

TO SUSTAIN THE BEST IN SURGICAL SCIENCE, PRACTICE AND SERVICE

# Yale Surgical Society

Spring 2025

## President's Corner



I am grateful to have acted as President of the Yale Surgical Society on **Warren Widmann's** behalf. I take this opportunity to thank the Executive Committee for all their support throughout the year and welcome our incoming President, **Cassius Chaar, MD, MPH, HS'09**. He has been the Treasurer and a robust contributor to the Executive Committee and I am confident that his stewardship will lead the new generation of YSS!

There have been a lot of initiatives this year most notably the aggressive inclusion of the residents to the society. We have had an enthusiastic response to the Candidate Membership category for Senior residents or fellows to participate fully in the YSS activities. There are now regular contributions from the residents to the Newsletter where they detail some of the accomplishments of the cohort. They are the new face of the YSS and the future leaders!

The YSS dinner on meeting on May 16, 2024 was very well received. In addition to the current residents and faculty, a number of alumni and guests attended, including Barbara Ward, MD, Chief of Surgery Greenwich Hospital, Karen Gibbs, MD, Chief of Surgery Bridgeport Hospital, Geoff Nadzam, MD, Chief of Surgery L&M. Other notables included Tony Scialla, MD and Dick Moggio, MD. On Friday, May 17th, the YSS Grand Rounds were held in the Fitkin Auditorium. The theme was Pathways to Leadership and was well-received by the trainees and staff. Our distinguished speakers were Mary H. McGrath MD, Professor of Surgery Emerita Division of Plastic Surgery University of California San Francisco, Frederick L. Greene MD, Medical Director, Cancer Data Services, Levine Cancer Institute, Emeritus Chair, Department of Surgery, Carolinas Medical Center Charlotte, NC and Robert S.D. Higgins MD, President, Rush University Chief Academic Officer and Senior Vice President RUSH University System for Health Chicago, Illinois.

The YSS Annual Meeting and Dinner will be at 6PM on Thursday, May 16 at the New Haven Country Club, 160 Hartford Tpke, Hamden, CT 06517. We will welcome new members, graduates of the surgical programs and present the named awards (remembering Sam Harvey, Deepak Naryan) to two of the graduating residents/fellows. On Friday, May 17, Grand Rounds will begin at 7AM in Fitkin Auditorium. The theme will be YSS and

## Bauer Sumpio, MD, PhD, HS'86

its Impact on Global Health. Our speakers will be **Dr. Sherry Wren**, Professor of Surgery at Stanford University and current Secretary for the American College of Surgeons, **Dr. Edward "Ted" Higgins**, a retired GS from Kansas City, KS and Founder and Chairman of Higgins Brothers Surgicenter for Hope in Fonds Parisien, Haiti and **Dr. Emily Farkas**, Associate Professor of Surgery, Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Associate Director of Global Health in Surgery Chief of Cardiac Surgery, Indianapolis VAMC.

We hope you will pay your dues or give donations to YSS. YSS is dedicated to preserving the tradition of surgery at Yale—the camaraderie, the sacrifice and the ambition of trainees, faculty, and staff. The tradition is further served by offering stewardship to subsequent generations who are challenged to attain and sustain the best in surgical science, practice, and service. The major expense of YSS is the awarding of prizes recognizing individuals who have been outstanding in their careers—be they residents, practicing surgeons, or faculty. We recognize philanthropic activities, community improvement, service to the underserved as well as service to colleagues, exceptional teaching, and with the YSS Traveling Fellowship provide funding to a promising second year surgical resident for a clinical experience to travel to another academic center.

Please use the following website for your dues and/or donations: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8enuva>

### Bauer Sumpio, MD PhD, HS'86

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## Divisional Spotlight: Thoracic Surgery



The Division of Thoracic Surgery has grown in leaps and bounds since its inception in 2005 when **Dr. Frank Detterbeck** was recruited to lead the newly developed program. The division has grown from one to seven general thoracic surgeons, now spans the Connecticut coast and has made major contributions to the field.

Under Dr. Detterbeck's leadership the program grew quickly with the additions of surgeons **Dr. Daniel Boffa** (2007), **Anthony Kim** (2009-2016), **Justin Blasberg** (2016), **Andrew Dhanasopon** (2017), **Vincent Mase** (2018), and **Gavitt Woodard** (2020). Dr. Boffa has since assumed the position of chief of the division in 2020 and supervised the recruitment of former Yale general surgery resident **Benjamin Resio** in 2024.

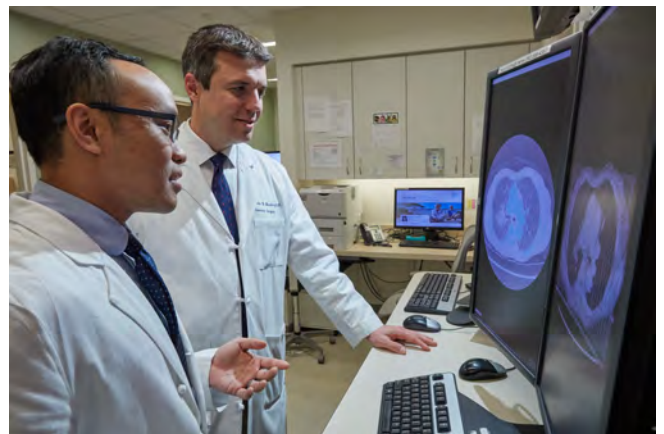
The division has also expanded its footprint in Connecticut from the Yale New Haven Hospital main campus to cover Greenwich Hospital, Lawrence and Memorial Hospital the West Haven Veterans Administration Hospital, Saint Raphael's Campus and Waterbury Hospital. Over this time, the division has increased its market share in Connecticut from 2% to 30%.

Academically, Dr. Detterbeck has been a leading contributor internationally to multi-society guidelines for lung cancer and thymic malignancies, including authoring the 8th and 9th edition staging guidelines for lung cancer. Dr. Boffa has been selected as the vice chair of the Commission on Cancer and was awarded an R01 to examine the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Operative Standards Program. Dr. Woodard was recently awarded the IASLC young investigator and AstraZeneca lung cancer research awards. In the last year, the division has produced two national grants, a grant from the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, and 53 publications. A publication from the division is cited approximately every 6 hours.

Clinically, the division has grown exponentially in volume and in the last year performed 1,133 cases at YNHH, including 336 robotic cases and 185 lobectomies. Dr. Boffa has created the largest esophageal cancer program in the state, which boasts some of the best surgical outcomes in the nation for esophagectomy and has earned the program a top STS rating of three-stars. The pulmonary and lung surgery programs have been named to the US News and World report Honor Roll for the last 10 consecutive years. The division is also at the forefront of innovation, being early adopters of robotic thoracoscopy, robotic bronchoscopy with fluorescent marking and sub lobar resection for lung cancer, single port robotics for thymic resection, 3D imaging for segmentectomy and robotic esophagectomy.

The division plays a central role in the development and mentorship of general surgery residents and is proud of its recent success in placing graduates into thoracic surgery fellowship and into practice. Dr. Mase and Dr. Dhanasopon have both served as associate program directors. Recent general surgery graduates who have matriculated into thoracic fellowship and practice have included **Mark Maxfield HS'15**, **Matthew Deluzio HS'19**, **Brian Arnold HS'20**, **Paul Feingold HS'20**, **Whitney Brandt HS'21**, **Benjamin Resio HS'22** and **Michelle Salazar HS'23**.

The division also continues to support the integrated cardiothoracic I6 residency for which Dr. Mase has been recently appointed as program director, as well as the traditional 2-year fellowship pathway. **Areo Saffarzedeh HS'21** was the program's first I6 graduate to pursue general thoracic surgical practice, and he will be followed by **Matt Pichert** this year. The traditional fellowship has also had success placing recent graduates into academic general thoracic practice including **Andrew Dhanasopon HS'17**, **Brooks Udelsman HS'24**, **Sora Ely HS'24** and **Nida Bham HS'25**.



## Alumni Updates



**Heather Yeo, MD, MHS, MBA, MS, HS'11** graduated from Georgetown Medical school in 2004. She completed her general surgical training (including two years of laboratory research and career development) and finished her training as Chief Resident at Yale-New Haven Hospital in 2010-2011. This was followed by fellowships in both Surgical Oncology and Colon and Rectal Surgery at Weill Cornell Medical Center. Following her training, she remained on staff at Weill Cornell and is currently Associate Professor of Surgery at Cornell. Heather was the Frank Glenn Faculty Scholar in Surgery at Cornell from 2019-2024 and the Nanette Laitman Clinical Scholar in Healthcare Policy and Research. This also resulted in her appointment as Associate Professor of Population Health Sciences at Cornell.

**Jason Gold, MD, HS'04** graduated from the Yale School of Medicine and subsequently matriculated into the Yale -New Haven Medical Center General Surgery training program from 1997-2004. This was followed by a fellowship in Surgical Oncology from 2004-06 at Memorial Sloan Kettering. He was recruited to the Veterans Affairs Boston Healthcare System in West Roxbury, Massachusetts where he continues to be on staff since 2007 specializing in all aspects of Surgical Oncology. He is also an Associate Professor of Surgery at Harvard Medical School. He continues to be active in many surgical societies including the Society of Surgical Oncology and the Association of Veterans Affairs Surgeons. He has maintained an active and productive laboratory focus in surgical oncology as well as training numerous surgical residents.



**Gopal Grandhige, MD, HS'08** graduated the General Surgery residency in 2007-2008. This was followed by first moved to Tampa in 2009 after completing his training where his practice encompassed all aspects of Minimally Invasive Surgery. In 2022, he decided to focus on his passion for treating foregut disorders and he founded the Tampa Bay Reflux Center where he offers the TIF procedure (EsophyX) and the LINX procedure. He lives with his husband Darin Bahl (owner of Tailored Twig) and his three dogs. He has been extremely successful offering a streamlined concierge experience to his patients.

After graduating from the Yale Surgical Residency, in 2022, **Danielle Heller, MD, MHS, HS'22** completed a Breast Surgical Oncology fellowship at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, where she did research in breast cancer-related lymphedema and racial/ethnic disparities in quality of life for women with lymphedema. She now works as a breast surgeon for the Hartford Healthcare Cancer Institute treating malignant and high-risk disease. She is also on faculty at Quinnipiac University's Netter School of Medicine as an Assistant Professor in the Dept. of Surgery. In this role, she also serves as co-director of a four-year capstone scholarly project course in Basic, Translational, and Clinical Research, and helps run the students' Breast Health elective. Outside of work life, Danielle lives in Stamford, CT, with her husband and two young daughters. They are all thrilled to be back in Connecticut after her stint in the concrete jungle of NYC!



**Jill C. Rubinstein, MD, PhD, HS'18** is a distinguished surgical oncologist and computational researcher based in Connecticut. She earned her medical and doctoral degrees from Yale University, where she also completed her general surgery residency. Following this, she pursued a fellowship in Complex General Surgical Oncology at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. Currently, Dr. Rubinstein practices at St. Vincent's Medical Center in Bridgeport, Connecticut, as part of Hartford HealthCare. Her clinical expertise encompasses melanoma, sarcoma, and endocrine surgery. In addition to her clinical responsibilities, she serves as a computational oncologist at The Jackson Laboratory, focusing on the integration of clinical, genomic, and imaging data to study tumor heterogeneity and evolution in response to treatment.

# Alumni Updates (continued)

Dr. Rubinstein's research is at the forefront of translational oncology, employing deep learning imaging techniques alongside high-resolution molecular assays to analyze tumors through an evolutionary framework.

Her work aims to elucidate resistance mechanisms and identify potential targets for intervention, thereby advancing personalized cancer treatment strategies. Her contributions to the field are reflected in numerous peer-reviewed publications, including studies on tumor heterogeneity and the application of machine learning in cancer diagnostics. Beyond her professional endeavors, Dr. Rubinstein is an avid outdoor enthusiast who enjoys hiking, biking, and kayaking, and she is a dedicated mother to three sons.




Since graduating from the Yale Podiatric Foot and Ankle Surgical Residency in 2015, **Elizabeth Bondi, DPM, HS'15** is currently working as a Senior Associate Consultant and Instructor of Podiatric Medicine at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN where she was presented with a Catalyst Award by the Department of Orthopedic Surgery. Additionally, she works as a forensic podiatrist. She currently serves on the board for the American Academy of Podiatric Sports Medicine, the American Society for Medical Shockwave Treatment, and the American Society of Forensic Podiatry. Additionally, she serves as an instructor for Sports Medicine Ultrasound. In addition to treating general foot and ankle conditions, her primary interest is in regenerative medicine and sports medicine. Her interest in these fields stemmed from playing sports in high school and

college. As a previous professional ITF tennis player, Division III NCAA National Champion in tennis and basketball at DePauw University, tennis and basketball coach, and Ironman triathlete, her experience in various sports provides her with a keen understanding and appreciation for the dynamics and movements required for athletes to minimize their injury risks and return to their sport. Dr. Bondi's current research interests include the impact of the tennis forehand on the hip and ankle, forensic gait analysis, and the impact of the shockwave and EMTT on various foot and ankle conditions.

**Brian M. Schmidt, DPM, HS'15**, is an Associate Professor of Internal Medicine and Surgery at the University of Michigan Medical School and at the Veteran Affairs Ann Arbor Healthcare System. He is actively funded by the National Institutes of Health/National Institutes of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases serving as Primary Investigator (PI) on concurrent U01 and K23 grant awards. He is the first and only Podiatrist in United States history to be awarded a K23 grant and studies culture independent techniques to rapidly identify pathogens in foot and ankle infections. In addition, he serves as the Research Director for the Diabetic Limb Preservation Research Fellowship at the University of Michigan. Finally, he is the co-PI of The Diabetic Foot Consortium's ongoing DFU Biomarker study (ClinicalTrials.gov identifier no.: NCT06104969) and serves on the Executive Committee for this national multi-site clinical trial network.





## Yale Surgical Society Events:

Thursday, May 15, 2025:

- ❖ **Yale Surgical Society Annual Dinner**, New Haven Country Club  
*(Formal invitation to follow)*

Friday, May 16, 2025:

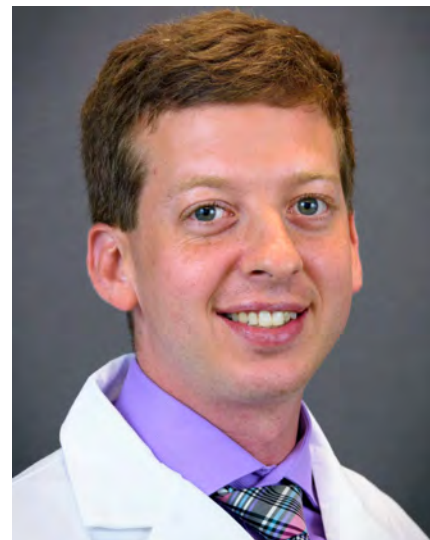
- ❖ **YSS Grand Rounds - International Surgery Program**
  - Sherry Wren, MD, HS'89
  - Edward "Ted" Higgins, MD, HS'84
  - Emily Farkas, MD, HS'07

## From the Desk of the Administrative Chief Resident

by Joshua Sznol, MD MSPH

It is my distinct pleasure as Administrative Chief to highlight and reflect upon the achievements of the surgical residency over the past year. In an era of uncertainty and change, both within the department and globally, the department has remained focused on providing extraordinary patient care while educating the future leaders of surgery. On behalf of the entire residency, I would like to thank **Dr. Andrew Duffy** for his dedication and leadership of the residency over the past two years as program director. **Dr. Kristen Oliveira** has recently accepted the position and will continue to guide the program in these trying times.

One of the main goals of this residency is to produce leaders of academic surgery, and the residency continues to have a profound impact nationally. **David Su, Liz Godfrey, Sam Butensky, Kurt Schultz, and Leanne Brown** all contributed to the newly released consensus guidelines on treating peritoneal



surface malignancies in the *Annals of Surgical Oncology* and *Cancer* under the guidance of **Dr. Kiran Turaga**. Yale continues to have a strong presence in surgical oncology, as demonstrated by **Leanne Brown** who was first author on whole genome duplications in patients with cancer published in *Nature Communications*.

The long standing relationship of Yale and the National Clinician Scholars Program continues this year with **Caroline Richburg**, who also recently published in *JAMA Surgery*. **Sam Miller** found time during his chief year to publish three separate publications with a larger focus on palliative care. In the few months of his professional development time, **Shy Rehman** was named a Frederick A. Collier Surgical Society Research fellow, an American College of Surgeons HOPE scholar and has presented at multiple conferences regarding his work.

As part of our mission to produce leaders, involving our state partners has never been more important. Recognizing the importance of advocacy, **Daniel Kerekes** and **Pawan Mathew** represented Yale at the American Medical Association House of Delegates as Committee Leads, helping to craft over 135 resolutions on national policy for topics ranging from overdose prevention to improved accountability of insurance companies. Focusing her efforts on improving the lives of residents and on advancing the care of thoracic patients, **June Zolfaghari** was selected as the Communications Committee Member for the Women in Thoracic surgery national organization, as well as being the upcoming president of the Yale Women's House Staff Organization and the president elect for the Yale Resident/Fellow senate.

Outside of the hospital, the residency continues to grow and thrive. The residency welcomed four children this year. **David Su, Sam Butensky, Marianna Papageorge, and Yuqi Zhang** are all incredibly proud parents all while delivering incredible patient care. Last year, we highlighted several residents on their running accomplishments. After completing the Boston half marathon in two hours last year, she has now completed her first marathon. **Rachel Rivero** and **Caroline Richburg** were joined by our new faculty **Dr. Savoie** to run the NYC Marathon. As if defending her PhD was not enough, **Holly Blackburn** also competed in the Women's Ironman World Championship. **Kurt Schultz** has been taking notes and has just passed his prospectus and is looking forward to completing his PhD soon.

Regardless of the academic success of the residency, the tenacity and collegiality of our residents remains the highlight of the program for me. Serving as administrative chief this year has been an incredible experience and training opportunity with lessons I hope to carry forward in service of our country. I look forward to watching our residents and community grow and I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity of training here.

## Remembering Hastings Wright, MD

by Zachary Pickell, MD Class of 2026



*Dr. Wright examining patient during rounds with residents and students.*

Over the last 50 years, modern surgery and surgical training have become increasingly subspecialized. General surgeons at academic centers have been fundamental to this evolution, pioneering surgical techniques and subspecialty fields. **Hastings K. Wright, MD** was one of the last true “renaissance” academic general surgeons, helping transform the landscape and practice of academic general surgery. Hastings K. Wright, MD (1928-2002), joined the Department of General Surgery at Yale School of Medicine as a tenured professor in 1966 until his retirement in 1996. During Dr. Wright’s distinguished career, he served as General Surgery Section Chief and interim Department Chair. Dr. Wright was deeply committed to Yale’s academic mission and resident education. He was a regular New England Surgical Society attendee and a resident advocate who intensely fostered their attendance and participation at NESS.

He was renowned for distilling surgical literature into valuable teaching points for trainees. Dr. Wright published extensively on intestinal resection and adaptation sequelae, such as colonic absorption after colectomy in rats and humans and fluid, electrolyte, and bile salt absorption after abdominal surgery.

Dr. Wright’s clinical research on the management of colonic hemorrhage transformed the operative treatment of lower gastrointestinal bleeds from emergency radical surgery to controlled, semi-elective, segmental resections. He presented a portion of this work at the 60th Annual Meeting of NESS and published it in *The American Journal of Surgery*. As a core member of the Gastrointestinal Tumor Study Group, he participated in the first multi-center long-term study of adjuvant treatment following surgery for rectal adenocarcinoma. This landmark paper in *The New England Journal of Medicine* contributed to the adoption of multimodality therapy as the standard of care for patients with locally advanced rectal cancer. Additionally, Dr. Wright

published articles on breast, thyroid, kidney, hernias, trauma, diagnostic imaging, and anesthesia. One of his AJS papers on the role of imaging in managing intraabdominal was presented at the 62nd Annual Meeting of NESS. As Assistant Chief Editor of the *Archives of Surgery*, Dr. Wright embodied the spirit of academic general surgery and was inducted into the American Surgical Association. This “renaissance man” mentality shaped his personality and life philosophy. Alongside his esteemed career, Dr. Wright promoted surgeon well-being and emphasized the importance of work-life integration. He was an avid hiker, a dedicated family man, and enjoyed lobstering in New England. Dr. Wright’s legacy paved the way for modern surgery, leaving a lasting impact on surgical care and education. The dedication and innovation of these “renaissance” general surgeons laid the foundation for today’s clinical and training environment.



*Section of General Surgery: Drs. Dziuban, Passeri, Cole, Cahow, Storer, Kinder, Passerelli, Hayes, May, Wichterman, Goldenberg, Paschal, Sweeney, Wright, Goldberg, Tilson*

## The Yale Surgical Society Family

A family has many definitions. It often relates to being descendants of a common ancestor or experience, and who treat each other in a kind, warm and compassionate way based on common goals and common occurrences. It is safe to say that in all honesty that those who were part of the Yale Surgery experience feel this way. The experiences may have been multiple, both good and at times, less desirable, but when we reflect, regardless of being a house officer or faculty or otherwise, there is that common link that keeps us as one. One of the many things that make the experience is the “generativity” when it occurred and not only the surgical experience that was popular at the time, but the human dynamics that accompanied it. We all worked together to move the mountain that got in the way, and we all thanked each other and above all, gave credit where credit was due. Respect is often what make real families work. We shared occurrences that few outworlders would or could ever understand, and many of these we “fixed” and unfortunately, some we created. It had the opportunity to build you up or bring you down, and in the end you had your family either in New Haven or who was far away, to lean on. Some of us even began our biological family here, and we embraced in those individuals’ happiness and provided comfort if it went sour. We will always cherish and be proud of our colleagues in the Yale family successes and accomplishments and be committed to building them up and not knocking them down, no matter what the circumstances are, because that is what a family is and does, no matter what generation it is in.

## The 1990's: The Technological Age in Full Bloom and Its Impact on the Discipline of Surgery



*Ronald C. Merrell,  
MD Chairman,  
Department of  
Surgery 1993-1999*

In our Fall 2024 Newsletter, we shared our thoughts on the 1980's and its impact on effective change in the practice of surgery, the continued organization of the Department of Surgery and its impact on surgical training. In this issue we will discuss the changes the 1990s had in these issues. Almost overnight, the great revolution in surgical technology, the worldwide web, efforts for cost containment, the shift towards ambulatory efforts and changes in the spectrum of surgical procedures occurred. All of this occurred for the better and certainly changed all our lives. The sweeping success of the laparoscopic revolution in the 1990's marked the transition from traditional open surgery and encouraged surgeons to consider new perspectives. These rapid advances in technology were complimented by personal access to it because of the internet and communication devices such as two-way pagers, palm pilots, cell phones and camera phones.

Ambulatory surgery grew rapidly and technological advances such as improved anesthetics and analgesics and minimally invasive surgical techniques allowed for an increasing range of operations to be done in the ambulatory setting. Although unexpected, as the number of ambulatory surgical cases grew, the number of inpatient operations stayed the same. However, the implementation of the prospective payment system for Medicare patients based on DRG's resulted in a profound change in the economic incentives for hospitals making ambulatory surgery advantageous.

There was an increase in inpatient in certain procedures including angioplasty, and cardiac catheterization, pacemakers, procedures, increase in musculoskeletal in the elderly for fracture and dislocation, and solid organ transplantation. Declines were seen in prostatectomy, appendectomy in children and endocrine procedures. Overall, patients who were considered to frail for surgery became candidates for surgery when minimally invasive techniques were utilized. Patients with low level symptoms were more likely to request an operation when the procedure was less invasive and convalescence shorter. Decreasing inpatient operations, and increasing total operations were seen, however as alternative treatments were found, new technologies developed such as stents and declining incidence of certain diseases such as appendicitis.

Advances in molecular biology had its effect on surgery, but was in its infancy and its impact was just developing. Technology made it possible to analyze large, assembled data sets which silently had its impact on directing surgical care. More attention and specifically oversight in residency training occurred. An emphasis on resident wellness, women in surgical training and surgical subspecialty training occurred and the dawn of duty hours regulation was upon us. Further changes in surgical training included expanding of residencies and delivery networks where they need to work and further train, expansion of residencies, fellowships and specialty boards, simulation where endoscopy and surgical techniques mastered, and trainees routinely in the lab with the opportunity to choose advanced degrees in science, business and public health. The public eye was focusing on surgical error, gender equity in surgery and generation transitions. World events, social awareness, political activism and sharing information were paramount.

The 1990's saw an increase in plastic surgery as public perception improved, more procedural information became available, and the economy boomed. Plastic surgeons advocated for coverage of reconstructive procedures in new health plans. Although the advent of surgical endoscopy was gradual and evolutionary, in the case of laparoscopy dramatic technical innovations were required and occurred. Gone over time were fear of failure, fear of established procedures becoming obsolete, and fear of losing control. By the end of the 1990s every abdominal operation was being explored and perfected utilizing laparoscopic techniques. It rapidly expanded into more challenging cases in general surgery outside of cholecystectomy. Soon these laparoscopic techniques, now known as minimally invasive procedures expanded to the prostate, splenectomy, hysterectomy and adrenalectomy and even pancreaticoduodenectomy. Fellowships in minimally invasive surgery became common place.

Hepatic surgery had been previously hindered by three issues, namely the identification of intrahepatic anatomy, the control of bleeding and the risk of postoperative liver failure. Although hepatic surgery was becoming a standalone subspecialty, slowly it evolved into subspecialty units with a multidisciplinary approach with younger surgeons. The treatment of portal hypertension has evolved from surgery being the only option during the 1970s to evolving options in the 1990s. Surgery for portal hypertension rapidly declining during this period with advances in interventional radiology, endoscopic procedures and pharmacotherapy. Still the surgeon could be called upon for surgery for primary prophylaxis in PHT, surgery for acute variceal hemorrhage and surgery for secondary prophylaxis in noncirrhotic portal hypertension.

In the 1950's -60's kidney transplantation was born and further advances in the concept of immunosuppression made it more routine. Over time, transplantation of other organs occurred including the heart, the liver and intestine evolved. Transplants were either cadaveric or living related. Vascularized composite grafting such as hand or face were yet to come. For trainees in the 1990s liver transplants and living related transplants as well as cadaveric renal transplant were labor intensive and provided residents a real tremendous technical and immunologic experience.

Minimally invasive procedures revolutionized vascular surgery in the 1990s. Endovascular materials made percutaneous angioplasty possible. Open surgical interventions for lower extremity occlusive disease declined between 1990 and 2000. The dreaded outcomes of big vascular procedures with the need for deep anesthesia, cardiac morbidity, significant fluid shifts and blood loss as well as prolonged hospitalizations associated with the need for reoperation and significant pulmonary morbidity complicating pre-existing preoperative respiratory embarrassment were dramatically diminished with endovascular techniques. The substantial morbidity associated with mesenteric ischemia were reduced by timely endovascular techniques and hybrid operating rooms.

The explosion of information technology, minimal access surgery financial awareness in care and quality improvement were just some of the milestones in surgery that occurred in the 1990s. These paved the way for more dramatic changes to occur in the upcoming decades. All of these occurred with better outcomes for patients and added to the wellness and work-life balance of its caregivers.

## Nita Ahuja MD, MBA to become Dean at University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health and Vice Chair of Medical Affairs

**Nita Ahuja, MD, MBA**, Chairman of the Department of Surgery at the Yale University School of Medicine since 2018, has been selected as the Dean of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health and Vice Chair of Medical Affairs. Her last day at Yale will be May 14, 2025. During her tenure, the Department of Surgery continued to grow with many new programs developed. A Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, Dr. Ahuja is a cancer-care innovator whose treatment approaches and research have garnered international recognition. With an MBA, she's also a proven leader and administrator with a track record for bringing multidisciplinary teams together to solve health care challenges. The Yale Surgical Society wishes Dr. Ahuja all the best in her new role and is grateful for all of her time and efforts, as well as her accomplishments provided to the Department of Surgery. **Benjamin Judson, MD**, Chief of the Division of Otolaryngology has been appointed Interim Chairman of the Department of Surgery.



## Alan Dardik, MD, PhD to lead the Research Activities at the Icahn School of Medicine Department of Surgery



**Alan Dardik, MD, PhD** is transitioning from Yale and has taken the position of Vice Chair for Research and Co-Director of the Jacobson Aortic Center in the Department of Surgery at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York. Dr. Dardik joined Yale in 2001 after completing a PhD in computer science at the University of Pennsylvania, and finishing surgical training at the Johns Hopkins Hospital. He established a basic science laboratory focusing on the molecular mechanisms behind the adaptation of vessels and maturation of arteriovenous fistulae. The laboratory has had established NIH funding for more than 20 years with more than 20 million dollars in total grants supporting a robust infrastructure and contributing to the training of more than 70 residents and graduate students at Yale.

His dedication to teaching earned him the C. Elton Cahow Award for outstanding faculty teaching from Yale's Department of Surgery.

His impact on the field is tangible with 450 publications spanning the spectrum of vascular science from understanding the molecular identity of arteries and veins to the improvement of the surgical care of patients with aortic aneurysms, peripheral arterial disease, and hemodialysis access. He has given more than 300 invited talks and has been on the editorial board of several journals. He was named the inaugural Editor-in-Chief of *JVS-Vascular Science*, a position that he maintains currently. He has lead several vascular societies including the New England Society for Vascular Surgery and the Association of VA Surgeons.

In addition to his scientific contributions in research, Dr. Dardik has held several key administrative roles during his tenure at Yale. He served as the Chief of Vascular Surgery at the West Haven VA Medical Center (2009-2017) and was the interim chief of the Yale Division of Vascular Surgery (2018-2019). In his role as the Vice Chair of Surgery for Faculty Affairs, he provided high level mentoring to numerous faculty members and helped them develop their careers. He has shaped the path of many trainees and junior faculty. His excitement and optimism about his work are infectious and a constant source of inspiration to people around him.

In summary, Dr. Dardik is the epitome of the surgeon-scientist and has made profound contributions to the Division of Vascular Surgery and Endovascular Therapy, the Department of Surgery, and the Yale scientific community at large. We will miss him dearly and wish him the best in his future leadership role in New York.

## Kristin Oliveira, M.D. New Program Director for the General Surgery Residency Program



**Kristin Oliveira, MD** has been appointed as the Program Director for the General Surgery Residency Program in the Department of Surgery. A dedicated trauma surgeon and accomplished surgical educator, Dr. Oliveira has served as Associate Program Director for the past seven years and brings insight into the program's strengths and opportunities to lead the residency. She takes over for **Andrew Duffy, MD**, who served as Interim Program Director, who did a stellar job in this role.

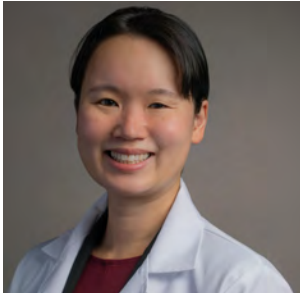
## James Kempton, MD appointed interim Chief of Surgery, West Haven, VAMC

The Department of Surgery is pleased to announce the appointment of Yale Ophthalmologist **James Kempton, MD** as Interim Chief of Surgical Services at the VA Connecticut Healthcare System, effective following the departure of **Alan Dardik, MD, PhD**, in March 2025. Dr. Dardik has served in this role since January 2024, and we are deeply grateful for his leadership and dedicated service to our veteran community.



## New Faculty Spotlights

### Madonna Lee, MD, Assistant Professor of Surgery (Cardiac)

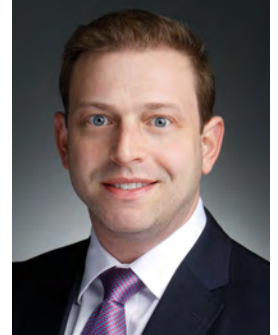


**Madonna Lee, MD** is a board-certified cardiac surgeon and Assistant Professor of Surgery at YSM. She specializes in pediatric and adult congenital heart surgery. Dr. Lee practices at YNHH's Pediatric Heart Center, where she collaborates with a multidisciplinary team to provide individualized care for

children with complex heart conditions. Her expertise encompasses a wide range of congenital heart defects, and she emphasizes the importance of tailoring surgical strategies to each patient's unique needs as they transition into adulthood.

Dr. Lee's educational background includes a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Engineering from Johns Hopkins University and a medical degree from Michigan State University. She completed her General Surgery residency at Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, a Cardiothoracic Surgery fellowship at The Ohio State University, and a Congenital Cardiac Surgery fellowship at Seattle Children's Hospital. Her research interests focus on quality improvement and surgical outcomes in congenital heart disease, aiming to enhance patient care through data-driven approaches. She is passionate about medical education and her roles at Yale include Medical Student Clerkship Rotation Director and Associate Program Director for the Integrated (I-6) Cardiothoracic Surgery Residency. She was selected as one of twenty Yale Faculty for the Education Scholar Fellowship 2025-2026. She is also an Associate Editor for the Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS) e-book Congenital section.

### Daniel Lavy, MD, Assistant Professor of Surgery (Colon & Rectal)



**Daniel Lavy, MD** is a fellowship-trained colon and rectal surgeon specializing in minimally invasive techniques, including robotic and laparoscopic procedures. He treats a range of conditions such as inflammatory bowel disease, diverticulitis, and colon and rectal cancers.

Additionally, he addresses common anorectal issues like hemorrhoids, fistulas, fissures, and rectal prolapse. Dr. Lavy is also experienced in performing colonoscopies for screening and therapeutic purposes and is at the forefront of treating fecal incontinence using sacral neuromodulation.

Dr. Lavy earned his medical degree with honors from Ross University School of Medicine in 2011. He completed his General Surgical residency at Rutgers Health/Monmouth Medical Center and a Colon and Rectal Surgery fellowship at the Cleveland Clinic in Florida. He is an Assistant Professor of Surgery at Yale School of Medicine and practices at Yale New Haven Hospital and Bridgeport Hospital. Dr. Lavy is a fellow of the American College of Surgeons and the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons. He is actively involved in research, with publications presented at national surgical meetings, and serves on the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation board.

### Neil Floch, MD, Associate Professor of Surgery (Bariatric, Minimally Invasive)



**Neil Floch, MD** is a board-certified general and bariatric surgeon, the Director of Bariatric Surgery at Greenwich Hospital, and an Associate Professor of Surgery at the Yale School of Medicine. With over two decades of experience, he has performed more than 2,500 bariatric procedures, including gastric sleeve and gastric bypass surgeries, as well as over 600 laparoscopic foregut surgeries. Dr. Floch specializes in minimally invasive and robotic techniques, addressing conditions such as reflux, hiatal hernias, gallbladder issues, and achalasia. He has served as president of the Connecticut chapter of the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS) and has authored seven book chapters.

Educated at Tufts University and the Boston University School of Medicine, Dr. Floch completed his surgical residency at the Beth Israel Medical Center and a fellowship in Minimally Invasive Surgery at the Mayo Clinic. He is deeply committed to patient advocacy, having worked with the Connecticut legislature to enhance access to obesity care. Dr. Floch emphasizes the importance of understanding obesity as a complex disease influenced by genetic and environmental factors, aiming to educate both patients and the public to reduce stigma and improve treatment outcomes.

TO SUSTAIN THE BEST IN SURGICAL SCIENCE, PRACTICE AND SERVICE

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Yale Surgical Society

## Where Are They Now?



**David S. Shapiro, MD, HS'71** was educated at Williams College and is a graduate of Tufts School of Medicine. He then completed his general surgery training at Yale-New Haven Hospital in 1970-71. He is a practicing general surgeon in Clearwater, Florida and the founder of the Hemorrhoid Treatment Center of Florida located in Clearwater. Dr Shapiro was awarded by the Tampa Bay Metro Magazine for inclusion in their list of Top Doctors. Dr. Shapiro is certified by the American Board of Surgery and has a vast experience in treating anorectal conditions. He has a background in academics and is Clinical Professor of Surgery at the University of South Florida College of Medicine.

**Gary Price, MD, HS'83** completed his general surgery training at Yale-New Haven Hospital in 1982-1983. This was followed by a Plastic Surgery fellowship also at Yale. He went into private practice in New Haven and remained until 2022 when he retired from practice. His specialty was plastic surgery and he maintained a busy robust clinical practice on the Yale clinical faculty for over 35 years. He served in a leadership role in many national medical organizations and societies. He is past President of the Connecticut State Medical Society and the Connecticut and New England Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons. Dr. Price also holds an MBA from the Yale School of Management. He continues to serve as President and Board Chair of the Physicians Foundation, a national non-profit organization currently focused on the physician's perspective of practice, physician leadership, physician well-being and the impact of drivers of health on our nation's health. Over the past twenty years, the Physicians Foundation has funded over 80 million dollars in research grants and other initiatives in these areas. Gary has always been an effective educator, outstanding surgeon and true gentleman.



**Richard S. Stahl, MD, HS'81** received his undergraduate degree in Physics at Emory University followed by his M.D. from Vanderbilt University. He completed his residency in general surgery at Yale-New Haven Hospital and his fellowship in Plastic Surgery at Emory. He is board certified in both Surgery and Plastic Surgery and is a Fellow in both the American College of Surgeons and the American College of Healthcare Executives. He joined the faculty at the Yale School of Medicine in 1983 as an Assistant Professor. While at Yale, he was a renowned surgeon, educator and demonstrated a superb knowledge of plastic surgery. After a time in private group practice in New Haven, Dr. Stahl was appointed Professor in the Department of Medical Sciences and Senior Associate Dean of Quinnipiac's Frank H. Netter School of Medicine in January 2015. He enhanced relationships in support of Quinnipiac's Schools of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences. In addition, he held executive positions at Yale-New Haven Health for over 20 years. He served as a mentor to numerous students, residents, fellows and in addition, to those in the Yale School of Management's Entrepreneurial Institute.

**David A. August, MD, HS'86** graduated from Yale University School of Medicine in 1980. He next completed his residency in General Surgery at Yale-New Haven Hospital in 1985-1986. During this time, he also spent two years at the National Cancer Institute. He remained on board as faculty at Yale followed by a faculty position at the University of Michigan Department of Surgery. He next was recruited to become Chief of the Cancer Institute of New Jersey and faculty at the University of Medicine and New Jersey, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in New Brunswick, New Jersey, a position he held for 24 years. David was an extremely accomplished Surgical Oncologist, an active investigator and a renowned educator to the numerous residents he trained. Dr. August was a world's expert on surgical nutrition in surgery patients as well as in cancer care and an active member in The American Society of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition. He was also a champion of Propensity Scoring Methods in the surgical literature. While at Rutgers, he was Associate Director of Faculty Affairs at the Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey. Dr. August has recently retired from surgery.



## YSS Announces Candidate Membership!

The Yale Surgical Society has developed criteria for trainees in Surgery, Surgical Subspecialties and Foot and Ankle Surgery to be candidate members in the YSS. This position is open to fellows and senior residents in good standing in their last two years of training. They are to be proposed by their program director with an updated CV. They will be expected to participate in YSS activities such as the biannual Newsletter, the membership directory, Yale Surgical Society Grand Rounds and reunion activities.

## Where Are They Now? (cont.)



**Dean Willis, MD, HS'81** is a graduate of George Washington University School of Medicine in 1976. He next completed his General Surgery training at Yale New Haven Hospital in the academic year 1980-1981. He went into General Surgery Practice in New London Connecticut and practiced his entire career at Lawrence and Memorial Hospital. His practice also included Vascular Surgery. He recently retired after 39 years of practice. Dean was an outstanding clinician, surgeon, team player and a true gentleman. He was dedicated to, and a true advocate of Yale Surgery and the Yale Surgical Society.

**Philip Dickey, MD, HS'89** received both his Bachelor's degree and his M.D. (cum laude 1983) from the University of North Carolina. This was followed by an internship in Surgery at Yale-New Haven Hospital in 1983-1984. He spent the next five years as a resident in Neurological Surgery from 1984-1989 at Yale-New Haven Hospital including a year as an Associate Research Scientist at Yale University from 1986-87 culminating in him being Chief Resident in Neurological Surgery from 1988-1989. Dr. Dickey has been in Private Practice of Neurological Surgery in New Haven, Connecticut from 1989-present. This has included Academic appointments as Clinical Instructor, Yale University School of Medicine from 1990-1994 and Assistant Clinical Professor at the Yale University School of Medicine from 1994-present while maintaining hospital appointments at Yale-New Haven Hospital, the Hospital of Saint Raphael and the Veteran's Memorial Hospital. Dr. Dickey has given numerous presentations throughout his career with influential publications in neurosurgery as well as training many neurosurgery residents. He was a founding member of the Yale Surgical Society.



**Peter A. Blume, DPM, HS'94** is a board-certified podiatric foot and ankle surgeon at the Yale New Haven Hospital. He is a medical director for ambulatory services and a co-director of chronic limb ischemia and medical director for the Heart and Vascular Center at the YNHHS. He is an assistant clinical Professor of Surgery, Cardiology, and Anesthesia at the Yale School of Medicine. He graduated from Syracuse University and the New York College of Podiatric Medicine and was the chief resident at the VA Medical Center Yale clinical campus in Connecticut. He also has a fellowship in Reconstructive Foot Surgery and Diabetic Limb Salvage from the Yale VA Medical Center and visiting fellow at the Georgetown University Medical Center. He has spent decades helping patients suffering from foot and ankle problems and is at the forefront of diabetic limb preservation and reconstruction. He has been recognized 5 times by Connecticut Magazine as one of "Connecticut's Top Doctors." Dr. Blume's commitment to the field is highlighted by the various teaching positions and faculty appointments that he has held over the past 20 years, publishing original research in over 150 publications and authoring many textbooks on podiatric surgery.



## In Memoriam



**Luke LiCalzi, MD, HS'80** of Garden City, NY and Southold, NY, passed away peacefully surrounded by his loving family on December 10, 2017 at age 68. He worked as a surgeon and mentor to many for 34 years at South Nassau Communities Hospital. He is survived by his wife Rita, as well as his four children. He was a devoted family man who was completely adored by his five grand-children. Luke retired after a decades long career in medicine and was the recipient of the 2016 Community Award at the South Nassau Communities Hospital annual Carnation Ball. Luke joined South Nassau in 1982 and served as Director of the Vascular Surgery Division in the Department of Surgery since 1992. He attended and graduated with honors from Albany Medical College of Union University in 1975. He completed residency training in General Surgery at Yale New Haven Hospital in 1980 and a fellowship in Vascular Surgery at New York University Medical Center in 1982. Even with his distinguished professional career, he most enjoyed spending time with family and friends. He loved gardening, reading, grilling/cooking, spending time in Southold, traveling, rooting for the New York Islanders hockey team and providing council and advice to his children.

## In Memoriam (cont.)



**James B.D. Mark, MD, HS'60** was born in 1929, and spent most of his first two decades at schools in the same neighborhood of Nashville, Tennessee. Dr. Mark graduated from high school at 16. He earned his bachelor's degree, then his medical degree, in 1953, from Vanderbilt University. His desire to connect with patients, and eventually with students, guided him toward medicine.

In 1953, Dr. Mark became a surgical intern at Yale New Haven Hospital, then completed two years of active duty in the United States Public Health Service in Chicago. While there, Mark met his future wife, Jean "Maxie" Rambar, his cousin's neighbor and friend. They married and moved to New Haven, where Dr. Mark completed his Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery residency at Yale in 1960. He remained at Yale as an Instructor and Assistant Professor.

In 1964, Mark followed his mentor, co-faculty member at Yale, and friend, Robert Chase, MD, to California. He became the Chair of Surgery at the newly affiliated Santa Clara County Medical Center.

*Photos courtesy of the Marks family*

In 1970, he was promoted to professor and relocated to Stanford Hospital, where he focused on thoracic surgery. Dr. Mark assumed leadership roles when he returned to Stanford, becoming acting chair of the surgery department in the '70s and chief of staff at the hospital in the '80s.

He also served as president of the Halsted Society, the Western Thoracic Surgical Association and the American College of Chest Physicians. He was one of the early adopters of thoracoscopic surgery for the lung, helping usher in what is now the gold standard for lung resection. Dr. Mark died at age 95.



*James Mark riding near the Stanford University campus in the 1970s*

He was dedicated to his work and loved it. For many decades, he was the only full-time person in the Division of Thoracic Surgery, so he went to the hospital every day. While medicine and his work as a surgeon were important, family was more so. He always made it home for dinner. He made time to coach little league for his sons and was always athletic, playing tennis and golf. Dr. Mark is survived by his wife, and seven grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

**Martin C Robson, MD, HS '84** passed away on April 15, 2023. Marty attended Northwestern University and received his undergraduate and medical degrees from Johns Hopkins University. He completed his general surgery residency at the Brooke Army Medical Center and his plastic surgery residency at Yale University. He was a dedicated surgeon with a passion for helping others and advancing the standard of treatments, specifically for burn patients. He was also a proud veteran and served two terms in the United States Army achieving the rank of Colonel.

Throughout his career, he served as Chief of Plastic Surgery at the University of Chicago, Wayne State University, the University of Texas Medical Branch and was an Emeritus Professor at the University of South Florida. An internationally recognized leader in the fields of burns and wound healing, he was a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and held Honorary Fellowships from the Royal College of Surgeons of England and the Royal Australian College of Surgeons. Martin served as President of the American Burn Association, the North American Burn Society, the Wound Healing Society and the Association of Academic Chairmen of Plastic Surgery. Martin held Chairman positions for the American Board of Plastic Surgery, the Residency Review Committee for Plastic Surgery and the Plastic Surgery Research Council. Martin authored over 650 publications, mostly devoted to wound healing, wound infection, burns, and proliferative scarring, and was a named inventor on numerous patents related to plastic surgery and wound care. He served as a visiting professor at over 50 universities throughout the world. Throughout his career his dedication to the Yale mission was unending, being an ambassador to the Division of Yale Plastic Surgery.



*James Mark spent the 1972-1973 academic year as a visiting professor in Tanzania.*



**Stanley W. Dziuban Jr., MD, HS'68** of passed away peacefully on Friday, January 30, 2015, at St. Peter's Hospital, Albany. He was born in Washington, D.C., he was the son of the late Elizabeth Ann and Col. Stanley W. Dziuban Sr. Stan proudly served his country in the U.S. Army Special Forces Medical Corps from 1967-1970, primarily in the Canal Zone, Panama. An honor graduate of special forces medical training, he received U.S. Army Southern Command recognition for distinguished achievement and top honors in all his education and training programs. His experiences started a long and rewarding career as a cardiothoracic surgeon in which he fulfilled his passion to help and heal others. Following his service, Stan received his B.S. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1971. He then attended Yale Medical School, earning his M.D. and graduating cum laude in 1975. He was the recipient of the Frank Parker Prize for the Yale graduate with the best qualifications as a successful practitioner. Stan served his residencies in General Surgery and Cardiothoracic Surgery at New Haven Hospital in Connecticut completing his training in 1979-1980. Dr. Dziuban was a partner in Albany Cardiothoracic Surgeons, PC. He practiced in many of the local area hospitals, including St. Peter's Hospital, Albany Medical Center, Albany Memorial Hospital, Ellis Hospital and the Stratton V.A. Medical Center. Dr. Dziuban practiced in Albany from 1982 until his early retirement in 2005 due to illness. His special focus during his career was the analysis and implementation of best surgical practices. He led the efforts of a multi-disciplinary team to implement changes which transformed the program at St. Peter's Hospital into one of the best in New York. The Society of Thoracic Surgeons also utilized his work in their national database as a key component in their establishment of quality practice standards. The same determination and passion for his life and work as a physician guided Stan during his extended illness. He was able to dedicate this time to nurture and guide his sons, William and Gabriel Dziuban, through to their high school graduation and first year at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. It was the overwhelming love for his sons that gave him the strength to experience a lifetime of joy of being their father and to prepare them for their futures. He is remembered by his family as a loving father and dedicated provider, and by his many patients and colleagues as an exceptionally capable and caring physician. Stan touched lives of many, both personally and professionally.



## YSS Announces New Jersey Chapter



Marc Mandel, MD

As the number of graduates of our training programs and our faculty and community surgeons grow, clusters of individuals to relocate and congregate in new positions geographically. This has inspired the leadership of the YSS to begin to organize chapters outside of Connecticut. One of these chapters proposed would be in New Jersey. There are currently many of our graduates and others who are part of the Yale family who have elected to partake in their careers in New Jersey. This will provide an opportunity for cultural exchange, patient referrals, collaborative scholarly activity, career development, recruitment, and good will. **Marc Mandel, MD, HS'90** has agreed to lead this initiative.

## Comments from the Readers

"It is with sadness that I learn of the passing of Doctors M. David Tilson and Donald P. Shedd, but also with rekindled fond memories of my experiences working at YNHH's as Housestaff & Resident, with them and under their auspices - no greater training and exposure to the Art and Science of Surgery could one ask for or obtain. What they accomplished and left behind speaks to their elegance. I was taught by the best.

I wouldn't change anything, wish I could do it again at Yale..."

**Mark Coan, MD, HS'75**

"Very interesting Yale Surgical Newsletter. Thanks for gathering the information and shaping it so that many of the accomplishments and education of the Yale faculty and residents were presented through the years of association with The Albert Schweitzer Hospital."

**William Meffert, MD, HS'68**

"This is really a terrific update! Very engaging and comprehensive. As a (still) relative newcomer to the Dept. it is great for me to get a feeling for the remarkable history of Yale Surgery and the giants that have roamed the halls!"

**Kevin Billingsley, MD, MBA**

"Lots of memories from Haiti."

**Richard Moggio, MD, HS'76**

*Join the Yale Surgical Society today!*

*Click here*



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## We would love to hear from you!

Please stay in touch and send us updates on your current practice, family, and life events. Pictures (recent and past) are welcome. Please include your surgical program (specialty), where you trained, years when you trained and the year you completed your training. Send your information to: [Walter.Longo@yale.edu](mailto:Walter.Longo@yale.edu)