

inside_{mount sinai}

A Newsletter for Employees and Friends of Mount Sinai

May 22 – 28, 2006

Class of 2006 Celebrates Commencement

Members of the Class of 2006 were joined by faculty, friends, and proud parents to celebrate the School of Medicine's 37th commencement, held on May 12 at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall.

Digital cameras flickered as a jubilant crowd watched the graduates receive their diplomas. The School conferred a total of 164 degrees, including nine Masters of Public Health in Community Medicine, six Masters of Science in Genetic Counseling, six Masters of Science in Clinical Research, one

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Joining Mount Sinai. . . Kirsten C. Sadler Edepli, PhD

Title: Assistant Professor of Medicine (Liver Diseases) and Molecular, Cell, and Developmental Biology

Graduate School: Harvard University

Post-Graduate Training: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (fellowship)

Research Interest: Liver development and disease

One of Dr. Sadler Edepli's first priorities upon arriving at Mount Sinai was to get her lab up and running—including setting up a zebrafish facility, one of the first at Mount Sinai, that she'll use to study liver development in the zebrafish embryo.

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Surgeon Performs Joint Replacement with New 3-D Imaging System

A new 3-D imaging navigation system is making joint replacement surgery easier for both surgeons and patients. Elton Strauss, MD, Associate Professor of Orthopaedics and Chief of the Orthopaedic Trauma and Adult Reconstructive Surgery Service, is currently one of the few orthopaedic surgeons in the metropolitan area to perform total knee and hip replacement surgeries with the computer assisted 3-D imaging device, known as the Stryker® Navigation System.

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Elton Strauss, MD, Associate Professor of Orthopaedics and Chief of the Orthopaedic Trauma and Adult Reconstructive Surgery Service (left), was assisted in the operating room while performing total knee replacement surgery using new 3-D imaging technology.

Commencement

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Masters of Science in Biomedical Sciences, 31 Doctors of Philosophy, and 111 Doctors of Medicine. (Five students graduated from the MD/PhD program.)

Presiding over the joyful ceremony was Kenneth L. Davis, MD, President and CEO of the Medical Center and Dean of the School of Medicine, who congratulated the new doctors and noted that the Class of 2006 will “set the standard for future classes.”

Peter W. May, Chairman of the Boards of Trustees, also praised the new graduates’ accomplishments and remarked that they were part of a very exclusive group. “It is not easy to get into Mount Sinai School of Medicine,” he said. “We have one of the most competitive acceptance rates in the nation. You are the best.”

Robert Berne, PhD, Senior Vice President for Health, New York University, who brought congratulations from the degree-conferring NYU, said it was an “honor to share the day with some of the best minds in medicine.” Dr. Berne also noted that as students, the graduates worked with some of the richest and poorest patients “and you treated them the same.”

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Socioeconomic equality was a recurring theme during the ceremony. In his commencement address, New York Senator Charles E. Schumer commended the advances doctors have made in extending the average person’s lifespan, while also cautioning the new graduates that socioeconomic divides in health care will become the nation’s top domestic obstacle. He asked the Class of 2006 to remember “the ideal that everyone, regardless of their income, will get excellent health care,” a comment that was received with enthusiastic applause from the audience.

The ceremony also featured the awarding of seven honorary degrees, including a Doctorate of Humane Letters presented to Senator Schumer. Honorary degrees in Humane Letters were also presented to award-winning journalist and author Richard M. Cohen, the husband of TV talk show host Meredith Vieira and a Mount Sinai patient and supporter, whose work has increased the national awareness of multiple sclerosis and colon cancer; and Mrs. Henry J. Gaisman, a member of the Boards of Trustees, who was recognized for her lifelong service to Mount Sinai. Honorary degrees in Science were awarded to William C. Dement, MD, PhD, Director of the Stanford University Sleep Disorders Clinic and Research Center, for work in sleep disorder research; Elizabeth G. Nabel, MD, Director of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, for cardiovascular research; Peter Palese, PhD, the Horace W. Goldsmith Professor and Chair of Microbiology, for work in virology, including reconstruction of the 1918 Spanish flu virus, which won the *The Lancet’s* Paper of the Year award in 2005; and Andrew C. Von Eschenbach, MD, Director of the National Cancer Institute and Acting Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration. Dr. Eschenbach, a cancer survivor, was honored for his work in cancer research.

Many in the graduating class brought a personal touch to the part of the ceremony in which they received their degrees. A handful of graduates were presented with diplomas by their fathers, brothers, or husbands who are faculty members at Mount Sinai. And several students accepted their diplomas from Dr. Davis with loved ones in tow, including a few students who cradled babies or toddlers in their arms.

Joint Replacement

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One of the main benefits of the 3-D system is that it allows for a more exact placement of the implant. The navigation system uses pins with wireless infrared trackers that are placed in the joint; the pins then communicate information about the joint to a computer, which translates the data into real-time images. The surgeon can see multiple views of the anatomy and can review the leg’s range of motion with the implant installed in its final position.

Dr. Strauss practiced using the device in the lab before taking it into the operating room two months ago for a hip replacement procedure. Since then, he has performed 18 hip and knee replacements using the technology.

“Patients are demanding more precision, so they can recover more quickly, have greater quality of life, and longevity of their implant,” says Dr. Strauss. “This new system allows for precise placement and accurate sizing of the prosthesis to get the best results. This allows the prosthesis to last longer and work more efficiently.”

Since the 3-D navigation system is new, the surgical procedure takes about 30 minutes longer than the traditional surgery. Dr. Strauss often selects younger patients for surgery with the new technology since they will require a prosthesis for a longer period of time and will therefore benefit most from the procedure. Due to the slightly extended length of the surgery with the new technology, he does not select frail patients for the procedure.

Dr. Strauss expects that joint replacement surgery will continue to evolve. “In the future, technology could cut down on the number of instruments used,” he explains. “One day, inflatable implants, puncture incisions, and even robots might be used.”