



The Arnold P. Gold Foundation Fostering Humanism in Medicine

Summer 2004

A Dying Mother and “Garlic Man”

Winning Essays Selected by Distinguished Panel



Thalia Margalit

Thalia Margalit, a first year medical student at the UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, wrote about a devoted nurse, Cathy, who taught her about humanism in medicine:

She was a unique force in that room, trodden by herds of medical professionals gravely passing through with their arms folded, shaking their heads in defeat. ...Unable to estimate the bounds of life, Cathy treated her patient as I imagine she treats all of her patients –vital and dying, young and old – with respect.

Margalit won the \$1,000 top prize in The Arnold P. Gold Foundation’s 2003 national *Humanism in Medicine Essay Contest* for her powerful and sensitive story about her dying mother, Cathy’s patient.

The \$500 second prize went to Anela Bonic, a second year medical student at Creighton University School of Medicine in Omaha, NE. After barely surviving



Anela Bonic



F. Perry Wilson

the horrors of war in Yugoslavia, Anela doubted her decision to become a doctor. She writes in *Humanity: Lost and Found* how her very first patients helped her to feel again and to recommit to caring for others. In *Garlic Every Day, and Other Wisdom*, F. Perry Wilson, a second year medical student at the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, tells how his sensibilities were awakened by the so-called “nameless 45” at a senior center. His humorous and perceptive account was awarded the \$250 third prize.

ESSAYS PUBLISHED

The three winning essays will be published this fall in *Academic Medicine*, the journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). *DOC* readers can view these, as well as those of the ten honorable mentions, in *The Humanistic Touch* section of The Foundation’s website, www.humanism-in-medicine.org. Information about the 2004 essay contest will be posted on the website in August.

ENCOURAGING REFLECTION

Our *Humanism in Medicine Essay Contest*, established in 1999, encourages medical students to reflect and share their thoughts, experiences and ideas about the humanistic practice of medicine. We express appreciation to the distinguished panel of judges (see below), including the many eminent physician-authors, who thoughtfully reviewed the essays, and to the hundreds of students who took the time to write and submit their stories.

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU

The Foundation appreciates the time and expertise contributed by our panel of judges for the 2003 *Humanism in Medicine Essay Contest*.

Thank you: Rafael Campo, MA, MD; Rita Charon, MD, PhD; Jerome Groopman, MD; Joan Handler, PhD; Judith Hannan; Jody Heyman, MD, PhD; Arlene M. Katz, EdD; Diane Kaufman, MD; Barron Lerner, MD, PhD; Colin Macpherson, MD (deceased); Sue Mellins; Rev. Daniel Morrissey, OP; Kyle Nash, D of Min; Danielle Ofri, MD, PhD; Alex Okun, MD; Rachel Naomi Remen, MD; David Rubin, MD; Murray Schwartz, MD; Marcia Soltes and Abraham Verghese, MD, MFA.

Featured Stories

- Letters from the Field Page 2
- Addressing Leadership. . . . Page 2
- At Wilma’s Studio Page 3
- Practicing Humanism Page 3
- Masked for Humanism. . . . Page 4

**Save the Date
November 13, 2004**

Associates Committee’s-Masquerade Ball
For information contact Barbara Packer
at 201-567-7999.

Letters from the Field

These are two of the many letters we receive from doctors and medical students throughout the nation.

Dear Sandra,

My program, *Stories-On-Call*, is an opportunity for me to take off my doctor's coat, put on my clown costume as "Amycakes," and read stories with the children at Children's Hospital in Oakland. I go floor to floor with my bag of books, reading stories to children on the hematology-oncology, surgical, general pediatrics, rehab, post-op wards, and medical intensive care unit.



Dr. "Amycakes"

I developed the idea, because I was looking for a way to broaden my relationship with my patients.

I remembered how effective "Amycakes" the clown was at bringing a smile to a sick child's face when I clowned with Patch Adams in Russia in 1999 on The Gold Foundation scholarship. You can imagine some of the smiles I get from patients and staff alike when I walk down the halls of my own hospital.

Here are a couple of highlights of my experience so far: I read *The Little House*, by Virginia Lee Burton, to a mother and her daughter as they snuggled in the hospital bed. At the end of the story, the mom exclaimed, "That was wonderful! No one ever reads to mommies."

I had the opportunity to read to one of my patients the day before he died. He was initially too tired to hear even his favorite, *Strega Nona*, retold by Tomie de Paola—but finally propped himself up in his pillows and requested not only *Strega Nona* and her magic pasta pot, but also the bedtime story of *Tico and the Golden Wings*, by Leo Lionni.

~ Amy Sobel, MD PL-3,
Children's Hospital, Oakland, CA

The Gold Foundation's *Jonathan Aronson Memorial Fund for the Medical Clown Scholarship* provides opportunities for medical students to participate in the Patch Adams "Healing through Humor" missions.

Dear Dr. Gold,

I was overwhelmed at the honor of receiving the *Leonard Tow 2004 Humanism in Medicine Award* at the University of South Carolina.

I am particularly pleased because ordinarily the words humanism and surgeons are rarely mentioned in the same sentence. This is unfortunate because I know many of my colleagues to be not only outstanding surgeons but to possess the qualities that you described as your criteria to receive this prestigious award. The gift of \$1,000 will go to a worthy cause related to your efforts in humanism here at the University.

The opportunity to be a member of the *Gold Humanism Honor Society* is exciting because through further communication with colleagues, your efforts and to a much smaller degree my efforts can be sustained. Thank you very much for this great opportunity and honor.

~ Brent E. Krantz, M.D., FACS, Professor of Surgery,
University of Southern California School of Medicine

Addressing Leadership

Members of The Gold Foundation staff have been invited guests at medical schools from Florida to California and from Michigan to Texas, welcoming inductees at new chapters of the *Gold Humanism Honor Society*, speaking at, and/or attending national conferences of medical school deans and administrators.

In her keynote address to the deans at the Northeast Group on Student Affairs (NEGSA) in Rochester, NY, Foundation Executive Vice President Dr. Sandra Gold challenged medical educators to think about their role in helping to develop leadership skills in their students:

On the macro level, it's leadership for the entire healthcare system, a system in need of repair. On the micro level, there's the type of leadership that a doctor shows with his/her patient... leading the patient to good health. ... Students need to understand that acquiring leadership skills is expected of them and will be assessed.

Thank you Travis O'Donnell, Foundation IT (Information Technology) Manager extraordinaire, for launching our redesigned website. Please visit!
www.humanism-in-medicine.org

At Wilma's Studio

Bobby's speech impediment caused him to be reluctant to socialize and often to lash out in frustration. Eric was articulate, eager to please and a bit of a show-off. Both young boys had neurological problems. Amazing things happened when their paths crossed at a *Wilma's Studio* at the Child Neurology Clinic at New York Presbyterian Hospital - Columbia University Medical Center.

Wilma's Studios are the inspiration of artist-physician Dr. Wilma Siegel, who has created several "healing with art" programs at teaching hospitals in Florida and New York. The studios provide low stress learning environments for

patients and families who are often nervous and stressed from spending several hours in clinic waiting rooms between appointments.



The day Bobby and Eric came to the clinic, artist Barbara Marco and counselor Linda Oifer had set up a *Wilma's Studio* with tables containing markers, feathers, stickers, pipe cleaners, buttons, crayons, and lots of glitter glue and colored paper.

"IT'S ABOUT THE MOMENTS"

With a little encouragement, the children soon became absorbed in art-making and temporarily forgot their fears and illnesses. Shy Bobby started folding paper. Rambunctious Eric, who first made fun of Bobby's blurred speech, began admiring Bobby's beautiful model car and asked for help in making one. Eric learned to appreciate Bobby's special abilities and Bobby gained a new sense of confidence, pride and satisfaction.

Director of the clinic, Dr. M. Richard Koenigsberger, thanked the Foundation: *...for placing those two fine artists in our clinic. It has made an enormous difference to the ambience, as well as the actual working of the clinic. It is a real step forward, and I hope there will be more.*

For Barbara and Linda and the volunteers from the National Association of Women Artists (NAWA) who help them, "It's about the moments!" The Foundation is proud to have provided initial funding for this program.

Practicing Humanism: Dr. William Kennedy Main, "Gold Doc"

My wife, Pearl, who was suffering from back problems, was referred to Dr. William Kennedy Main. Following an initial examination and review of her records, Dr. Main advised surgery. While he did not think it had to be done right away, he talked to us at length, provided a detailed explanation and suggested subjects for us to research. Our questions and emails were always answered quickly.

When Pearl's condition worsened, we sought a second opinion and Dr. Main's diagnosis was confirmed. At our next appointment with Dr. Main, he said that he would proceed — when Pearl was ready.

A COMPASSIONATE SURGEON

A few weeks later she gave the signal and the operation was immediately scheduled. During surgery, the anesthesiologist had a problem setting Pearl's IV. Dr. Main held her free hand and comforted her. My son and I had been told the operation would take about three hours. At the three-hour mark, Dr. Main sent word out to the waiting room that everything was fine but it would take a little longer. He understood our anxiety and demonstrated his concern for us.

Following surgery, Dr. Main personally prepared us for how Pearl would look and feel and what we might expect. We couldn't help but note that Dr. Main's compassion and attentiveness was in stark contrast to how some of the other physicians treated their patients' waiting families.

During a long holiday weekend a few weeks later, Pearl developed a bad reaction to her medication. Though Dr. Main was out of town, he nevertheless quickly exchanged several emails with me and arranged to have the prescription adjusted.



Dr. Main taking time to read to his daughter's class.

Dr. William Main is an exemplar of humanism in medicine and Pearl and I are pleased to nominate him as a "Gold Doc."

~ Mike Bergstein, New Jersey

Tell Us About Your "Gold Doc"
Email your story to: goldfdtn@gold-foundation.org



The Arnold P. Gold Foundation, Inc.
Tel. (201)567-7999; Fax (201)567-7880
email: goldfdtn@gold-foundation.org
website: www.humanism-in-medicine.org

Board of Trustees

Arnold P. Gold, MD, President
Sandra O. Gold, EdD, Exec.Vice Pres.
Norman Seiden, Vice Pres.
Myron Rosner, Esq., Secretary
Jeffrey L. Saltzer, CPA, Treasurer

Elaine Adler	William J. Lippman
Brian E. Benson	Robert B. Mellins, MD
Robert M. Berkowitz	Robert O. Owens
Stuart D. Cook, MD	William J. Peace, PhD
Steven K. Grinspoon, MD	Jonathan D. Seelig
David V. Habif, Jr., MD	Mark Seiden
Charles Klatskin	Samuel Silverstein, MD
Linda D. Lewis, MD	Michael Sonnenfeldt
Barry C. Waldorf, Esq.	

Ira H. Lustgarten, Esq., David E. Rogers, MD
Deceased

Medical and Professional Advisory Council
Norma E. Wagoner, PhD, Chair

Herman Aronson	Sherwin B. Nuland, MD
RADM Susan J.	John H. Peace
Blumenthal, MD, MPA	Rachel Naomi Remen, MD
Benjamin S. Carson, MD	Steven A. Schroeder, MD
Rita Charon, MD, PhD	Kenneth I. Shine, MD
Carl Epstein	David T. Stern, MD, PhD
Ruth L. Fischbach, PhD	John Stone, MD
Jerome E. Groopman, MD	J. Robert Suriano, PhD
Brett Harris, Esq.	Daniel T. Williams, MD

Staff

Barbara Packer, M.S. Managing Director	Travis O'Donnell Administrative Assistant
Ann G. Bruder, M.A. Director of Programs	Arlene Gould, M.A.T.* DOC Editor
Allison Sole, M.A. Program Officer	Mary Meehan* Bookkeeper (Pro Bono) <i>*part-time</i>

Masked for Humanism

Associates Support the Home Visit Program

The Foundation's Associates Committee surpassed their fundraising goal at last Fall's Masquerade Ball. They raised enough funds to support not just one, but three of The Foundation's pediatric *Home Visit Programs (HVP)* in New York.

SERVING THE UNDERSERVED

The *HVP* provides hands-on training for residents in pediatrics, internal medicine and geriatrics and personalized at-home care for underserved patients and their families. The Foundation has seeded 14 *HVP's* at nine teaching hospitals in California, Virginia and New York, including the *Dr. Jacob Handler Pediatric HVP* at Columbia.



Ball Co-Chairs Evie Klein (l) and Carey White (r) celebrate with Dr. Sandra Gold (c), Executive Vice President of The Arnold P. Gold Foundation.

HELPING THROUGH PARTICIPATION

We thank all committee members, the attendees, sponsors, and the many donors to the Silent Auction who helped to make the November event at the New York Explorer's Club both good fun and a great success.

Volunteers of the Year



Photo: Laura Braff

We applaud our dedicated "Volunteers of the Year" for 2003, Dr. Goldie Veiser, Michele Silver and special assistant, Michael Silver.

Foundation volunteers perform a myriad of helpful activities. As a not-for-profit organization, we value those who donate their time and expertise to help us in our mission. If you, or someone you know, would like to volunteer, please call Travis O'Donnell 201-567-7999 or email: Todonnell@gold-foundation.org.

The Arnold P. Gold Foundation
619 PALISADE AVENUE, ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS, NJ 07632



To preserve the "care" in healthcare,
please contribute to
The Arnold P. Gold Foundation.