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Honoring Achievement: Commencement 2013

Two Nobel laureates, leading health care philanthropists, a visionary entrepreneur, and 307 medical and graduate students were honored on Friday, May 10, at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai’s 44th Commencement Ceremony at Avery Fisher Hall.

Mount Sinai granted 142 MDs, 63 PhDs, and 98 Masters degrees. Nobel Prize-winning psychologist Daniel Kahneman, PhD, a Senior Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, delivered the commencement address to more than 2,500 faculty, staff, graduates, and their families and friends who filled the hall at Lincoln Center.

Dr. Kahneman received an honorary Doctor of Science degree for his studies on cognition and behavior, and their influence on the field of economics. Speaking to the graduates, he said that early in their careers,

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Crystal Party Celebrates Mount Sinai’s Growth

More than 1,200 leaders, staff, and friends of The Mount Sinai Medical Center gathered on Thursday, May 2, for the 28th Crystal Party, a festive evening that took place at the Conservatory Garden in Central Park to celebrate a year of many milestones.

This year’s celebration was hosted by Mount Sinai Trustee Eric Lane and his wife Sarah, who chaired the event, which raised more than $3.2 million to keep Mount Sinai on a trajectory of growth. The guests enjoyed dancing, cocktails, and dinner under a large white tent.

“In this past year, we have celebrated the opening of the Leon and Norma Hess Center for Science and Medicine and marked the beginning of a new era for medical education when we renamed our medical school the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai,”

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Left photo: Peter W. May, Chairman, Boards of Trustees, The Mount Sinai Medical Center, and his wife Leni May; Right photo: Mount Sinai Trustee Eric Lane and his wife Sarah were Chairs of the Crystal Party.
they would be called upon to make critical professional decisions. Acquiring a set of procedures to help them think clearly “when intuition isn’t there to guide” them would be beneficial, he said. Patients and colleagues will expect them to act confidently, he told the class, but they should not be confident without justification.

“Similar to the Serenity Prayer, you need the courage to act on your intuition when you trust it, the discipline to follow the rules and skills you have acquired when it’s the best you can do, and the wisdom to know when to use one or the other,” he said.

Excitement and pride were evident among the graduates and their families and friends who marked the occasion with smiles, hugs, cheers, and photographs.

Several students brought their young children with them on stage to receive their diplomas. Many were joined on stage by spouses, siblings, parents, and grandparents—all physicians—who officially hooded them in the ceremony that acknowledged their educational achievements.

Honorary degrees were awarded to the following visionaries and philanthropists:

• **Aaron Ciechanover, MD, DSc**, a Nobel Prize-winning biochemist and Distinguished University Professor at Technion Israel Institute of Technology, received an honorary Doctor of Science degree for his commitment to deciphering the mechanisms that underlie diseases, and to furthering the understanding of crucial biochemical processes.

• **Eva Andersson-Dubin, MD**, a philanthropist and founder of the Dubin Breast Center of The Tisch Cancer Institute, received a Doctor of Humane Letters for her compassion for those affected by breast cancer, and her leadership and generosity in transforming breast cancer care at Mount Sinai.

• **Glenn Dubin**, an innovator in the field of asset management and an active philanthropist, received a Doctor of Humane Letters for his commitment to improving access to education and quality health care, and creating opportunities for young people to develop leadership skills.

• **Mortimer B. Zuckerman**, an entrepreneur committed to driving an informed public discourse on key economic and political issues, received a Doctor of Humane Letters for his generous and transformational philanthropy in advancing human health.

Dennis S. Charney, MD, Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz Dean, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, The Mount Sinai Medical Center, praised the graduates’ accomplishments and anticipated their bright future.

“The class of 2013 represents the next generation of leaders of American medicine and biomedical science,” he said. “They will advance and accelerate the revolutionary paradigm shifts that are literally changing the foundation of health care delivery and the promise of biomedical research.”

This year’s class made breakthrough discoveries in mental illness, infectious disease, heart disease, and cancer, and had published their findings in the “best scientific journals, and won prestigious national awards,” Dr. Charney said, adding that they had “led initiatives to provide badly needed medical care to underserved communities locally and throughout the world.” They also “carried forth longstanding and renowned Mount Sinai programs, such as Visiting Doctors and the East Harlem Health Outreach Partnership.”

In addressing the Class of 2013, Peter W. May, Chairman, Boards of Trustees, The Mount Sinai Medical Center, said, “Graduates, you are entering the medical profession at a watershed moment: Many of the hallmarks of today’s medicine will be utterly transformed in the years to come. This new era offers thrilling opportunities and daunting challenges for advancing the practice of medicine. Fortunately, your training has prepared you to think innovatively and work collectively, to explore and to question.” Mr. May told the graduates: “Leverage one another’s expertise; it is through these collaborations that you will conquer the diseases of our time and bring hope to future generations of patients.”
Mount Sinai Pays Tribute to Nurses

Nurses will play a key role in the transformation of U.S. health care from a fee-for-service approach to one that emphasizes disease prevention and primary care, according to health policy leader Donna Shalala, PhD, President of the University of Miami, whose keynote presentation on Tuesday, May 7, capped off a weeklong tribute to nurses during Nurses Week at The Mount Sinai Medical Center.

Dr. Shalala, a former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services from 1993 to 2001, also served as the Chair of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Committee on the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Initiative on the Future of Nursing.

“The next 10 years are going to be an adventure,” said Dr. Shalala, addressing the audience at a reception following the keynote presentation. Yahaira Gonzalez, BSN, RN, Clinical Nurse, GP 10 Center, and Alyssa Trulby, BSN, RN, Clinical Nurse, GP 10 Center, spoke with Donna Shalala, PhD.

“Nurses can do a lot more than we allow them to do,” she said. Traditionally, “states have restricted the role of nurses,” even though they have spent “enormous amounts of money” to upgrade their education and training, she added. “Artificial restrictions don't recognize how education and training have changed over the years.” But fortunately, she said, “the needle is just starting to move in a number of states.”

At the conclusion of the event, David L. Reich, MD, Interim President and Chief Operating Officer of The Mount Sinai Hospital, thanked Dr. Shalala for her thought-provoking remarks. He told the audience, “I urge you to think of yourselves as integral members of the clinical team. We will work through these complex issues as partners.” Dr. Shalala met many of the Medical Center staff and members of the audience at a reception following the keynote presentation.

Crystal Party Celebrates Mount Sinai’s Growth (continued from page 1)

said Peter W. May, Chairman, Boards of Trustees, The Mount Sinai Medical Center. “The generosity of Trustee Carl Icahn also enables Mount Sinai to blaze new trails in genomic science and medicine through the Icahn Institute for Genomics and Multiscale Biology.”

Mr. May also celebrated the opening of the Hess Center, which is now a “major hub for scientific innovation in cancer, cardiology, neuroscience, genomics, child health, and imaging techniques.” He continued, “Cancer patients also receive more streamlined and comfortable care there, and we expanded our primary care practices in the adjoining Residential Tower. I couldn't be more proud to have so many wonderful accomplishments to celebrate.”

Kenneth L. Davis, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer, The Mount Sinai Medical Center, told guests that the institution fulfilled a longstanding vision when it opened the Leon and Norma Hess Center for Science and Medicine. He also expressed gratitude to Mount Sinai supporters. “Profound generosity for Mount Sinai was the hallmark of the last 12 months: That generosity was historic in depth and far-reaching in breadth,” he said. “Transformational support from Carl Icahn, together with the commitment of our Boards of Trustees, has allowed us to set a trajectory of growth for our facilities, faculty, students, and patient services.”

Dr. Davis added, “We are also coming close to the successful conclusion of our fundraising campaign, having raised more than $1.5 billion, and we are on track for reaching $1.4 billion. This is a great moment for Mount Sinai, and I thank you all for making it so.”
Mount Sinai Ceremony Honors Innovative Researchers

Five assistant professors at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai were honored for advancing research for the hepatitis C virus, neurodegeneration, cancer care, pluripotent stem cells, and the pathogenesis of HIV at the Mount Sinai Achievement Ceremony on Thursday, May 9, in Stern Auditorium.

Dr. Harold and Golden Lamport Research Awards were given to:

- Matthew J. Evans, PhD, in the Department of Microbiology, for his work in understanding the hepatitis C virus;
- Coro Paisán-Ruiz, PhD, in the Estelle and Daniel Maggin Department of Neurology, Department of Psychology, and Department of Genetics and Genomic Sciences, for her study of the cellular and molecular mechanisms underlying neurodegeneration;
- Julie Schnur, PhD, in the Department of Oncological Sciences, and Psychiatry, for her work in improving the quality of life in cancer patients;
- Jianlong Wang, PhD, in the Department of Developmental and Regenerative Biology, for studying the biochemical basis and molecular mechanisms governing stem cell pluripotency and somatic cell reprogramming.

Saurabh Mehandru, MD, in the Samuel F. Bronfman Department of Medicine, received the Solomon Silver Award in Clinical Medicine for his work in studying the pathogenesis of HIV in the gastrointestinal tract.

The Achievement Ceremony also honored more than 55 medical students inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society, and the Gold Humanism Honor Society, as well as those cited for distinction in research and medical education.

“The state of our school is very strong,” said Dennis S. Charney, MD, Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz Dean, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, The Mount Sinai Medical Center, who welcomed the audience of students, their families and friends, and mentors. “In large part, this is due to the excellence of our students, and the commitment of our faculty to outstanding mentorship.”

Volunteers Needed for New “Be Well” Program

Sign up to lead daily guided walking groups as part of “Mount Sinai Moves,” a new walking program sponsored by the “Be Well” Initiative that will begin in June. To volunteer, or to learn more, call Training and Education at 212-241-1944 or email Sandy.Starr@mountsinai.org.

Education

The Page and William Black Post Graduate School for Continuing Education

The Office of Continuing Medical Education (CME) offers seminars, conferences, grand rounds, and live webcasts for physicians and other health professionals to extend their knowledge and remain current in their specific fields. For more information on courses, including times, visit www.mssm.edu/education/continuing-medical-education/courses or call the Office of CME at 212-731-7950.

Fourth Annual Resident and Fellow Research Day

The Graduate Medical Education Office invites all faculty, staff, and students to its Fourth Annual Research Day. Residents and Clinical Fellows will present more than 80 research projects.

Friday, June 7
9 – 11 am
Oral Presentations
Hatch Auditorium
11 am – 1 pm
Poster Presentations, Lunch
Guggenheim Atrium

From left: Jianlong Wang, PhD; Saurabh Mehandru, MD; Dennis S. Charney, MD; and Coro Paisán-Ruiz, PhD

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