Higher Education* cited Upstate as the 10th leading producer of African-American physicians. Threatte received the President's Award for the Advancement of Affirmative Action in 1992, and the President's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1998. In 2003, he was honored by the National Association of Medical Minority Educators with the Distinguished Service Award in Health. A member of the Medical Alumni Association/Foundation Board for 14 years, Threatte is slated to assume the presidency in October of 2004.

"It's fun," says Threatte, both about helping students and the sleuthing role of pathology. Although he admits, "I still don't like coffee all that much."

—Renée Gearhart Levy



Peter Adasek, MD '65

## 1962

**Steven A. Artz**, of Charleston, WV, writes: "Jackie and I have three sons who are physicians. Jonathon is a neurologist at Kaiser in San Rafael, CA; David is head of medical informatics and assistant professor of medicine at Memorial Sloan Kettering/Cornell University; in NYC; Andrew is a Hem/Onc fellow at the University of Chicago. I am still involved in clinical practice and the education program at the Robert C. Bryd Health Sciences Center at the Charleston Area Medical Center."

## 1963

**Carl Salzman**, of Watertown, MA, was given the national award of "Psychiatrist Teacher of the Year," a national award, in November 2003.

## 1964

**2004**  
OCTOBER 1 & 2

**George Burak**, of Scarsdale, NY, writes: "I am looking forward to the 40th year reunion in October."

## 1965

**Peter Adasek**, of Colorado Springs, received an honorary membership in the Slovak Pediatric Society for his 13 years of volunteer work while visiting Slovakia. Since January 2002, Dr. Adasek has been traveling to Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Italy, Germany, Austria, France, and Switzerland. He is now back in the United States and spends his time in Little Falls, NY, as well as Colorado Springs. Dr. Adasek reports that his daughter, Carie, and her husband, Jake, had their first baby, Lucy Lou, in June 2003.

## 1967

**Bertram Zarins**, of Boston, MA, performed shoulder surgery on Senator John Kerry, Democratic presidential candidate, this past March. Dr. Zarins is the team doctor for the New England Patriots, the Boston Bruins and the New England Revolution soccer team.

## 1970

**Mark Wolraich**, of Oklahoma City, was inducted to the Hall of Fame of Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD).

## 1973

**Leonard J. Parker**, of Barrington, RI, writes: "My son, Joshua, graduated from Upstate this past May, and will be doing his pediatric residency at Stanford University Hospital in Palo Alto, CA. My wife, Ellen, and I enjoyed reliving those wonderful medical school years vicariously once again. He had a terrific four years in Syracuse. Our younger son, Jonas, will be attending the Heller School at Brandeis University for a PhD in social policy."

## 1974

**2004**  
OCTOBER 1 & 2

**Jay M. Ritt**, writes: "I've been living in Sharon, MA, since leaving Syracuse in 1974. My wife, Melody, and I have two grown daughters, Leigh and Samantha. I'm in group practice in dermatology south of Boston. Thanks to **Stuart Tafeen, MD**, for showing me the light."

**Philip Schulman**, of Melville, NY, writes: "My son, Aaron, is graduating from NYU School of Medicine this year. Daniel is graduating from Stony Brook University and our daughter, Jamie, is graduating from high school."

## Edward Higgins, MD '78

## Medicine His Calling

**H**is great-grandfather, grandfather, father and uncle all were doctors in Cortland, New York, south of Syracuse. It was only natural that Edward (Ted) Higgins, MD, '78, would follow in their footsteps as the fourth generation doctor of the Higgins clan. Or was it?

"Everybody in Cortland knew the Higgins family as a medical family," says Dr. Higgins, chief of staff and a vascular and general surgeon at Research Medical Center, a 500-bed tertiary center in Kansas City, Missouri. "I grew up thinking I'll try something different, although I had no idea what."

The "what" wasn't answered until the summer of 1971—in a most unusual setting—while the young Higgins was in the midst of a four-month stint on a sheep, cattle and pig farm in the southern Ireland community of Hackettstown.

Higgins ended up on the farm during a bicycle tour through Europe that began after his graduation from St. Lawrence University, where he majored in history and government.

He and a college chum had bicycled through England and Wales. When his friend had to leave to return to the United States, Higgins continued solo to Ireland. Then, one rainy afternoon, his life's direction would begin to clear up.

"I was sitting under a tree to escape a rainstorm when an older man, a farmer, also stopped. We just started



Edward Higgins, MD '78

talking. I said I needed a meal and he said there was a woman nearby who cooked for all the farmers. I went there and the woman invited me right in. There were six or seven bachelor farmers there. They were all curious about what I was doing and we all hit it off. One thing led to another and the farmer I had met asked me if I was interested in helping him build a fence."

Higgins ended up working on the farm for four months shearing sheep, feeding pigs, cleaning the pig barn and doing whatever odd jobs he was asked to do.

"It wasn't an epiphany, but I learned a lot about myself on the farm," he says. "It was a period I'll never forget. It shaped me, and I decided somewhere along the line on the farm that I wanted to be a doctor, a good one, and that I wanted to help people. I returned home and announced to my father that I wanted to be a doctor. I had fought it for a long time, but medicine was my calling."

"My education was excellent it Upstate. It was where I cemented in my mind that I wanted to be a surgeon," Higgins says.

Higgins developed some great friendships with faculty while at Upstate. As a tribute in their honor, Higgins contributed to the fundraising campaigns for Dr. Lloyd S. Rogers, and Dr. Lawrence Pickett. (Both are now deceased.)

"They were wonderful surgeons. I admired both of them," Higgins says. Another favorite was Dr. Robert Rohner, (1952) whom Higgins calls "a great pathologist."

After Upstate, Higgins did his residency in general surgery at Yale Medical School, where he spent time reminiscing about Syracuse with Dr. Pickett, who had returned to Yale to start a pediatric surgery program.

After completing his vascular fellowship in 1984 at Baylor University, where he studied under famed heart surgeon Dr. Michael DeBakey, Higgins and his wife, Kim, moved to her native Kansas City, where they've lived ever since. Higgins is in his 21st year at Research Medical Center where, in addition to building his practice, he established the center's non-invasive vascular diagnostic lab in 1985.

While Higgins says he tries to spend most of his free time with his four children, Edward III, 19; Margaret, 17; Rebecca, 15; and Helen, 12; his calling to help people has taken him abroad for more than a decade.

During medical school in 1982, Higgins and other students spent a three-month rotation at a hospital in Haiti built by Dr. Larimer Mellon.

"It was a wonderful experience being

able to give back to people who have absolutely nothing," Higgins says. "I knew it was something I needed to do."

Eleven years ago he joined a medical mission trip to the Dominican Republic to help Haitian sugar cane workers and their families. It's become an annual event, and each of his children has joined him. This January, Kim joined him on the one-week mission. He performs as many as 50 badly needed surgeries while he's there; many of his patients wait a week for surgery.

Higgins performed the first surgery at the new Good Samaritan Hospital in the Dominican Republic built by villagers and missionaries.

"These people are the poorest among the poor. They can't afford healthcare in any way. Good Samaritan is a hospital for people who have nothing," he says. "This is what I love doing, and you get paid back by a look in the eye and a smile."

—Mark Frank



Sharon Falkenheimer, MD '78

**1978**

**Sharon Falkenheimer**, of San Antonio, TX, was recently appointed by President Bush to the Board of Regents of Uniformed University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, MD. She was also appointed by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to the advisory committee to the Director of the National Center for Environmental Health of the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, GA. She holds academic appointments in bioethics in the Department of Medical Humanities and Ethics at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio and in aerospace medicine in the Department of Preventive Medicine and Community Health at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. She is an academician of the International Academy of Aviation and Space Medicine and a fellow of both the Aerospace Medical Association and the Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity.

**Bruce Leslie**, of Newton, MA, writes: "I am still practicing hand surgery in the Boston area. My oldest son, Brian, is at Babson College. My daughters, Liz and Monica, are active in club volleyball. Liz, a sophomore, was on the varsity basketball and volleyball teams."

**Stephen Presser**, of Rochester, NY, writes: "It was wonderful reliving the four years of med school at the recent 25-year reunion. My wife of 27 years will graduate Syracuse Law School in May. My now-married daughter, Shifra, is completing a master's degree in counseling. My son, Hillel, is in law school in Florida."

**Ronald Pies**, of Lexington, MA, has written a new book of poems entitled *Creeping Thyme*, which offers a poetic journey through his experience as a psychiatrist and as a man. Dr. Pies has published poetry in numerous literary journals and anthologies, and has written on the therapeutic uses of poetry and the nature of poetic language.

**1980**

**Jospeh P. Imperato**, of Northbrook, IL, is now the secretary treasurer of the medical staff at Lake Forest Hospital.

**Michael Privitera**, of Cincinnati, OH, has been named Greater Cincinnati's top innovator in health care for 2004 by the *Cincinnati Business Courier*. Dr. Privitera shared the honor with Hwa-shain Yeh, MD, of the Mayfield Clinic and The Neuroscience Institute. The two physicians have collaborated for 16 years in their efforts to free patients from the burden of epileptic seizures. Together they have developed new

protocols, explored new drugs, implemented new safety measures, and helped perfect the art of brain-mapping and neurosurgical intervention. Dr. Privitera serves as assistant dean at the UC College of Medicine and as medical director of UC Physicians.

**1981**

**Brian Anderson**, of Lafayette, NY, has been appointed chief of surgery at Crouse Hospital. Prior to joining Crouse in 1986, he was chief resident in surgery at Upstate.

**Sharon Brangman**, of Syracuse, NY, was honored for her significant contribution to the Alzheimer's Association of Central New York, at their eighth annual dinner dance this past April.

**Lori J. Sternheim**, writes: "My husband **Bill Sternheim**, '80, and I are still living in Boca Raton with our three kids, David, 14; Gillian, 11; and Andrea, 10. I work part-time in a hospital-based radiology practice and Bill is in private practice in hematology and oncology."

**1982**

**Gary B. Kaplan**, of Chagrin Falls, OH, a pulmonologist at Lake West Hospital in Willoughby, has been named Physician of the Year for 2003 in the Lake Hospital System.

**1984**

**2004**  
OCTOBER 1 & 2

**Andrew Braunstein**, of Maitland, FL, writes: "The weather is great and there is plenty of work for another surgeon!"

**Brett B. Grenky**, of Manlius, NY, writes: "I'm presently in a large group practice with fellow '84 classmates **Rick Zogby** and **Dan Wnorowski**. My children, Zack, 16; Ryan, 12; and Samantha, 10, are all well."

**1986**

**Eduardo Arazoza**, of Penfield, NY, writes: "My wife, Judy, and I say, 'Hello,' to everyone from the class of 1986. Our first daughter, Bethany, is off to college in Boston."

**1988**

**John and Kathi Teixeira**, of Skaneateles, NY, write: "We have three children, John, seven, Rachel, five, and A.J., two."

**1989**

**2004**  
OCTOBER 1 & 2

**Brian S. Brundage**, of Auburn, NY, writes: "**Pam (Foresman)** and I are still toiling away in Baby Jail on the shores of Owasco Lake with our young daughters, Kate and Claire. Come visit!"

**1991**

**Timothy Mallon**, of Bel Air, MD, writes: "I was promoted to colonel in the US Army. I have been assigned as occupational medicine residency director, Uniformed Services University of Health Services in Bethesda, MD."

**1992**

**David E. Abel**, of Portland, OR, writes: "I have been appointed director of genetics at Northwest Perinatal Center in Portland. Please feel free to email me at [dabel@whallc.com](mailto:dabel@whallc.com)."

**Wendy Book**, of Atlanta, GA, writes: "I am co-director of the adult congenital cardiac program. I remain active in heart failure and transplant. My husband, **Mike Piansky**, and I have two children aged six and four."

**Timothy D. Kane**, of Pittsburgh, Pa., writes: "I am assistant professor of surgery at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Division of Pediatric Surgery. I'm also the director of minimally invasive surgery at the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh from 2001 to present."

**1993**

**Janice Bedell**, of New Hartford, NY, writes: "I am now a part-time radiologist for Slocum-Dickson Medical Group, with three children, Brandon, Jared and Laura. Laura is the newest addition to the family."

**Stephanie S. Roach**, of Ithaca, NY, writes: "We're alive and well in Ithaca, NY, Match Day Ben is 11-years old now and doing well in fifth grade. Redheads: Emma, five; and Sam, three; are growing fast!"



Kate and Claire, daughters of Brian and Pam Brundage, MDs '89



Laura, daughter of Janice Bedell, MD '93

2004 AOA Class Seated

On March 13, 28 senior medical students and seven junior medical students became members of the national medical honor society, Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA). The society was established in 1902 by a group of medical students at the University of Illinois at Chicago in an effort to elevate the ideals of scholarship and professionalism in medical students. The society quickly spread to medical schools across the country, and now

most medical schools have chapters. Only one sixth of any class may be elected. Eligibility is determined by academic performance, but student members elect new members using a process that considers service, leadership, and character as important qualifications for membership. The AOA motto is "Worthy to serve the suffering." New inductees in the class of 2004 include nine students elected in their junior year:

James Fennelly  
Evan Grossman  
Brian Hanrahan  
Jordan Kerker  
Jason Lewis  
Albert Nayeri  
Natalie Roney  
Joseph Scordino  
Igor Yusupov

**Class of 2004 senior inductees include:**  
Kimberly Bleir  
Lauren Chernick  
Shari Clarke  
Keith Duffy  
Lauren Eisenberg  
James Farry  
Aaron Fischman  
Seth Isaacs  
Prat Ittharat

Kenar Jhaveri  
Nickolas Katsoulakis  
Michael Lester  
Timothy Minton  
Andrew Najovits  
Lee Reichel  
Roman Shinder  
Jonathan Silverstein  
Alyssa Stephany  
Daniel Weller

**The seven students from the class of 2005 inducted in their junior year include:**  
Christopher Anker  
Brian Fengler  
Craig Grossman  
Michael Hutchinson  
Shareef Jandali  
Scott Stevens  
Awais Vance



Mia, daughter of Carolyn L. Danzi Marasco, MD '95



Andriana and Nicoletta, daughters of Antonios Gasparis, MD '96



John Seok, MD '01 in Iraq

1994

**R**2004  
OCTOBER 1 & 2

**Robert Cole**, of Rochester, NY, writes: "My wife, Pamela Viggiani, PhD, and I have two children. Theo is two, and Kalyn is 10 months. I finished an MBA at Rochester Institute of Technology in May 2003. I am still working for Lifetime Health as a family practitioner."

**Lee Herbst**, of Sagre, PA, writes: "After completing my residency at North Shore University Hospital in obstetrics and gynecology, I accepted a position with the Guthrie Clinic in Sagre, where I have been practicing for the past six years. My wife, Beth, and I have two sons, Gabriel, six, and Brandon, four."

1995

**Carolyn L. Danzi Marasco**, of Wesley Chapel, FL, writes: "My husband, Matthew, and I are happy to announce the birth of our daughter, Mia Gloria Morasco, September 2003. I became a partner in Health Point Medical Group's Pediatric practice in Tampa, in July 2003. Mia loves to spend time in Tampa with her grandfather, **J. Thomas Danzi, '70.**"

**Gordon Luan**, writes: "I am here to report that after doing *locum tenens* for the last three years, I finally settled down in sunny San Diego, CA, in the summer of 2003. I just joined the group Centre for Healthcare as a family practitioner in Ramona, CA. Our website is [www.centre-forhealthcare.com](http://www.centre-forhealthcare.com). Let me know if you are in town and I can show you around."

1996

**Antonios Gasparis**, of Miller Place, NY, writes: "My wife, Dora, and I are happy to announce the birth of our second girl, Andriana, this past January. I completed my vascular fellowship at Stony Brook last June. Subsequently I went to Texas Tech University for an endovascular fellowship. I have recently joined the staff at Stony Brook University."

**Karen Williams**, of Watertown, NY, writes: "In July 2003, my husband, Joe, and I welcomed baby number four. Timothy Robert is well loved by siblings, Heather, eight; Chris, five; and Mikey, three. I have left the military and am in private practice in Watertown."

1997

**Melissa Jeitler**, of East Syracuse, NY, has been board-certified in obstetrics and gynecology by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Dr. Jeitler is at Advocates for Women's Health.

**Suchitra Kavety**, of Manlius, NY, has been board-certified in obstetrics and gynecology by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Dr. Kavety is at Associates in Ob/Gyn of Central New York.

1998

**Kevin Setter**, of New York City, writes: "I'm married to **Kate Palomino, '95**, and we have a son, Nicholas, born on August 30, 2002. I'm currently an orthopedic fellow at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital. Kate is an attending orthopedic surgeon at the Hospital for Special Surgery."

**Michael George**, of Washington, DC, is a pediatrician in a five-member practice in Northern Virginia.

1999

**John A. Ternay**, of Atlanta, is a cardiology fellow at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia.

2000

**Rajesh Jain**, of Camillus, NY, writes: "I am currently a fourth-year resident in orthopedic surgery at Upstate. I will be doing a fellowship in total joints after residency. My wife, Nimisha, gave birth to our first child, a boy named Sachin, this past December."

**Stacy Ostapko**, of Chesapeake, VA, writes: "I am working as a pediatric hospitalist in Virginia Beach. I have been married three years, and recently purchased my first home in Chesapeake."

2001

**John Seok**, of Jacksonville, NC, writes: "I had an exciting time with the Marines during Operation Iraqi Freedom as an Infantry Battalion Medical Officer. I will never forget the hardship and valuable medical experience during a battle in Iraq."

Amy Reynders, MD '01

Hall of Fame

Not too many of us can claim membership in any kind of Hall of Fame, especially at the ripe old age of 30. But Amy Reynders, MD '01, in her third year of a five-year residency at Upstate Medical University's Department of Otolaryngology can.

Dr. Reynders was inducted into the Section 5 High School Basketball Hall of Fame last November in her hometown of Rochester, NY. "It was a nice surprise when I received the letter," Reynders recalled. "It seems like such a long time ago, and it brought back some good memories."

Following her sterling "career" at Rochester's Aquinas Institute, where she starred academically (senior class valedictorian), as well as athletically, the 5-foot-11-inch Reynders became a three-year starter and two-year captain at Rutgers University in New Jersey.

"I wasn't a big-time scorer; I was more of a team player," said Reynders. "I loved to pass. What probably made me successful was my understanding of the game, and my heart and desire to go out and win every contest I participated in. I couldn't beat many people up and down the court in a race, but I could find a way to beat you to the basket."

One of six children, Reynders developed her competitiveness playing "tons of sports" with her father, brothers and any neighborhood kids who'd show up. "My brothers humbled me and made me tougher. If I got knocked down, stopping and complaining wasn't going to stop the game from going on so I figured I'd have to keep on playing, too."

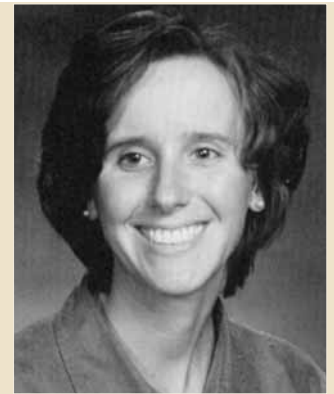
She kept on playing—all the way to her college basketball scholarship with the Scarlet Knights.

It wasn't until her junior year at the Big East Conference school that Reynders decided that the medical profession was her calling. "I had taken all the prerequisite classes," she said. "I was sort of a late decider. When I was a kid it wasn't like I was always saying I wanted to be a doctor. I did enjoy science courses and I worked with some physicians during one of my summers in college. I shadowed a sports medicine doctor, an orthopedist and an OB-GYN and although I haven't ended up in those areas, I saw the impact physicians had on their patients and it was hard not to aspire to do those sorts of things. As I went through medical school and my training, and once I was exposed to otolaryngology, I just realized that would be the best niche for me."

Reynders graduated summa cum laude from Rutgers in 1996 and then spent "probably the best year" of her life serving as a full-time volunteer in Oregon with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, helping promote breast- and cervical-cancer screenings for low-income women. "It was an incredible year. I think it was what I needed; people need a chance to catch their breath and decide what they're going to do next."

While in Oregon, Reynders applied to and was accepted at Upstate. She graduated magna cum laude in 2001. "Upstate provided me with a very solid foundation," Reynders said. "I had excellent professors and clinicians who laid the groundwork for my medical career. When I find myself in different situations with different patients I say to myself, 'Oh, that's what they were talking about!' Across the board, our training here prepared us well for our respective fields."

Among Reynders's wide range of responsibilities are tonsillectomies, biopsies and sinus surgeries. She works on everyone from senior citizens to "little babies with



Amy Reynders, MD '01



recurring ear infections." It's that diversity that is perhaps the most appealing aspect of her chosen field. "Having the ability to see patients, diagnose and then, if needed, surgically treat them is a nice spectrum."

Basketball provided Reynders a spectrum of experiences, too. Those experiences have eased her transition from star athlete to doctor. "In terms of getting along with different personalities, basketball has helped me tremendously," she said. "While my colleagues and I have different personalities, we all mesh as a team for the common good."

—Mark Frank