



## The Arnold P. Gold Foundation

Fostering Humanism  
in Medicine

Summer 2005

### Humanism in Action: A Trio of Gold Docs

By Arline Brown

This is a story of gratitude for the care my husband Paul received from his physicians: Dr. David Posner, pulmonologist; Dr. Mark Ginsberg, thoracic surgeon; and Dr. Lynn Ratner, medical oncologist. Paul was the patient, but we were in this unexpected battle together.

#### THE PIVOTAL PERSON

From the first day we met Dr. David Posner to the more than two years later when Paul died, David, as we came to call him, was the pivotal person who sustained us. Tests, biopsies, surgeries, chemotherapy, and more tests consumed our lives. The medical activity swirling around us swamped all other activities with its demanding, relentless schedule. David remained the calm, caring, and trustworthy center of our transformed lives. Honest and clear in his communication, he answered our many questions, always careful not to make promises he could not keep or add to our concerns unnecessarily.

Paul had a large tumor in the lower lobe of his right lung. David highly recommended the surgeon, Dr. Mark Ginsberg. A tumor, over 11 centimeters, was removed. Six months later, new spots appeared on the upper right lobe. David and Dr. Ginsberg conferred; and Dr. Lynn Ratner, medical oncologist, was brought into the picture. All three reviewed the information, talked over the options



Dr. David Posner, Dr. Mark Ginsberg, Dr. Lynn Ratner

with us, and we decided to begin chemotherapy. Paul's battle continued for another year and a half. More surgery, more chemo — a marvelous respite of seeming success. Then our luck ran out.

#### A TEAM OF COMPASSION

What was truly humane about these doctors was that they shared results and discussed decisions as quickly as possible with us. We needed to know what was going on! Otherwise, we would have been consumed by our concerns and fears, no matter how stoic we appeared. As soon as these physicians had information, they shared it with us. Often, Dr. Ginsberg or Dr. Ratner asked is if we could wait a few minutes until one reached Dr. Posner or vice versa.

They understood so well the anxiety that Paul and I had about changes in treatment, what would be next, or the results of a scan. They ran efficient offices with caring, competent staff. As we were scurrying like little white mice through the cancer maze, their compassionate, clear, and prompt communication kept us going. It kept us whole.

#### PAUL'S TEAM

Such communication by physicians is a priceless, exquisite gift to patients. We felt that everyone was on the same team: Paul's team.

The many wonders of modern medicine can be isolating techniques. I feel strongly that they need to be encircled by the warmth of human communication. We expected to go to skilled, knowledgeable physicians. What was special and heartwarming was the communicating aspect of their care. Three extremely busy doctors always had time to communicate with each other and with us. Promptly and clearly. Compassionately. Without their healthcare hug to hang onto, we would have been alone in our struggle. My family and I thank them.

#### Tell Us About Your "Gold Doc"

The foundation is pleased to recognize compassionate doctors. Nominate your "Gold Doc," and send your story to the foundation's office at: 619 Palisade Ave., Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632 or e-mail: [todonnell@gold-foundation.org](mailto:todonnell@gold-foundation.org)

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## “Creating Good in the Work That You Do”



*Excerpts from 2005 Commencement Address, Lawrence G. Smith, MD, former dean of medical education, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, NYC; chief academic*

*officer, senior vice president of academic affairs, North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System.*

“If people are going to let me that deep into their personal lives, I better be pretty respectful and I better remember what a privilege this is.... Medicine is all about the patients. So, promise me something. Every single day of your life, with at least one patient, put brakes on. Stop. Sit down and learn who that person is ... and remind yourself that the privilege of doctoring has all of its roots in the sanctity of the relationship between you and your patients... and all the respect you will get for the rest of your life stems from you being true to that trust.... Medicine is a field of action. It only matters if you do things, and when you do them, you have to be effective and to be effective, people have to trust you and believe in you. So this action paradigm of the successful physician is all about creating good in the work that you do.... By the end of your career, people are going to benchmark your success... by whether the patients entrusted to your care did well. Never lose sight of that benchmark.”

*For the full text of Dean Smith’s address, see the Foundation’s website, [www.humanism-in-medicine.org](http://www.humanism-in-medicine.org)*

## Teens Explore Humanistic Approaches to Medical Scenerios

A Service Project of the University of California Irvine School of Medicine Chapter of the Gold Humanism Honor Society.

### REAL-LIFE DILEMMAS

Clinical scenarios provided ample opportunities to discuss common teenage problems, like depression and domestic violence, as well the humanistic and ethical considerations when working with teenagers in a medical setting. Each discussion group consisted of approximately ten high-school students and counselors with one to three mainly GHHS-member medical-student facilitators. Teenage participants acted the role of the physician in the clinical case, while the counselor or one of the medical-student facilitators played the role of the teenager.

Based on its success, it’s likely that this original GHHS service project will become a permanent addition to the CAMPMED curriculum. Hopefully, it will also serve as a model for other GHHS chapters to develop programs dedicated to encouraging underserved teens to pursue careers in medicine.

*The Gold Foundation assists chapters in the development of such activities that promote humanism and service on their campuses and in their communities. Chapter-initiated community projects are awarded on a competitive basis, ranging from \$500-\$1,500.*

### CAMP’S UNIQUE MISSION

UCI CAMPMED is a program that was founded by medical and undergraduate students in 1997. The mission of UCI CAMPMED is to provide an opportunity for socioeconomically disadvantaged high-school students to interact with, learn from, and become inspired by undergraduates, medical students, and physicians/medical professionals. The program targets students who show academic promise and express an interest in pursuing a career in health and public services. CAMPMED is designed to expose the students to the health professions, and to develop their skills and access the resources to achieve their goals.



*UCI SOM GHHS medical student volunteers. From left to right: Gina Gadjos, Christine Chan, Mario Vera, Daniel Wells, Douglas Brosnan, Stephanie Dittmer, and Vinita Jain.*

## Congratulations to 2004 Essay Contest Winners!

**I**t was an especially tough choice this year. The entries were numerous and the quality outstanding. Our top winners are all fourth-year medical students. This year, our esteemed judges deemed two essays worthy of second place, resulting in a tie. Our sincere thanks to the judges for their dedicated work.

Here are the best of the best:

**First Prize: \$1,000**

**Ashley Mull**

University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine, 4th year

**Second Prize: \$500 (tie)**

**Jonathan Emerson Kohler**

University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine, 4th year

**Jason Mendler**

University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, 4th year

**Third Prize: \$250**

**Andrew M. Southerland**

Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University, 4th year

**Honorable Mentions:**

Jacob M. Appel

Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, 1st year

Irene Dehghan-Paz

University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine, 2nd year

Kevin P. Kaufhold

University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, 3rd year

Brian Hyett

University of Massachusetts Medical School, 4th year

Michael Chacey

University of Kansas School of Medicine, 3rd year

Rebecca Taxier

SUNY Buffalo School of Medicine, 2nd year

*Continued on page 4*

## Selected Passages from Winning Essays



**Ashley Mull**

"Even as a third year medical student on my first rotation, I knew that meant trouble — Rolando was bleeding out....Later that day,

driving home, the tears finally came.... I thought about the events of the night, and what turns a person's emotions and humanity off. I thought about the relentless onslaught of death and disease that assaults you in medical school, such a stark contrast to the preclinical wonder of the human body and its miraculous workings.... I wanted desperately to cling to the part of me that ached and burned and not allow the part of me that mechanically sewed Rolando up after he died to become the whole."



**Jason Mendler**

"Our goal was to make her [36-year-old patient dying from breast cancer] as comfortable as possible

in the last moments of her life.... Left in the room was one of the patient's sisters, who held her right hand, and one of the nurses who held her left hand. All of a sudden, the monitor alarm again beeped, as if a final reminder of our futility in curing this woman of cancer. The nurse turned to me and said something I will never forget. 'Please turn off that monitor. All we need now are our eyes and our hearts'...."



**Jonathan Kohler**

"For months I had walked the halls of that ER, had become deaf to the suffering of the trauma

patients rolling through the door in ambulance after ambulance. Gunshot wounds, knifings, industrial accidents, MVAs.... I had held open wounds and pulled them to make the broken bones duck back into wet, hot, gaping holes, the marrow flowing red and yellow onto the skin. And always it had had a distance, a surrealist's brush, a reduction to basic principles of physics and physiology. Not this time."



**Andrew Southerland**

"Dr. Donald Brown was a throwback, a general practitioner who was apt to make house calls,

and he had been Big Mama's physician and friend for over 15 years. He saw an endless docket of patients every Monday through Friday, monitored the sickest in the hospital, and still made time for the living room when the circumstance necessitated. His relationship with Big Mama had come to include weekly home visits. As her condition declines, his presence was welcomed."

### Save the Date for the Associates Gala Saturday October 29, 2005

Eat, Drink, Dance, and Bid in Our Silent Auction  
8:00PM – Midnight

Prince George Ballroom, New York City

Proceeds to sponsor The Arnold P. Gold Foundation  
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For information, call Travis O'Donnell at 201-567-7999.



The Arnold P. Gold Foundation, Inc.  
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## What Goes Around, Comes Around

May, a month when the foundation awards medical students, residents and faculty for outstanding



compassion, was also the month our founders were acknowledged for advancing humanism. Dr. Stuart Cook (center), former UMDNJ president, with Drs. Sandra and Arnold Gold when they received the Distinguished Citizen Award from the New Jersey Medical School's Board of Advisors at New Jersey Medical School's 2005 Convocation on May 23rd. The award is given annually to a New Jersey resident in recognition of distinguished citizenship and outstanding humanitarian service, and as an inspiration to the graduating class, their guests and attending faculty.



On May 13, 2005, Linda Gural (right), President of the Institute for Nursing, presented the EPIC award to Sandra for her work in promoting humanistic patient care. EPIC stands for *exceptional people impacting the community*.

May brought us more good news when we discovered that Rebekah Kim was selected by Dartmouth Medical School as the 2005 Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine graduating student winner. Prior to beginning medical school, Rebekah spent eight months as an Arnold P. Gold Foundation intern in 2000. We are proud of Rebekah and not a bit surprised!

## Essay Winners

*Continued from page 2*

Sarah Jane Borch  
University of Connecticut School of Medicine, 1st year

Mehul V. Raval  
Wake Forest University School of Medicine, 4th year

**Distinguished Judges:**

Jerry Avorn, MD;  
Rafael Campo, MA, MD;  
Marcia Day Childress, PhD;  
Joan Handler, PhD; Judith Hannan;  
Arlene M. Katz, EdD;  
Diane Kaufman, MD; Perri Klass, MD;  
Barron Lerner, MD, PhD;  
Paula Lyons; Sue Mellins;  
David Wendell Moller, PhD;  
Rev. Daniel Morrissey, OP;  
Kyle Nash, DMin;  
Sherwin Nuland, MD;  
Danielle Ofri, MD, PhD;  
Alex Okun, MD; David Rubin, MD;  
Murray Schwartz, PhD;  
Johanna Shapiro, PhD

The winning essays will be published this fall in *Academic Medicine*, the prestigious journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). These essays, as well as 10 honorable mentions, will be posted in the Humanistic Touch Archives of the Foundation's website, [www.humanism-in-medicine.org](http://www.humanism-in-medicine.org). Information about the 2005 essay contest will be published on the website in September.

## The Arnold P. Gold Foundation

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To preserve the "care" in healthcare,  
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