



Arnold D. Pearlstone, MD '55, with his wife and unidentified friends.

### 1945

**Frank Bersani**, of Skaneateles, NY, was featured in the January 5, 2005, edition of the *Eagle Newspaper*, in an article titled "Growing up on Syracuse's North Side: Dr. Frank Bersani."

### 1954

**Philip Ferro**, of Jamesville, NY, was elected to the Upstate Medical University Gamma Chapter of the national Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society, by a special student vote for his outstanding service to Upstate Students. This was the first time students conferred AOA membership on alumni, who previously had not been members.

### 1955

**Arnold D. Pearlstone**, of Westport, CT, was honored with the 2005 Physician of the Year Award by the Greater Bridgeport Medical Association. The association stated that in addition to caring for his many patients at his medical practice in Fairfield, Dr. Pearlstone, along with his wife, travels annually to Jamaica, eager to provide free ophthalmologic care and surgery to thousands of needy patients. In addition to operating 12 to 14 hours per day during his five-day trips, Pearlstone works locally to secure the resources to keep an operating room at the Lions Club International Clinic in Jamaica adequately equipped.

**Sol D. Pickard**, of Huntington Woods, MI, writes he is now fully retired and definitely on new tracks, including "grandpa-ing," reading Revolutionary War history and nonfiction for a change, cultivating old and new friends, and rewriting personal and family history. Dr. Pickard writes, "Need old friends and colleagues at the 50th class reunion this year to keep me honest."

### 1960

**Lewis Wexler**, of Stanford, CA, recently received the first gold medal of the North American Society of Cardiac Imaging and presented the Charles T. Dotter, MD, Memorial Lecture at the American Health Association's Scientific Sessions on the subject, "The past, present, and future of noninvasive imaging for coronary artery disease."

### 1963

**Carl Salzman**, of Watertown, MA, writes that the fourth edition of his textbook *Clinical Geriatric Psychopharmacology* was published and that he won the National Teacher of the Year Award in 2003. "Feeling great—working full time."

### 1964

**Stanley Burns**, of New York, NY, was featured in the January 2005 edition of the American College of Surgeons *Bulletin* in an article titled, "Surgical Lifestyles: Surgeon has Photographic Memory of Historical Advances."

### 1965

**Patricia Numann**, of Syracuse, NY, has been named a member of the media team for the American College of Surgeons' Public Profile and Visibility Steering Committee. Dr. Numann joins a select group of surgeons charged with learning to communicate through their local television stations.

### 1966

**A. Michael Kaplan**, of Dix Hills, NY, writes that in the past year he has opened up a second pediatric office, which now has seven pediatricians and two nurse practitioners. Dr. Kaplan is also enjoying his three-year-old grandson, Max, and 15-month-old granddaughter, Carly, in the Boston area and his three-year-old granddaughter, Emily, and one-year-old granddaughter, Zoe, in the San Francisco area. Kaplan and his wife spend part of the winter in their Florida home.

**Elizabeth McAnarney**, of Rochester, NY, received an honorary degree from Upstate Medical University at Commencement on May 22. Dr. McAnarney is professor and chair of the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Rochester Medical Center.

### 1968

**J. Patrick Lavery**, of Kalamazoo, MI, continues in active perinatal practice. Dr. Lavery is also a consultant for the Risk Management and Patient Safety Institute.

### Michael Weiner, MD '65

## An Ounce of Prevention

One of the greatest fears of aging is the fear of Alzheimer's disease. "Once you hit 90, your chance of having Alzheimer's is 50 percent," says Michael Weiner, MD '65. "It's a growing problem and costs our country well over \$100 billion a year."

Dr. Weiner is one of the nation's leading Alzheimer's researchers, focusing on the use of MRI and MR spectroscopy to monitor the progression of Alzheimer's and other neurodegenerative diseases.

"Imaging is very important, not only in the diagnosis of these diseases, but in tracking new treatments during clinical trials to gauge their effectiveness, says Weiner, who is professor of radiology, medicine, psychiatry, and neurology at the University of California San Francisco, and director of the Magnetic Resonance Unit at San Francisco's VA Medical Center. "Ultimately once we have treatments that do work effectively, it's going to be very important to detect the disease at an early stage before people have impairments so that dementia can be prevented."

Weiner and his staff use MRI to track the rate of brain shrinkage. "As the nerve cells in the brain die, the brain shrinks, like a plum going to a prune," he says. "If you image the brain successfully over time, you can measure the volume of certain areas of the brain and quantify the rate of brain atrophy."

The current FDA-approved Alzheimer's medications provide some symptomatic improvement for patients, but do not slow the progression of the disease. "What we need are drugs that truly act on the disease progress itself," Weiner says.

While the cause of Alzheimer's is still a mystery, Weiner says there is evidence supporting the theory that the accumulation of beta-amyloid protein may be at the root.

Weiner recently was named principal investigator of the NIH Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative, a five-year, \$60 million grant funded jointly by the NIH and industry to obtain longitudinal clinical, imaging, and biomarker data on normal aging, mild cognitive impairment, and Alzheimer's disease.

The grant, the largest ever awarded by the National Institute on Aging, funds imaging of elderly subjects at 50 sites across the United States, who will be followed longitudinally over three years. "The purpose of this is to develop a generalized standard of using MRI for treatment trials and to validate the use of imaging for FDA as a biomarker for disease modification," explains Weiner. "Hopefully the results of this study will help the pharmaceutical industry do trials more efficiently and get results. We need a drug."

Weiner has been using MRI to research Alzheimer's and brain diseases for the last 15 years. After graduating from Upstate and completing fellowships in metabolism at Yale and biochemistry (focusing on the kidney) at the University of Wisconsin, he spent 10 years focused on the biochemical aspects of nephrology.

All that changed in 1980, when Weiner learned about nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR). "I got this idea to put a rat into a magnet with an NMR coil on its kidney to make measurements of biochemistry of the kidney non-invasively," he says. That turned out to be one of the very first experiments using NMR on an intact animal.



Also an avid pianist, Dr. Weiner plays several nights a week in San Francisco area clubs and restaurants. He has recorded two CDs, and will soon release his third, recorded in Havana.

After several years of using NMR to study the kidney, Weiner decided to refocus his career on developing NMR spectroscopy to do clinical research on humans, eventually focusing on the brain.

Although the immediate goal is to help develop a drug that stops the progression of Alzheimer's, Weiner says even that is just a beginning. He has a NIH grant aimed at early detection of Alzheimer's disease, so that when treatments become available, subjects at risk can be identified to prevent dementia. "None of us wants to wait until we or our parents are demented before we begin treatment," he says. "We want to prevent it before it starts."

—Renée Gearhart Levy

**1969**

**Robert and Joann Dale** of Rochester, NY, enjoyed connecting with classmates at the 2004 reunion. Their son, Matthew, a New York City computer whiz, wed his high school sweetheart in Maine the weekend after reunion. Their daughter, Jennifer, lives in Rochester, so they get to see their granddaughters Hannah and Amanda frequently. They write, "Had a great vacation in China last summer, though we tired of the communal food with everyone dipping their saliva-stained chopsticks into the dishes."

**John Krawchenko** and **Michael P. Owen '73**, both neurosurgeons from Watertown, NY, have formed an affiliation with Canton-Postdam Hospital. They began work in their clinic on the first floor of the hospital in February. The two doctors will perform spinal and back surgeries at the hospital.

**1974**

**Jack L. Baldassare**, of Tenafly, NJ, writes he and Elena became grandparents for the second time on September 23, 2004. Granddaughter, Goldie Estella, joins granddaughter, Billie Dove. Dr. Baldassare writes, "Three daughters and two granddaughters; does anybody have a 'y' chromosome?"

**Philip Schulman**, of Melville, NY, writes that his son Aaron is now a first-year medical resident and son Daniel works for Smith-Barney on Wall Street.

**1976**

**Christopher G. Ullrich**, of Charlotte, NC, writes that he and Betsy are doing well. Dr. Ullrich is in his third year as chief of radiology at the Carolinas Medical Center. Charlotte Radiology PA has grown to include 70 radiologists. "I am busy learning a lot about things I was never told about in medical school and residency!"

**1978**

**Pamela Lipkin**, of New York, NY, has earned a reputation for plastic surgery revisions, particularly when it comes to noses. An article about plastic surgery among celebrities in the magazine *Allure* listed Dr. Lipkin in a "Doc Hollywood specialty directory" under nose jobs. And *New York* magazine included Lipkin in a diagram that indicated specific doctors for each body part. Lipkin was listed as a surgeon known for "slender, aquiline noses."

**Joseph Monkofsky**, of Syracuse, NY, joined the medical staff of Glens Falls Hospital.

Dr. Monkofsky's son, Joseph Charles, recently graduated from college.

**1979**

**Mark Erlebacher**, of Fayetteville, NY, became a fellow of the American College of Physicians last October.

**Mark Foster**, of Bradford Woods, PA, discusses the physiology of the back, and describes the latest technologies and innovative approaches that are making recovery increasingly probable in his book, *Backache: Putting It Behind You*.

**1980**

**Lowell Hart**, of Fort Myers, FL, is the director of research for Florida Cancer Specialists, a 40-doctor practice on the West Coast of Florida. Dr. Hart has five children: the eldest is a sophomore at the University of Miami.

**Joseph P. Imperato**, of Northbrook, IL, is the secretary-treasurer of the medical staff of Lake Forest Hospital.

**1984**

**Hal Cohen**, of Fayetteville, NY, was elected to the Upstate Medical University gamma chapter of the national Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society, by a special student vote for his outstanding service to Upstate Students. This was the first time students conferred AOA membership on alumni, who previously had not been members.

**1985**

**James M. Callahan**, of Syracuse, delivered a talk on the medical management of sports concussions at "Head Games: a Sports Concussion Symposium," sponsored by University Hospital, the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and Syracuse University.

**Pedro H. Calves**, of West Islip, NY, is the medical director for palliative care service at Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center.

**Neal Zung**, of Armonk, NY, is looking forward to seeing everyone at the 20th Reunion!

**1986**

**Sheila Lemke**, of Jamesville, NY, was among 25 area women to receive Women in Leadership awards from television station WTVH.

**Amir Garakani, MD '02****Inside the Anxious Mind**

Psychiatrists have long known that certain medications can alter brain function, providing help for people with mood and anxiety disorders. Now a group of psychiatric researchers is trying to prove that therapy can do the same thing.

Amir Garakani, MD '02, a third-year resident in psychiatry at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City, is part of a team using brain imaging to determine whether cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) causes a change in brain structure. "Someone who has panic attacks generally takes medication because they can't function," he explains. "We're using functional neuroimaging to try to show that CBT actually changes brain metabolism, which would be quite a finding. The advantage of PET (positron emission tomography) and fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) is that we can scan a person while he or she is anxious, or even during an actual panic attack, as we do in one of our studies. The affected areas of the brain 'light up,' and we can then see if CBT normalizes activity in areas involved in anxiety, such as the amygdala and prefrontal cortex. Hopefully, this will help guide us in finding the best long-term treatment options."

Dr. Garakani says preliminary research looks promising. While the two projects—one focusing on subjects with generalized anxiety disorder, the other on subjects with panic disorders—have been submitted as RO1 grants to the National Institute of Mental Health, he has already published preliminary findings and presented posters on the research at national psychiatry conferences.

Garakani considers himself fortunate to be engaged in this research with Jack Gorman, MD, chair of Mount Sinai's Department of Psychiatry. "He's an amazing person to have as a mentor," Garakani says. "I'm not only getting clinical experience, but experience working on federal grants." He plans to do a research fellowship after residency.

Garakani admits his research involvement is a bit unusual for a third-year resident, who spends the majority of his day working in an out-patient clinic at Mount Sinai, where he sees a wide range of patients, from children to geriatric patients, who come in for psychodynamic psychotherapy, behavioral therapy, supportive therapy, and medication management. "Most people are not lucky enough to get this level of exposure and experience with research so early in their careers, especially without a PhD," he says.

But Garakani is not your average resident. As a student at Upstate Medical University, he received the Dearing Award for creative writing three times (first place twice, and a second). As a fourth-year student, he was awarded one of 20 Rock Sleyster, MD, Scholarships awarded nationally by the American Medical Association to students planning to specialize in psychiatry. As a resident, he's won several research awards, and last year was named one of 10 recipients nationally of the 2004-2006 American Psychiatry Association/Glaxo-SmithKline Fellowship, awarded to prepare future leaders in psychiatry. And he was recently awarded the 2005-2007 Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry Fellowship.

Garakani says his clinical experiences at Upstate gave him a chance to be very hands on, and his psychiatry rotations and clerkship were no exception. He recalls



Amir Garakani, MD '02, is using brain scans to determine the effectiveness of therapy on patients with anxiety disorders.

working with Tom Schwartz, MD, and Prakash Masand, MD (now at Duke), as influential in directing his career path and piquing his interest in psychiatric research.

He ultimately chose psychiatry because he believed it had the most potential for important research and development and because he saw a good fit with his own creative strengths. "There is so much to learn about the mind-brain interface," says Garakani, who serves on the advisory board for *The Healing Muse*, Upstate's literary journal. "It's an expanding field."

—Renée Gearhart Levy

**More policies on Class Notes!**

Many alumni write that they would like to hear from old friends and classmates. While we cannot print home addresses and phone numbers because of privacy and space considerations, we will include your email address in a class note if specifically asked to do so.

**We love photos!**

We appreciate it when you send photos with your class notes and wedding announcements, but many computer scans and print-outs of any kind do not have the reproduction quality we require. Please send a strong, original print, or a digital image of 300 dpi or greater.

**Keep in touch with Upstate!**

Looking for the latest news on campus activities? You can find it and much more at Upstate Medical University's website: [www.upstate.edu](http://www.upstate.edu).



Children of Karen Williams, MD '96



Grace Ann, daughter of Michele (Mercincavage) Bassler, MD '97

**Richard A. Rubin**, of Slingerlands, NY, recently left the practice of primary care internal medicine to become senior vice president/chief medical officer of Seton Health/St. Mary's Hospital in Troy, NY. "Would be happy to hear from classmates at [rrubin@setonhealth.org](mailto:rrubin@setonhealth.org)."

**1987**

**Catherine Vernon**, of Camillus, NY, was promoted to clinical associate professor in the Clinical/Educator track at Upstate.

**1991**

**David Dexter**, of Erie, PA, is the chair of the Department of Surgery at Hamot Medical Center.

**John** and **Christina LaBella**, of Wexford, PA, are celebrating 15 years of marriage and medicine together.

**1992**

**Brian Meltzer**, of Pennington, NJ, has taken a new position within Johnson & Johnson in the J&J Development Corporation (JJDC). JJDC is the strategic venture group for the overall corporation. Dr. Meltzer writes, "Working with this group is going to be a phenomenal experience. I'm very pleased!"

**1993**

**Sonya Tuerff (Dutkewych)**, of Chaddsford, PA, practices vascular and endovascular surgery at Christiana Hospital in Delaware. Dr. Tuerff is also the mother of three children, Damian, five; Katarina, three; and Annika, five months.

**Matthew Karen** writes he is doing well living in Winchester, VA. Dr. Karen works as a facial plastic surgeon. Karen married Santa D'Alessio, MD, and they have two children, Jacob, three; and Sydney, one. "Emails welcome—would love to hear from you." [matthewkaren@msn.com](mailto:matthewkaren@msn.com)

**Stephanie Roach**, of Ithaca, NY, was featured in the January 20 edition of the *Ithaca Journal* in an article she authored titled, "New Procedure can Relieve Pain From Arthritic Shoulders."

**1995**

**Lynn Cunningham**, of La Fayette, NY, answered questions on women's health at the League of Women Voters' brown bag luncheon on March 1. Dr. Cunningham is a family practice physician at the Cortland Health Center. Cunningham cares for patients in the areas of women's health, pediatric medicine, adult medicine and geriatrics. Also interested in sports medicine, she and her husband train year-round for triathlons.

**1996**

**Karen Williams**, of Watertown, NY, has been in private practice since leaving the military in 2003. Dr. Williams and her husband, Joe, stay busy with the kids, Heather, nine, Christopher, seven, Michael, four, and Timmy, 18 months. "Looking forward to our reunion in 2006."

**1997**

**Michele (Mercincavage) Bassler**, and her husband, Edwin, recently moved to Buffalo, NY, and had their first child, Grace Anne, born February 8. **Melissa Jeitler**, who is currently an ob/gyn practicing in Syracuse, was named the baby's godmother.

**1998**

**Sherri E. Putterman** and **Drew Caplin**, of Floral Park, NY, announce the birth of their daughter, Kayla Marit, born on August 8, 2004. Dr. Putterman has passed her board exams in obstetrics and gynecology and is in private practice in Garden City. Dr. Caplin is completing chief residency in radiology and will be doing an interventional fellowship at Long Island Jewish Medical Center.

**Matthew Vicinanza**, of Birmingham, AL, is currently doing a fellowship in oculoplastics and facial reconstruction at University of Alabama. Dr. Vicinanza is serving as a clinical instructor to the residents as well. Vicinanza and his wife, Erin, have three lovely girls, Grace, Riley, and Erica, and would welcome more.

**2001**

**Joe Lasek** and **Carina Cartelli**, of Burlington, VT, just celebrated their daughter Alyssna's first birthday. Dr. Cartelli has taken time off from her residency in internal medicine to be home full-time with their daughter. Dr. Lasek is now in his fourth-year in psychiatry and second year as chief resident at the University of Vermont. Upon completing residency, Lasek will take on the full-time care of their daughter, while Cartelli finishes her residency. After, Lasek plans to start an outpatient practice in the Burlington area. Cartelli is still considering her practice options.

**2002**

**Barbara L. Harclerod**, of Liverpool, NY, writes that she and her son, Ian, who is three, are moving to Hamilton, NY, this summer. Dr. Harclerod will graduate from Saint Joseph's Hospital family practice residency program in June and she will begin work at Community Memorial Hospital in Hamilton in August.