Department of Psychiatry
2022 Holiday Newsletter
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DEAR COLLEAGUES,

I am delighted to share this newsletter highlighting the accomplishments of the Department of Psychiatry over the past year. We successfully concluded three important Vice Chair searches thus expanding our Steering Committee with talented leaders. With these new appointments in addition, to our leadership appointments over the last couple of years, we are poised to accelerate our strategic priorities in clinical care, research, and education in 2023.

I am honored to have been asked to serve as Interim Dean of Weill Cornell Medicine and Interim Provost for Medical Affairs of Cornell University as of January 1, 2023. In this role, I intend to ensure the continued momentum of initiatives to advance our mission to care, discover and teach. We are all grateful to Dean Augustine M.K. Choi for his dedicated leadership over the past seven years. The Department of Psychiatry will continue advancing its own strategic initiatives under the capable leadership of Dr. Philip J. Wilner who has been appointed Acting Chair. I look forward to returning to my position as Chair once a new Dean is in place.

I also wish to express my deepest gratitude to Drs. Steve J. Corwin and Laura L. Forese whose leadership and support have been critical to our success.

I am so proud of our outstanding faculty and staff and their talents, passion, and commitment. I would like to acknowledge our donors whose generous philanthropy accelerates the advancement of our missions.

Thanks to all of you whose commitment to our program ensures our ongoing success.

Best wishes for a happy holiday season and New Year!

Sincerely,

Francis S. Lee, M.D. Ph.D.
Chair, Weill Cornell Medicine Department of Psychiatry
Psychiatrist in Chief, NewYork-Presbyterian Weill Cornell Medical Center
As of February 1, 2023, Dr. Justin A. Chen will be joining the faculty of Weill Cornell Medical College as our new Vice Chair for Ambulatory Services and Vice Chair for Health Justice. In these new roles, Dr. Chen will be responsible for overseeing and advancing our behavioral health outpatient services across our Manhattan and Westchester campuses to ensure the delivery of innovative high quality, patient-centered care that is accessible to the diverse populations of New York City and Westchester County. Dr. Chen will be joining us from Harvard Medical School where he is Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Medical Director of their Outpatient Psychiatry Division and co-Director of Primary Care Psychiatry.

Also starting on February 1, 2023 is Dr. Leonardo V. Lopez who will be joining the faculty of Weill Cornell Medical College as our Vice Chair for Inpatient Services. In this new role, Dr. Lopez will be responsible for collaborating with Hospital leadership to contribute to the development, implementation, and ongoing oversight of the psychiatry inpatient hospital services at NYP/Weill Cornell Medicine, Westchester Behavioral Health, and NYP Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. He will also collaborate with leadership at Gracie Square Hospital, to integrate their clinical service into the planning, development, and implementation of NYP Behavioral Health Service Line policies, procedures, and practices. Dr. Lopez is coming from New York University where he is Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Director of Inpatient Psychiatry at NYC Health + Hospitals Bellevue and Associate Director of Interventional Psychiatry.

We are excited to have appointed three inew Vice Chair searches following the conclusion of extensive national search processes. In October, Dr. Rebecca L. Rendleman was appointed to the role of Vice Chair for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in the Department of Psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medicine. In this role, Dr. Rendleman will be responsible for overseeing and advancing our child and adolescent psychiatry program across the campuses of NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center and Westchester Behavioral Health.

Dr. Rendleman is Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry. She is the Director of our Child and Adolescent Fellowship program and has been serving as the Interim Director of the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry since August 2021. In addition to all her many accomplishments, Dr. Rendleman demonstrated exceptional leadership and dedication during the years of the pandemic and in addressing the recent challenges related to our increasing national mental health crisis in the child and adolescent population.
Gracie Square Hospital (GSH), a 140 bed psychiatric hospital on Manhattan's Upper East Side, is an affiliate of NewYork-Presbyterian and a critical inpatient service provider in our healthcare continuum. Dr. Philip J. Wilner was appointed President and CEO in June 2021. Dr. Donna T. Anthony, Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medicine, is GSH's Chief Medical Officer and Tim McGarvey is the Executive Director and Chief Nursing Officer. GSH's beds are part of the NYP Psychiatry's inpatient approach that provides centralized access to inpatient admissions across the service line. As of mid-December, GSH is now a Magnet-Designated hospital and the third free-standing psychiatric facility in the world to receive this designation.

In October of 2022, Brooklyn Methodist Hospital fully merged with NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital and reopened 24 psychiatric inpatient beds. Thank you to Dr. Jessie Colah, Psychiatry's Service Chief, and Elsa Russom, Clinical and Quality Lead, for their steadfast leadership throughout the merger.

NewYork-Presbyterian increased access to patients through the Front Door to Care Initiative by providing easy access to appointment schedules and bringing the medical center systems into the digital future. Throughout 2022, the medical center also worked on improving strategy and fund alignment, increasing employee belonging, advancing health justice, and enhancing the patient experience.

We honor Dr. Laura Forese for her outstanding successes to advance care at NewYork-Presbyterian. Dr. Forese will retire from her role as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at NYP in 2023. She had an integral role in leading Westchester Behavioral Health, having previously served as the campus' Chief Operating Officer.
We are incredibly proud of the dedication of our clinical teams across the psychiatry service line who work together to deliver quality patient care. Every team, including out-patient, in-patient, and emergency, has demonstrated flexibility in methods of care that have improved the overall patient experience.

Our Ambulatory Services Teams continue to adapt the best that telehealth can deliver. The rapid advancement of telepsychiatry has resulted in increased patient volume and access to care. This past year, our hospital ambulatory programs transitioned from an almost exclusive virtual care model to a hybrid model of care with increased staff presence on campus.

Telepsychiatry has been leveraged to serve inpatients across NYP's enterprise through our NYP Telepsychiatry program. Led by Service Chief, Dr. Christina Shayevitz, the team provides psychiatric consultation to patients at NYP's enterprise hospitals.

We were delighted to welcome back our Manhattan based inpatient team with the reopening of NYP/Weill Cornell Medical Center's Greenberg 11 North unit, now renamed the Sir Cesare L. Santeramo and Sir Robert J. Campbell Psychiatric Unit. The state of the art, newly-renovated unit reopened on November 28, 2022, with 12 psychiatric medical in-patient beds and 20 general psychiatric in-patient beds. Thank you to the team, led by our Division Director, Dr. Benjamin Brody, for being adaptable throughout their temporary relocation to the Westchester Behavioral Health Center since early 2020.

Our emergency department has experienced unprecedented volume with a surge of adult, child, and adolescent patients coping with mental health issues following the societal pressures of the pandemic. We are deeply grateful to Dr. Sharon Hird, Chief of the Emergency Service and our emergency teams for their dedication.
The increasing demand for mental health services continues to outpace the ready availability of services. Moreover, co-occurring mental health issues can undermine medical health outcomes and increase service utilization. To address these problems, it is important to adapt new and innovative approaches to identifying and treating mental health issues.

Under the leadership of Dr. Lisa Sombrotto, Vice Chair for Collaborative and Integrated Care, the department is advancing stepped, integrated models of care as an important strategic priority. Through new initiatives and partnerships with primary care, obstetrics and gynecology (OBGYN), and pediatrics, our department is increasing momentum to advance integrating mental health services in medical settings at Weill Cornell Medicine.

These efforts are building upon the success of our Collaborative Care Center (CCC) program. Led by Dr. Guy Maytal, the CCC comprises a multi-disciplinary team of in-network mental health professionals who accept referrals from WCM primary care. The program provides short term treatment interventions and refers patients back to primary care for long term maintenance or to community based and specialty providers and programs when indicated.

**PRIMARY CARE**

In partnership with colleagues in New York Quality Care, the Accountable Care Organization (ACO) of NewYork-Presbyterian, Columbia, and Weill Cornell Medicine, we launched a pilot of a stepped, integrated model of care in the primary care setting. Based on the collaborative care model’s principles, we have brought together a team comprised of primary care, psychiatry, and psychology. Patients are screened for depression and symptoms are treated to a targeted metric. We are grateful to our fantastic partners Drs. Adam Stracher and Joanna Lowenstein as well as a larger team of colleagues from the ACO, for their collaboration in implementing this model of care.

**Primary Care Collaborative Care Team**
In July, Dr. Lauren Osbourne joined WCM as Vice Chair of Research for the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. An Associate Professor of Psychiatry in Obstetrics and Gynecology and Psychiatry, Dr. Osbourne is collaborating with Drs. Alison Hermann and Soudabeh Givrad in our department to design and implement a stepped, integrated model of care in the OB/GYN setting. A pilot of this program model will be launching in the coming months.

OB-GYN Collaborative Care Team

Soudabeh Givrad, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Lindsey Wallace Goldman, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Psychology in Clinical Psychiatry

Alison Hermann, M.D.
Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Lauren Osbourne, M.D.
Vice Chair of Research for the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology Associate Professor of Psychiatry in OBGYN & Psychiatry

Hannah Strater, N.P.
Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner

Pediatrics Collaborative Care Team

Corinne Catarozoli, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Psychology in Clinical Psychiatry

Cori M. Green, M.D., M.S.C.
Vice Chair, Behavioral Health, Pediatrics

Warren Y.K. Ng M.D., M.P.H.
Clinical Innovation Officer, NYP Behavioral Health Service Line
Medical Director Outpatient Behavioral Health, NYPH-CUMC

Alma Spaniardi, M.D.
Service Chief, Payne Whitney Child Outpatient

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Alma Spaniardi, M.D.
Service Chief, Payne Whitney Child Outpatient

With funding from NewYork-Presbyterian, we will be expanding behavioral health integration in the pediatric primary care and subspecialty clinics across Weill Cornell Medicine and Columbia University Medical College (CUMC). Congratulations to Dr. Warren Ng, Professor of Psychiatry at Columbia Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, for his new appointment as Chief Innovation Officer for NYP Psychiatry Service Line. In this role, Dr. Ng will collaborate with our clinical leaders across Pediatrics and Psychiatry to advance behavioral health integration.

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Vice Chair, Behavioral Health, Pediatrics

Alma Spaniardi, M.D.
Service Chief, Payne Whitney Child Outpatient

Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
Our Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry Service has thrived under the leadership of the Service Chief, Dr. Anna Dickerman. The CL team are the primary providers of acute psychiatric consultation and treatment for patients hospitalized in non-behavioral health settings across the hospital. Dr. Dickerman and colleagues will be pursuing the launch of an ACGME-accredited fellowship in CL in the coming year.

The CL team has partnered with the addiction psychiatry team to develop a specialized in-patient consult service under the guidance of Dr. Jonathan Avery, Vice Chair for Addiction Psychiatry. The service has resulted in an increase in buprenorphine administration and across NewYork-Presbyterian and novel forms of buprenorphine intervention.

In August we launched the Behavioral Health Emergency Response Team (BERT) which is a new Zero Harm Initiative aimed at improving quality care and safety. The BERT Team brings together a team of clinical and non-clinical staff including psychiatry attendings, residents, nursing, security, and patient care services who received specialized training in de-escalation methods.

Another innovation in people-centered care was the launch of the Peer Program, which facilitates the connection of practitioners with patients by sharing experiences. Our current peer, Michael Turgeon, L.C.S.W., has been a model in providing hope and acclimation to in-patient treatment. We are happy to announce that the program will be expanding in 2023.
NewYork-Presbyterian Westchester Behavioral Health (WBH) has been a leader in meeting the challenges of providing psychiatric inpatient care in the context of Covid-19 surges. We could not be prouder of our leaders and teams for continuing to provide outstanding care.

**PICU**

Violent behavior and aggression on psychiatric inpatient units has reached critical levels throughout the country. The team embarked on a pilot program in October 2021 to mitigate the effects of this increasing trend. A new 5-bed psychiatric intensive care unit (PICU) was opened with the mission to safely care for patients with psychotic and mood disorders who are at elevated risk of engaging in aggressive behavior based on history and current assessment. To date, there have been very few instances of intramuscular medication, seclusion and restraint, and use of one to one-to-one observation.

Built into the fabric of the program is an extensive set of outcome measures. The development of the program was truly an interdisciplinary effort, led by Michael Radosta, Vice President of Behavioral Health and Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer - Behavioral Health, and Dr. Mark Russ, Medical Director for WBH. Key contributors to the development of the program were Dr. Anthony Ahmed, Dr. Dora Kanellopoulos, Lisa DeFelice-Fratto, Dr. Mark Sullivan, Tanya Parker, Mary Brous, Janet Ferguson, Michelle Gabriel, Marisol Runge, Dr. Roy Smetana, Mark MacDonnell, Barbara Waltman, Jami Somereve, Michelle Ryan, Chelsea Cote, and Tracy Stahl. Dr. Jimmy Avari, Division Director, and Rebecca Emanuelli, Patient Care Director, were also instrumental in helping to develop the program and have provided expert clinical leadership.

**Adolescent Surge**

With only one week’s notice, the staff of NYP/WBH pulled together an inpatient surge plan to accommodate adolescent patients needing psychiatric hospitalization. Just as in many other areas of the country, the need for adolescent inpatient psychiatric care has escalated in the last year. The rise in adolescent mental health issues started prior to the onset of the pandemic and accelerated as a result.

Under the leadership of Dr. Saira Haider, and Sherri Tubiolo, Patient Care Director, a portion of the NYP/WBH Women’s Unit was re-purposed for adolescents. The unit program is connected virtually to the other inpatient adolescent programs in the hospital so that patients may participate in group activities. The subunit is intended to flex between women’s and adolescent inpatient units dependent as need.

An important part of WBH’s success is the outstanding work of the Psychiatric Inpatient Admissions and Treatment Center led by Ruth Mendelowitz, LCSW, and Gwen Mancuso, Ph.D., LCSW.
In recent years, we have seen a surge of children and adolescents in our emergency and inpatient departments. We are incredibly grateful to our child and adolescent psychiatry clinicians for their remarkable ability to meet this increased demand and develop new programs and services to meet these needs. We recognize the incredible efforts over the past year to provide aid for this crisis and we are grateful to Dr. Rebecca L. Rendleman for her leadership as Vice Chair of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

This year, Dr. Alma Spaniardi was appointed Chief of the Child and Adolescent Outpatient Clinic in Manhattan. She was also selected to the Quality Improvement Academy Class of 2023 for a project on measurement-based care in the Child OPD. We would also like to commend Dr. Angela Chiu for her creation of the free, easily accessible web-based tools for school-aged children to cope with the stress along with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine.

WCM was re-designated as a Tourette Center of Excellence (TCoE) by the Tourette Association of America. Led by Dr. Shannon Bennett and newly appointed co-director, Dr. Corinne Catarozoli, the WCM TCoE aims to improve the quality of life of people with Tourette syndrome and other Tic Disorders by promoting the highest level of care, research, education and training, and advocacy and awareness for these conditions.

The NewYork-Presbyterian Youth Anxiety Center (YAC), a clinical and research program founded and supported by a dedicated group of philanthropists, is committed to addressing the epidemic of anxiety and depression in adolescents and young adults. It is comprised of faculty from Weill Cornell Medicine and Columbia University's Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Following the tragedy in Uvalde, TX, YAC faculty created a guide for parents on how to discuss tragedy with children. YAC is committed to disseminating content that offers hope and help to young people and their families.

NewYork-Presbyterian Youth Anxiety Center Guide for Parents’ Response to School Violence

Addressing Tragedies with Children

The NewYork-Presbyterian Youth Anxiety Center, and the Department of Psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medicine and Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons are deeply saddened and driven by pain and loss of life in Uvalde, Texas, Buffalo, NY, and other communities around the United States in the wake of recent mass shootings. As health care providers, educators, researchers, and people, we are committed to supporting children and families who are distressed, vulnerable, sad and afraid.

We know that countless parents and caregivers are having seemingly impossible conversations with their children about violence in our schools and communities. It can be incredibly important and healthy to acknowledge the reality and pain that is happening in a way that is appropriate to your child’s age and maturity. Here’s a resource guide to help parents and kids, below is a brief guide for parents to help families cope with the aftermath of these tragedies.

NewYork-Presbyterian Youth Anxiety Center resource guide released in May 2022.
Since its inception in July 2021, CopeNYP has been a successful element of NewYork-Presbyterian's employee wellness offerings. CopeNYP has increased its accessibility and reach by offering online intake for support requests. Throughout 2022, the program, staffed with clinicians from Weill Cornell Medicine, has provided 2,799 no-cost counseling sessions to over 737 clients. The program’s clinicians have also seen an additional 520 people in group and individual support sessions following disruptive or traumatic incidents.

CopeNYP’s webinar series has also provided excellent wellness support. Over 2,000 people have attended the series, which also remains available in recorded form on the NYP InfoNet. Each webinar is hosted by a clinician from CopeNYP and covers a range of topics including maternity leave care, building resilience, and the impacts of trauma. The team has begun offering shorter 15–30-minute webinars to ease accessibility for employees with limited time.

In addition to the internal resources of the program, CopeNYP has also partnered with the University of Michigan and the David Lynch Foundation™ to offer trauma informed care and transcendental meditation respectively.

CopeNYP is available to the 48,000 employees across NYP. WCM employees can access the medical college’s Employee Assistance Program Consortium (EAPC) here.

Student and HouseStaff Mental Health

Over the past year our commitment to the wellness of our students and trainees has grown along with our advancements in education. Dr. Patricia Marino serves as the Director of Student Mental Health along with Dr. Anna Rosen as the Director of House Staff Mental Health.

Thank you to Weill Cornell Medicine Psychiatry’s Wellness Champions, Drs. Sam Boas and Fayrisa Greenwald, for serving on the Weill Cornell Medicine Wellness Steering Committee.
The Sackler Institute has approached an inflection point when artificial intelligence, machine learning, and computational modeling of brain-behavior relationships will enable rapid advances in the neurobiology of mental illness. Furthering the institute’s technological infrastructure Dr. Conor Liston, Director of the Sackler Institute for Developmental Psychobiology, and his team successfully competed for an infrastructure grant from the Dean’s Office at Weill Cornell Medicine, providing new computing equipment, which is now fully operational. In addition to this grant, the team also received extramural support from three new research project grants resulting in almost $25 million for transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) research. With this funding, the program has grown rapidly to become a leading nationally recognized center for TMS research.

A research focus for the institute has been neuroimaging and behavioral biomarkers, which help predict psychiatric risk during development, define brain-based diagnostic categories, and individualize treatment selection. The Institute will begin three large-scale clinical trials—the first of their kind—to develop and test neuroimaging biomarkers for predicting response to therapeutic neuromodulation for depression and OCD. In addition to this, Dr. Jonathan Power is preparing to launch a new study leveraging multi-echo fMRI technology to investigate how changes in brain network organization interact with hormonal fluctuations to give rise to mood symptoms in women with premenstrual dysphoric disorder or peripartum depression.

The Sackler Institute has also grown its digital advancements through an online tool called START: Symptom Tracker And Resources for Treatment, which quantifies mood, anxiety, and trauma symptoms, provides feedback to participants, and connects them with existing mental health resources. START was developed by Dr. Ben Zebley, Dr. Liston, and Liston Lab members to provide support for frontline healthcare workers during the Covid-19 pandemic and has since been used by over 3,000 participants.
The Program for Substance Abuse and Stigma of Addiction has had an impactful year through its clinical, training, and research programs. Under the leadership of Dr. Jonathan Avery, Vice Chair of Addiction Psychiatry, the program has grown to allow for more community programming including free Narcan training sessions, a Fentanyl test trip program, and advanced peer educational programming, including an international conference on substance abuse programs in San Patrignano. Along with the work of outstanding faculty and fellows, the program partnered with MIT to create a virtual gaming tool for physicians to practice and learn to reduce the stigma against substance abuse disorders.

For the 23/24 academic year, PGY-IV residents Drs. Emily Dumas and Nick Romano have matched to our addiction psychiatry fellowship.

The Lee Lab research program, under the leadership of principal investigator, Dr. Francis Lee, is focused on connecting molecular neuroscience with psychiatry through mechanistic studies of how growth and plasticity factors contribute to the pathophysiology and treatment of psychiatric disorders. Along with collaborators, Drs. Conor Liston, Anjali Rajadhyaksha, Joshua Levitz, and Barbara Hempstead, the lab team published papers in 2022 in Nature Communications, Journal of Clinical Investigation, and Science Advances. In an example of working with collaborators on vertically integrated research, Dr. Lee has identified a new hippocampal circuit to diminish fear through safety signal learning that diverges from the established circuitry involved in classical fear extinction learning. This preclinical work has provided the rationale to embed safety signal learning modules into the Maya digital CBT app. In addition, this past year the lab and its collaborators have received new grant support from NINDS, NIDA, as well as the Foundation for OCD Research (FFOR).
In October of 2022, Dr. Susan C. Vaughan joined the full-time faculty of Weill Cornell Medicine as the next Aaron Stern, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Psychodynamic Psychiatry and the Director of the Aaron Stern, M.D., Ph.D., Program in Psychodynamic Psychiatry. Dr. Vaughan is a distinguished psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, educator, and scholar who joined us from Columbia University’s Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons where she served as the Director of Columbia University’s Center for Psychoanalytic Training and Research.

Over the past year, CADB expanded educational and training programs including talks given for the hospital system, the community, and autism-specific conferences. In addition, CADB hosts the Global Autism Interactive Network (GAIN) and the International Collaborative for Diagnostic Evaluation for Autism (IDEA) groups, which are internet-based communities of learning that connect over 500 participants from more than ten countries. CADB also continued to host and support the Project SEARCH Autism Enhancement program, a 10-month prevocational training program for young adults with autism.

Over the past year, CADB also received several new research grants this year, including three grants awarded to Dr. Kanne from NIMH, NICHD, and Color the Spectrum.
Throughout 2022, the DeWitt Wallace Institute prioritized enhancing the accessibility of programming and resources by reopening the Oskar Diethelm library and expending digitized collections available to educators, clinicians, and the community at large. In addition to this, the Richardson Lecture Seminar, now in its 60th year, has been transformed into a public forum with attendance reaching over 450 professionals across 20 seminars throughout the academic year.

To aid in the library’s reopening, the institute’s Special Collections Librarian, Nicole Topich, M.L.I.S., continued to assist researchers remotely and in person while she completed storage upgrades with the support of a prestigious Preservation Assistance Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). For additional support, three new internship positions were created for graduate students.

In addition to a year of historical education, the DeWitt Wallace Institute’s director, Dr. George J. Makari, earned praise and commendation for his new book, Of Fear and Strangers: A History of Xenophobia, which was published in the fall of 2021. The book was awarded the 87th Annual Anisfield-Wolf Book Prize, the only national juried prize for literature that confronts racism and explores diversity, and was named Editor’s Choice in The New York Times, a Bloomberg Best Non-Fiction of the year.

The Weill Cornell Medicine Department of Psychiatry has celebrated another year as one of the leading centers for the study of severe personality disorders. As of July 2022, Dr. Otto Kernberg, founding director of PDI, was appointed Professor Emeritus. Dr. Kernberg and his colleagues have been engaged in a clinical trial of Transference-Focused Psychotherapy (TFP). Developed by Dr. Kernberg and his colleagues, TFP is a psychoanalytic treatment for borderline personality disorder. Prior to his transition, Dr. Kernberg completed a volume of reflections on aggression, conflict, and personality pathology. Thank you to all of those that joined us in celebrating Dr. Kernberg in July at his fest shrift.

Following Dr. Kernberg's retirement, Dr. John F. Clarkin was appointed the Director of the PDI.
This June of 2021, Dr. Faith Gunning was appointed the inaugural George Alexopoulos, M.D. Director of the Weill Cornell Institute of Geriatric Psychiatry, culminating two decades of work to understand the relationship between aging, mood, and cognition. The Institute of Geriatric Psychiatry is an international leader in the understanding and treatment of mental health disorders in older populations, and in training the next generation of researchers and clinicians. Broadly speaking, the Institute’s research program spans 3 domains: 1) studies of behavioral and neurobiological abnormalities of late-life depression related to treatment response; 2) development of novel, neurobiologically-based, simple to administer interventions; and 3) integration of mental health services into community health and social services and training non-specialist clinicians and laypeople in mental health screening, care management, and treatment.

The Institute of Geriatric Psychiatry has begun research involving experimental therapeutics, including a video game to address cognitive control and mood dysfunction in middle aged and older adults and a collaborative study with Dr. Conor Liston testing if resting state fMRI can be used as the first brain-based treatment predictive biomarker for major depression. Another digital advancement for the institute is WellPATH. This tablet app, designed by Dr. Dimitris Kiosses, focuses on improving emotion regulation in cognitively impaired older adults with depression and middle-aged and older adults at risk for suicide. In addition to this, Dr. Kiosses has also been awarded a new grant for this study, titled “A Mobile Intervention for Suicide Prevention For Middle-aged And Older Adults After a Suicide-Related Hospitalization.”

In addition to exceptional research, Dr. Jo Anne Sirey is leading the institute in the development and delivery of clinical interventions to improve mental health treatment for diverse community dwelling older adults. Dr. Sirey served on the on the New York State Interagency Geriatric Mental Health Council and was awarded the 2021 Spero Award in Community Psychiatry from the Department of Psychiatry. She also designed “The Trio for Successful Aging” as an innovative service delivery model where outreach, needs assessment, and service delivery are integrated seamlessly to serve vulnerable adults. Continuing through 2023, Dr. Sirey will be partnering with New York City’s Department for the Aging (DFTA) on an important public health initiative that develops and implements a service delivery model to provide mental health services at senior centers in New York City.
The Division of Digital Innovations in Psychiatry leverages the power of digital platforms to enhance treatment, improve outcomes, and promote healthier lifestyles.

The Maya CBT mobile app team, led by Drs. Faith Gunning and Avital Falk, completed recruitment for a clinical trial measuring the efficacy of a mobile app delivering CBT to young adults with anxiety. Preliminary results are promising, with significant decreases in symptoms of anxiety and depression from baseline to the end of the mobile CBT intervention. The next phase of research, led by Dr. Jennifer Bress, will use the app’s modular format to examine whether youth with mood or anxiety disorders can be treated more effectively using personalized versions of the Maya app that specifically target their most troubling symptoms. The app team has also recently launched a publicly available version of Maya, now available in the app store here.

In addition to the Maya app, the team is working to develop a symptom tracking app that will enable users to monitor and track mental health symptoms. Lead by Dr. Monika Dargis, the symptom tracking app will be an extension of a study lead by Drs. Conor Liston and Ben Zebley, in which healthcare workers and other employees monitored their mental health symptoms at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. The symptom tracking app will be paired with the Maya CBT app, so that users will have immediate access to an evidence-based digital intervention.
Our Department is distinguished by the quality of our training programs from medical student education to our multiple residency training programs, to our pre- and post-doctoral psychology training. We appreciate the leadership of Dr. Daniel Knoepflmacher, the Vice Chair of Education and the Director of the Residency Training Program, and Dr. Susan Evans, the Director of Education for Psychology.

Thanks to Dr. Susan Samuels, Director of Medical Student Education and Psychiatry Clerkship Director, and Dr. Dimitry Francois, Associate Clerkship Director, Westchester and Dr. David Hankins, Associate Clerkship Director, Manhattan for their efforts in running this program. In November, Dr. Mark Sullivan began as the new Associate Clerkship Director of the Westchester campus, following Dr. Francois' departure from the full time faculty and to voluntary.

Congratulations to our educators who were recognized with awards this year, including Drs. Francois and Hankins who received the Department’s Certificate of Recognition for Dedicated Teaching and Outstanding Mentorship, and Dr. Smita Agarkar, awarded with the WCM Excellence in Teaching Award. Additionally, Dr. Francois was recognized with The Richard A. Herrmann, M.D. Teaching Award, awarded the WCM Distinguished Service to Education Award, and Dr. Janna Gordon-Elliott was awarded the WCM Lifetime Achievement in Education Award.
Our department remains strongly committed to improving our scholarly focus on health outcomes and caring for a diverse patient population. Thank you to the stellar team running our ACGME accredited training programs. We would also like to thank our talented Chief Residents: **Drs. Emily Dumas, Emily Menand, David Pioquinto, and Zhenzhen Shi.**

Congratulations to our educators who were recognized with awards this year including: **Drs. Janna Gordon-Elliot** and **Peter Marzuk** for the 2022 Excellence in Medical Education Award, **Dr. David Hankins** for the Certificate of Recognition for Dedicated Teaching and Outstanding Mentorship in Medical Student Education, and **Dr. Jonathan Avery** for the 2022 – 2023 Tobin Cooper Professor Award.

The Clinical Scholars Program is a department initiative developed to promote scholarship and academic activities to advance our clinician's academic careers. Developed and led by **Dr. George Alexopoulos**, the program has led to the promotion of many of its participants.

We are proud to welcome our current cohort of clinical scholars:

- **Virginia Arlt, Ph.D.**: Collaborative Care, Mindfulness, Integrated care
- **Corine Catarozoli, Ph.D.**: Behavioral Health in Pediatrics
- **Stephanie Cherestal, Ph.D.**: Virtual Reality, DBT, Exposure Therapies
- **Monica Dargis, Ph.D.**: Treatment Delivery in Correctional Settings
- **Lindsay Goldman, Ph.D.**: Integrated Models of Care in OB/GYN
- **Jeff Ha, M.D.**: ICU Consultation Liaison Psychiatry, rTMS, Ketamine
- **Shira Ritholtz, Ph.D.**: Innovative Parent and Child Psychotherapy Interventions Across the Continuum of Care
- **Mark Sullivan, M.D.**: Forensic Psychiatry, Medical Education
- **Deanna Swain, Ph.D.**: Autism Spectrum Disorders

Thank you to **Dr. Richard Friedman** for his dedication to the education of our community through his publications and articles on compelling topical issues within the New York Times, Washington Post, and more. Read some of his recent articles below.

**How to know if it’s depression or just ‘normal’ sadness.**
**This empathy exercise might help you bridge some divides.**
**New York Times Features**
Dr. Dionne Powell, Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, received the 2022 Solomon Carter Fuller Award designated for a black citizen who has pioneered in an area which has significantly benefited the quality of life for black people.

Dr. Michael A. Perelman, Clinical Professor Emeritus of Psychology in Psychiatry, received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Sexual Medicine Society of North America.

Dr. Jonathan Power, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, received a 1907 Foundation Trailblazer Award for the new fMRI study of mood state transitions during pregnancy.

Dr. Stewart Adelson, Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry, received an award for outstanding commitment and dedication to the field of child psychiatry from the New York Council on Child & Adolescent Psychiatry.

Dr. Jennifer Bress, Assistant Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry, received the 2022 Research Assistance for Primary Parents (RAPP) Award of the WCM Mastercard Diversity-Mentorship Collaboration.

Dr. Nili Solomonov, Assistant Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry, received the K23 Career Development Award for the study “Positive Valence Systems Engagement during Social Reward Exposure Psychotherapy for Mid- and Late-life Depression.”

The pregnancy symptom tracker, made by Drs. Alison Hermann, Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry, Sudabeh Givrad, Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry, and Jonathan Power, received the Primary Care Innovation Award.

Dr. Ben Huang, Instructor of Neuroscience in Psychiatry, received the Bruce Laine Ballard Award for Pioneers in Diversity

Dr. Vivian B. Pender, Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society.

Dr. Dr. JoAnn Difede was awarded funding from The Office of Academic Integration for the study “Piloting Virtual Reality Environments to Treat PTSD in Healthcare Workers Consequent to the COVID-19 Pandemic.”

Thank you to the Payne Whitney Faculty Council and its current President Dr. Joseph Barbuto for their role in organizing four Grand Rounds presentations as well as several interesting educational and training workshops every year. Dr. Barbuto follows in the leadership of Dr. Jim Nininger who previously served as the council’s president.
CAREER ADVANCEMENTS

Congratulations to the following faculty and staff members on their recent academic promotions.

Stewart Adelson, M.D. to Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Jimmy Avari, M.D. to Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Benjamin Brody, M.D. to Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Marc Dubin, M.D. to Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Dimitry Francois, M.D. to Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry

Janna Gordon-Elliot, M.D. to Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Alison Hermann, M.D. to Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Georgina Hartzell, M.D. to Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Irena Ilieva, Ph.D. to Assistant Professor of Psychology in Clinical Psychiatry

Arielle Linsky, Ph.D. to Assistant Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry

Jianping Zhang, M.D. to Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry

Welcome to Our New Faculty!

Daniel Bigman, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Nicole Butler, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry

Arielle Casasnovas, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry

Stephanie Chiao, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Daniel Eden, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Eric Goldwaser, D.O., Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Michelle Gorenstein-Holtzman, Psy.D.
Assistant Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry (Interim)

Jessica Hartman, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry

Heather Kawalick, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Omar Khan, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Jihye Kim, M.D.
Instructor in Psychiatry

Benjamin Scherban, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Brittany Tusa, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry

Susan Vaughan, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry (Interim)

Amanda Wallace, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Alanna Warhit, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Mark Alexander Wiener, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

We are saddened by the loss the following esteemed colleagues.

June Blum, Ph.D.
Linda Espinosa, R.N.
Herb Schlesinger, Ph.D.
Fred Schwartz, Ph.D.
We recognize the following outstanding faculty who recently transitioned to Emeritus status:

- **George Alexopoulos, M.D.**
  Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry

- **Elizabeth Auchincloss, M.D.**
  Clinical Professor Emerita of Psychiatry

- **Otto Kernberg, M.D.**
  Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry

- **Sibel Klimstra, M.D.**
  Professor Emerita of Clinical Psychiatry

- **James Kocsis, M.D.**
  Clinical Professor of Psychiatry

- **Cynthia Pfeffer, M.D.**
  Professor Emerita of Psychiatry

- **Theodore Shapiro, M.D.**
  Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry

- **Richard Weiss, M.D.**
  Clinical Associate Professor Emeritus

- **Charles Winkelstein, M.D.**
  Clinical Associate Professor Emeritus

We are grateful to Dr. Steven Roth who retired from his full-time Service Chief position at Westchester Behavioral Health in October after 38 years of service. Dr. Roth will continue to contribute to our clinical and education programs as a member of the voluntary faculty.

**Steven Roth, M.D. JD**
Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry
As part of our mission, we continue to strive to include different perspectives, proficiencies, and life experiences to advance patient care and scientific knowledge. Our department is grateful to the faculty members that volunteer their time to help push us toward a high standard of equity and inclusion in psychiatry. Thank you to the leaders of the Weill Cornell Medicine Psychiatry Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council, Co-Chairs Drs. Stephanie Cherestal and Anna Salajegheh, and DEI Curriculum Subcommittee members, Drs. Sam Boas and Nisha Mehta-Naik.

Over the past year, the council has several events involving discussion groups and multicultural healthcare workshops, including the “Culturally Responsive Clinical Encounters” continuing education series. During affinity months, the council also held educational tabling programs at the Westchester Behavioral Health and is planning to expand the program more in the new year. Read more about the council’s initiatives here.

In addition to clinician and faculty level DEI initiatives, the department’s training programs have made great progress in building a more inclusive community. The Residency Council for Diversity & Inclusion (RCDI) has provided a space within the residency to celebrate and promote the different and unique voices, identities, and experiences of our residents. Within its programming, the council has conducted lunch and learns, reading groups, and group outings to educate and connect the residents to the council’s mission. The RCDI is chaired by Drs. Koryalys Edwards and Reile Slattery with help from a steering committee including Drs. Max Cabrera, Varun Goel, Adeolu Ilesanmi, Emily Menand, and ZhenZhen Shi. Learn more about the RCDI here.

The students at Weill Cornell Medical College have driven great change in access and equity for LGBTQ+ mental health care. The Weill Cornell Medicine Wellness Qlinic is a student run volunteer organization that provides mental health care to the New York City LGBTQ+ community free of charge. To increase access to resources, the Wellness Qlinic also partners with New York City community resource leaders and provides comprehensive training to all volunteers. Read more about the Wellness Qlinic here.
An Update from the Dean:

Based on the recommendations of a Student Mental Health and Wellness Taskforce, we are planning an International Conference in collaboration with the World Psychiatric Association for the fall 2023. We will be inviting experts from all over the world, in addition to speakers from WCM-NY. At the end of the conference, there will be a Doha Declaration on Mental Health of Students. We intend to make this a regular forum devoted to wellness and mental health of students.

In collaboration with UNESCO, we have recently initiated a pilot study of high school students to assess the impact of regularizing circadian rhythm, balanced diet, and enhanced physical activity on overall physical and emotional wellness and fitness. Findings from this pilot study will be used by UNESCO as a template in their planning for rolling out an initiative, “Fit for Life” in multiple countries.
We enjoy a strong partnership with Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC) with over 30 of their physicians and psychologists on our department’s faculty. We appreciate our collaboration with Dr. William Breitbart, Vice Chair of MSKCC, Chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at MSKCC.

Throughout 2022, MSKCC has made many important advancements in cancer care that have been demonstrated through a variety of publications and research grants. The faculty at MSKCC published 2 books, 21 chapters, and 157 medical journal articles. Numerous renowned research grants were awarded to the MSKCC faculty, allowing the MSKCC Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences to continue to make an enormous impact in the understanding and treatment of oncology. Some key grants include:

Francesca Gany, M.D., M.S. is recipient of the 2022 Prevent Cancer Foundation Research Grant.

William Rosa, Ph.D., M.B.E., M.S. (PI) was awarded a grant from the Rita & Alex Hillman Foundation Serious Illness and End of Life Emergent Innovation Program for his project “A Novel Poetic Dignity Therapy Application to Enhance Meaning and Purpose for Sexual and Gender Minority Patients at End of Life”.

Kelly Trevino (PI) was awarded a RRF Foundation for Aging grant for her two-year project “Development and evaluation of a culturally tailored anxiety intervention for Latino/Latina/Hispanic caregivers of older adults with cancer.

In addition to research advancements, MSKCC has provided quality training through 11 national courses in 2022 through the Psycho-Oncology Education and Training Institute. The team also created the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee, chaired by Dr. Yesne Alici, Vice Chair of Clinical Operations.
It has been an exciting year as our department grew its footprint as a mental health resource in the New York community and beyond. In September of 2022, we began the Psych Support Series to bring awareness to Suicide Prevention Month. The series had 250 people attend webinars on mental health and suicide prevention presented by physicians in Weill Cornell Medicine’s psychiatry, pediatrics, and emergency medicine departments. We would like to thank Drs. Sam Boas, Juste Buneviciute, Nicole Butler, Corinne Catarozoli, Alexandra Huttle, Dimitris Kiosses, Anna Rosen, Suza Scalora, and Lucy Willis for volunteering their time to educate our community about mental health.

In addition to virtual events, our department continues to share resources and news on our social media channels, websites, and in the news. This year, our faculty members have participated in over 60 podcast and blog posts with Weill Cornell Medicine in addition to our external media coverage. We are excited to grow more in 2023 as we launch our own podcast: On the Mind: The Official Podcast of the Weill Cornell Medicine Department of Psychiatry.

We are grateful for the support we receive from donors whose philanthropy enhances our ability to achieve our missions, sustain excellence, and advance innovations. We are also deeply appreciative of the generosity of faculty members for their donations and engagement in philanthropic efforts to support program development.

We have a remarkable team of dedicated administrative professionals to whom I am deeply grateful. Our Medical College leadership include senior administrators: Jennifer Walsh, Chief Administrative Officer, Psychiatry; Jocelyn Triplett, Assistant Administrator; Andrei Gangal, Financial Manager; Marcella Sanchez, Administrative Manager. Our extended administrative team includes: Melanie Cabrera, Sydney Campion, Janny Chong, Nalini Deonarine, Shamila Dilmaghani, Zemfira Egelbaum, Monica Fortsch, Rebecca Hellman, Natalie King, Rebecca Lovell, Sharon Pecache, Nicole Vital, Geraldine White, and Kate Workman. Our daily Hospital administrative partners are Nora Contract, Director of Operations, NYP Psychiatry; Joyce Zheng, Administrative Team Lead; Marcelles Jaeger, Administrative Business Associate; and Joanne Ciallella, Program Liaison, and many, many more!