PHOTOS BY NANCY PARISI

Kerry Parker Casale
University at Buffalo
Buffalo, NY

Wes D. Cloughbery
General Surgery
Stony Brook Teaching Hospital
Stony Brook, NY

Jeffrey Y. Chin
Transitional Year
Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital, Boston, MA

Sonia S. Choudhury
Pathology
University of Kansas Medical Center, Kansas City, KS

Nancy P. Cooley
Pediatrics
University of Kentucky Medical Center, Lexington, KY

Joseph J. Connors
Orthopedic Surgery
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Little Rock, AR

John C. Cossar
Orthopaedic Surgery
North Carolina Baptist Hospital, Winston-Salem, NC

Teresa Marie Cote
Anesthesiology
Northwest Hospital Medical Center, Seattle, WA

Bradley H. Cooper
Pediatrics
University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, TX

Mark D. Cozzi
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Kerry B. Cox
Pediatrics
University of Colorado School of Medicine, Aurora, CO

Santosh C. Dandapat
Orthopaedic Surgery
University of California, San Francisco, CA

Rahul P. Das
Anesthesiology
North Carolina Baptist Hospital, Winston-Salem, NC

Amy C. Dauenhauer
Anesthesiology
University of Minnesota Medical Center, Minneapolis, MN

Anthony L. Davis
Orthopedic Surgery
University of Colorado at Denver, Aurora, CO

Amy D. Deacon
Orthopedic Surgery
University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ

Jeffrey M. Decker
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Jennifer Kellogg Dengiello
Pediatrics
Duke University Medical Center, Durham, NC

Michael R. Dethlefsen
Orthopedic Surgery
University of Washington, Seattle, WA

Kerry R. Dickson
Pediatrics
University of Kentucky Medical Center, Lexington, KY

Michael J. DiGiacomo
Anesthesiology
University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worcester, MA

Candice McDaniel
Orthopaedic Surgery
University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA

Jessica M. DiLorenzo
Anesthesiology
University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC

Katherine M. Dissanayake
Pathology
University of Colorado, Denver, CO

Jessica L. Dryer
Anesthesiology
University of Kentucky Medical Center, Lexington, KY

Raj Chaitanya Dutta
Orthopaedic Surgery
University of California, San Francisco, CA

John R. Dunn
Anesthesiology
Northwes tern University Medical School, Chicago, IL

Rachel E. Dugas
Pediatrics
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Little Rock, AR

Katherine M. Dunn
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Anthony A. Duggan
Anesthesiology
University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, OK

John J. Dunn
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Joseph D. Dolan
Orthopaedic Surgery
University of California, San Francisco, CA

Sharon D. Donahue
Anesthesiology
Northwestern University Medical School, Chicago, IL

Handley P. Donnelly
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Teresa M. Driscoll
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Jennifer M. Driscoll
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Samantha M. Driscoll
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Bethany D. Driscoll
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Katherine L. Driscoll
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Janna M. Driscoll
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Mark D. Driscoll
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Katherine S. Driscoll
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Jennifer M. Driscoll
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Samantha M. Driscoll
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

Janna M. Driscoll
Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

John G. Gannotti
Orthopaedic Surgery
Allegheny General Hospital, Pittsburgh, PA

Benny Hakim
Internal Medicine
North Shore University Hospital, Manhasset, NY

Anthony L. Hans
Anesthesiology
University of Rochester/Strong Memorial Hospital, Rochester, NY

Mathew J. Harris
Orthopaedic Surgery
Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI

Michael Christopher Hawrylchuk
Anesthesiology
University of Rochester/Strong Memorial Hospital, Rochester, NY

Gina Pelice Hayes
Emergency Medicine
SUNY Upstate Medical University, Syracuse, NY

Marc Anthony Hayes
Anesthesiology
SUNY Upstate Medical University, Syracuse, NY

Elizabeth Kao
Anesthesiology
Cleveland Clinic Foundation, Cleveland, OH

Keith Charles Kaplan
Medicine–Pediatrics
Pittsburgh Health Sciences, Pittsburgh, PA

Maximilian E. Kaczmarek
Anesthesiology
University of California, San Francisco, CA

Mark S. Kaczmarek
Anesthesiology
University of California, San Francisco, CA

Matthew A. Kaczmarek
Anesthesiology
University of California, San Francisco, CA

Kai Pittman, LEFT, celebrates her match news with her mother, Patricia. Kai received her first choice and will train in family medicine at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

This year’s UB Match Day festivities took place on March 16 at D’Arcy McGee’s Irish Pub in downtown Buffalo, where students, their families, friends and faculty gathered to celebrate. The results were announced by Charles Severin, MD ’97, PhD, interim associate dean for medical education and admissions. “After reviewing the residency programs that our fourth-year students were offered this year, it is very clear that they were able to secure outstanding residencies in very competitive programs,” says Severin. “The success of our students not only impacts their postgraduate training but also indirectly affects our recruitment of incoming students,” he adds. “During every interview day this past academic year, at least one prospective first-year student asked about our fourth-year students’ success rate in securing competitive residencies. Based on the performance of our seniors, these prospective candidates were impressed as well.”

Summer 2006
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Sonia Yoon is ecstatic to have received her first choice, which is to train in internal medicine at Einstein/Montefiore Medical Center in Bronx, New York.

Danielle Zimmer will train in general surgery at Yale University’s Hospital of St. Raphael in New Haven, Connecticut.

**Celebrating Academic Achievements**
Celeste E. Martin, MD, is now a faculty member in the UB Department of Internal Medicine. Dr. Martin, who completed her medical training at the University of Buffalo School of Medicine, is currently based in Houston, Texas, where she will train in anesthesiology.

Nadia Mirza and her father, Hahmud, discover that she received her first choice and will train in medicine (preliminary year) and diagnostic radiology at Norfolk Hospital in Norfolk, Connecticut.
Addressing Health Disparities

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER RUBENS J. PAMIES, MD '86

THE 160TH COMMENCEMENT for the School of Medicine took place on May 5th at the Center for the Arts on the North Campus. The commencement address was delivered by Rubens J. Pamies, MD ’86, vice chancellor of academic affairs and dean for graduate studies for the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC).

Prior to joining UNMC, Pamies was professor and chair of the department of internal medicine at Meharry Medical College and professor of medicine at Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

A native of New York City, Pamies has been involved in academic medicine for 16 years. From 1989 to 1992, he served at the University of South Florida College of Medicine in Tampa, where he held the position of director and founder of the minority affairs division.

In 1992, he moved to Cleveland, Ohio, to join the medical staff of Mount Sinai Medical Center as chief of the division of general internal medicine and as assistant professor at Case Western University School of Medicine. At Case Western, he was named associate dean for academic programs in 1994, associate professor in 1995 and associate dean for student affairs in 1996.


Pamies

THE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM DR. PAMIES’ ADDRESS:

I’d like to thank Dean Morin and the rest of the University at Buffalo administration for inviting me to address the graduating class of 2006. It is a wonderful honor.

Being invited back to your alma mater to give a commencement address is the ultimate compliment that a graduate can receive, I believe.

With your medical education here in Buffalo, you’ve been given a great start to be the best . . . You’ve been equipped with basic knowledge and clinical experience that match the education received by any other medical student in the country.

My path over the past couple of decades has lead me to become a leader in addressing the issue of health disparities, which is another challenge that you face today. It’s no secret that minorities are not receiving optimal health care and that they experience worse outcomes than non-minorities. You must ask yourself why this is happening and how you, as a physician, can prevent it from continuing.

This past year, Hurricane Katrina exposed the impact of health disparities in our country and it exposed our health-care system. We have a health-care system that doesn’t adequately deal with the poor in this country. That’s why some developing countries have a better infant-mortality rate than we do. We don’t deal adequately with those people who are minorities and are poor. Hopefully, you will contribute to a health-care system that in the future will serve all people equally.

In New Orleans, 52 percent of the people had no insurance and 32 percent were on Medicaid, so a lot of people didn’t have good access to health care. In addition, factors such as limited physical activity, poor nutrition, negative environmental factors, and inadequate lifestyle choices all contribute to poor health. For example, in Harlem, 25 percent of the children are now asthmatic. In the United States, asthma, diabetes, HIV/AIDS and obesity are reaching epidemic proportions. These conditions are highly prevalent in our minority populations and are likely to worsen health disparities. We must act now to narrow this gap.

We also must sacrifice to ensure that all Americans are insured. Currently, 40 million Americans can’t afford health insurance. You must ask yourself what you are willing to give up so that everyone can have coverage.

Fewer than 5 percent of the practicing physicians in our country are African American, an ethnic group that comprises 12 to 14 percent of our population. This is inadequate, and we must support programs that address this.

In 2008, health-care accessibility and payment will be among the top issues of the presidential elections. The naysayers will say that our system is broken and that nothing can be done to prevent a meltdown. Certainly, every profession has its challenges and health-care delivery is not different. I do believe that with good ideas and leadership from those within the medical community, we can meet our challenges.

Today, I challenge all of you to be part of that solution. Your day is not yet over. I’m very confident that with the quality of education that you have received at Buffalo, each and every one of you has the potential to make a significant impact on these challenges. If you become part of the solution, you’ll be able to look back on your career and be proud.
Celebrating Academic Achievements

The Undergraduate and Graduate Biomedical Sciences Commencement took place on May 11th at the Center for the Arts on the North Campus.

This year, 41 PhD, 31 master’s and 155 baccalaureate candidates were eligible for degrees.

The commencement address was delivered by Richard Hanson, PhD, Leonard & Jean Skeggs Professor of Biochemistry in the Department of Biochemistry, Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. Degrees were conferred by UB President John B. Simpson, PhD.

Candidates completed work in the following School of Medicine and Biomedical Science departments or programs: biochemistry, biochemical pharmacology, biotechnical and clinical laboratory sciences, microbiology and immunology, neurosciences, nuclear medicine technology, medical technology, pathology and anatomical sciences, pharmacology and toxicology, physiology and biophysics, biomedical sciences. Also included were the Roswell Park Cancer Institute Graduate Division programs in cancer pathology and prevention, molecular pharmacology and cancer therapeutics, immunology, molecular and cellular biology, molecular and cellular biophysics and biochemistry, natural sciences.

Above, Left to Right: Drs. Jim Olson and Mary Anne Rokitka congratulating Dr. Vijay Swamy, standing far right, on his retirement from 39 years of service in the Biochemical Pharmacology Program. Below Right: Arpit Patel congratulated by Elpida Crawford for receiving his BS degree in nuclear medicine technology.

Below, Left: Alla Tabor, MD ‘06, receiving the Lieberman Award in Anesthesiology from Mark Lema, MD, chair and professor of anesthesiology. Below Right: Alla Tabor, MD ‘06, upon receiving one of his three awards (see previous page).