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## Marina Kaufman Holz, Ph.D., Is Named Dean of the Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences

**Marina Kaufman Holz, Ph.D.**, has been appointed dean of the Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences (GSBMS), succeeding Francis L. Belloni, Ph.D., who has retired after serving as dean since 1997. A seasoned researcher and educator, Dr. Holz will officially join the New York Medical College community on September 1, coming from the Stern College of Yeshiva University where she served as the Doris and Dr. Ira Kukin Chair in Biology, chair of the Division of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and holder of a joint appointment in the Department of Molecular Pharmacology of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Dana G. Mordue, Ph.D., associate professor of microbiology and immunology, is serving as interim dean of the GSBMS until the arrival of Dr. Holz. [Read the full article...](#)



## ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT SURVEY



How would you rate Alumni Engagement and Opportunities? Let us know your feedback through our [Alumni Engagement Survey](#).

## Class of 2018 Celebrates Commencement Day



After years of dedication, sacrifice and unyielding efforts, the New York Medical College (NYMC) Class of 2018 enjoyed the fruits of their labor at the 159th Commencement exercises on May 23 at Carnegie Hall, where families and friends packed the house for the momentous occasion. The College awarded 213 doctor of medicine degrees (M.D.), 40 doctor of physical therapy (D.P.T.) degrees, 16 doctor of philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees, 81 master of science (M.S.) degrees, 91 master of public health (M.P.H.) degrees and 4 doctor of public health (Dr.P.H.) degrees. The pomp and circumstance of Commencement was preceded by an eventful day of award ceremonies for the School of Medicine, the Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences and the School of Health Sciences and Practice. [Read the full article.](#)

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



**[Jessica Rakonza, M.S. '18, M.D. '18](#)**

*Homeward bound, ready to practice medicine*

View the [NYMC 159th Commencement photo gallery](#).

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

## NYMC Hosts 5th Annual Drs. Gabor and Harriette Kaley Endowed Lectureship

The Fifth Annual Drs. Gabor and Harriette Kaley Endowed Lectureship held on May 24 honored the memory of Gabor Kaley, Ph.D., who served as chairman of the Department of Physiology for 37 years. **Akos Koller, M.D., Ph.D.**, second from left, chairman, Scientific Council Institute of Natural Sciences, University of Physical Education, Budapest, Department of Neurosurgery, University of Pécs, adjunct professor of physiology at New York Medical College and a mentee and longtime colleague and friend of Dr. Gabor, was welcomed as this year's guest lecturer. He presented "Alzheimer's Disease: Failure of Autoregulation of the Cerebral Circulation?" [Read the full article.](#)



View the [5th Annual Drs. Gabor and Harriette Kaley Endowed Lectureship photo gallery](#).



**[Galadu Subah, M.S. '16](#)**  
M.D./Ph.D Candidate

*Bringing basic science research and patient care*

#### FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

### Graduate Student Research Forum Still Going Strong After Three Decades



The 30th Annual Graduate Student Research Forum (GSRF) held on March 20 was a day for sharing a wide variety of research topics by students in the Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences. Sponsored annually by the Graduate Student Association (GSA), the forum provides an opportunity for students to present their research in progress, sharpen their presentation and communication skills, ponder stimulating questions from the audience and receive valuable feedback from judges. [Read the full article...](#)

View the [30th Annual Graduate Student Research Forum photo gallery](#).



**[Jonathan A. N. Fisher, Ph.D.](#)**  
Assistant Professor of Physiology

*Taking students on an immersive journey through the human brain using virtual reality*

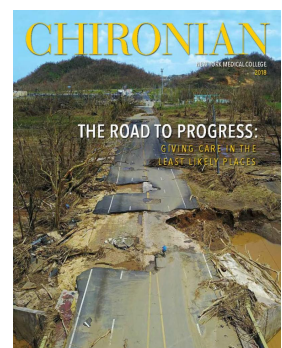
### Department of Cell Biology and Anatomy Hosts Annual Research Forum

The Department of Cell Biology and Anatomy held its annual research forum on March 14, giving graduate students and postdoctoral fellows an opportunity to share their research projects and sharpen their presentation skills. Eight presentations were followed by a five-minute question and comment period from a panel of judges comprised of Jonathan Fisher, Ph.D., assistant professor of physiology, Thomas M. Jeitner, Ph.D., research associate professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, and Jin Li, M.D., Ph.D. '01, associate professor of neurology. **Gary Guo, M.D., Ph.D.**, far left, instructor of medicine and a co-sponsor of the forum, **Joseph D. Etlinger, Ph.D.**, second from left, professor and chairman of the Department of Cell Biology and Anatomy, and **Victor A. Fried, Ph.D.**, standing far right, professor of cell biology and anatomy, pathology and graduate program director, joined the presenters. [View the presentations here...](#)



#### CALL FOR ALUMNI MILESTONES

We would love to share your most recent news and accomplishments in our next issue of the [Chironian](#).



### Christopher S. Leonard, Ph.D., Assumes the Role of Interim Chair of the Department of Physiology

If you have any accomplishments or developments, published a book, or have any family news to share we



**Christopher S. Leonard, Ph.D.**, professor of physiology, has been named interim chairman of the Department of Physiology, succeeding Thomas H. Hintze, Ph.D.'80, professor of physiology, who recently stepped down from his role as chair. Dr. Leonard joined the NYMC faculty in 1997 after holding faculty positions at New York University. He earned his masters and Ph.D. degrees in physiology and biophysics from the Sackler Institute of Graduate Biomedical Sciences at New York University and completed a National Institutes of Health (NIH) post-doctoral fellowship in the Department of Physiology and Biophysics at New York University Medical Center under the mentorship of renowned neuroscientist Rodolfo R. Llinas, M.D., Ph.D. [Read the full article...](#)

would love to hear from you. Please [share your updates](#) with us to be included in our class notes.

#### GRANT NEWS



NYMC faculty members engage in sponsored research and other programs spanning a wide range of biomedical topics. Read about the latest [NYMC grant news](#).

### Raj K. Tiwari, Ph.D., Is Named Interim Chairman of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology

**Raj K. Tiwari, Ph.D.**, professor of microbiology and immunology, associate professor of otolaryngology and graduate program director, has been named interim chairman of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology, succeeding Ira Schwartz, Ph.D., professor of microbiology and immunology, medicine and biochemistry and molecular biology, who recently retired from his role as chairman. Dr. Tiwari joined the NYMC faculty in 1996 and has maintained an active, funded research program in immunological aspects of cancer biology. Dr. Tiwari received his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in biochemistry from the University of Calcutta in India and completed his postdoctoral training at the University of Toronto in Canada and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City. Prior to joining the NYMC community, he held faculty positions at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center. [Read the full story...](#)



#### IN THE NEWS



As leaders in a variety of specialties and fields, NYMC's faculty are called upon by media outlets to serve as experts on cutting edge topics, events and news stories. Read the latest offerings of [NYMC in the news](#).

### New York Medical College Researcher Sheds New Light on Root Cause of CTE



As an expert in his field, with decades of experience studying synaptic plasticity in the quest to better understand neurological diseases, including traumatic brain injury, **Patric K. Stanton, Ph.D.**, professor of cell biology and anatomy and of neurology, and a team at New York Medical College were called upon to join an elite contingent of researchers studying the origins of Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE). The stunning results of that study provides the first solid evidence regarding the origins of CTE. According to Stanton, "It is becoming clear that simply experiencing repeated impact in contact sports, without ever having a concussion, can still increase the risk of developing CTE. We need to know how much it increases this risk, and develop new methods of monitoring impact to determine when, and for how long, a person should no longer be playing contact

sports. [Read full article here...](#)

#### PHOTO GALLERY



View photos from the [2018 GSBMS Commencement Awards](#)

## Robert A. Welke Cancer Research Foundation Continues Longstanding Support of NYMC Cancer Research

For more than two decades, the Robert A. Welke Cancer Research Foundation has been proud to fund cancer research at New York Medical College's Brander Cancer Research Institute, directed by **Zbigniew Darzynkiewicz, M.D., Ph.D.**, second from right, professor of pathology, medicine and microbiology and immunology. The Foundation was created to honor the late Robert A. Welke, who was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia (AML) in 1993 and underwent experimental treatments at Westchester Medical Center. From time to time, Robert Welke's widow, **Betsy Welke**, second from left, and her family, including her daughter, **Carley Welke**, center, visit New York Medical College and Dr. Darzynkiewicz's lab to learn about the newest advances in the fight against cancer and see the latest technology and equipment, some of which was made possible to purchase and operate through the generosity of the Welke Foundation. The equipment, consisting of Flow Cytometer/Cell Sorter and Laser Scanning Cytometer, the most sophisticated instruments to analyze individual cells, serves as a Core Facility, available to all NYMC researchers. [Read the full story here...](#)



[Ceremony](#), held on May 22, 2018.

### ALUMNI ONLINE COMMUNITY



Register for the [Alumni Online Community](#) to connect with fellow alumni, increase your network and stay up to date on Alumni news and events.

## Bridge Funding Grants Are Announced

Researchers at New York Medical College have been selected to receive awards under the Fall 2017 round of the Touro and College and University System (TCUS) Bridge Funding Grant Program. Bridge grants are designed to sustain research projects between larger grant funding. The recipients' projects were reviewed as part of a rigorous peer review process, as well as recommendations by the TCUS Biomedical and Health Sciences Research Council.



**Christopher S. Leonard, Ph.D.**, professor of physiology, was selected for his work on "Synaptic Modulation of Mesopontine Cholinergic Neurons." "Our research program is aimed at understanding how the neuropeptide orexin regulates neuronal activity in brain circuits controlling sleep/wake patterns, motivation and emotion. In addition to learning new information about how the brain regulates these states, our studies may also reveal new therapeutic targets for treating narcolepsy and its co-morbid mood disorders," explained Dr. Leonard. "This bridge award provides critical sustaining support for our lab and will enable us to generate critical new preliminary data. I am very grateful to the Touro and New York Medical College leadership for prioritizing this type of support."

**Penghua Wang, Ph.D.**, assistant professor of microbiology and immunology, was also selected for bridge funding for his research, "UBXNs as Regulators of Antiviral Immunity." "Both herpes simplex virus 1 and Chikungunya virus are human pathogens of public health significance. The research investigates the physiological roles of a family of poorly understood genes, UBXNs, in controlling HSV-1 and CHIKV infection and disease pathogenesis in mice via genetic, molecular biological, biochemical and immunological approaches, and may ultimately contribute to development of vaccines and therapeutics," explained Dr. Wang. "New York Medical College is strengthening its research, which, I strongly believe, is an important component of advanced medical education."



[Read the full article...](#)

## Touro Dental Health is Open for Business



The Touro College of Dental Medicine at New York Medical College is pleased to announce its new state-of-the-art dental health facility, Touro Dental Health, is now open, providing affordable oral healthcare for the community and advanced educational training for dental students. The 32,000-square-foot oral health facility, located at 19 Skyline Drive, will provide care by dentists-in-training under close supervision of faculty and dental professionals. Patients of all ages will be treated in the areas of general dentistry, oral and maxillofacial surgery, endodontics, periodontics, prosthodontics, pediatric dentistry, cosmetic dentistry and oral medicine. Appointments are available from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and can be scheduled by contacting Touro Dental Health at (914) 594-2700 or [dentalhealth@touro.edu](mailto:dentalhealth@touro.edu). [Read the press release...](#)

## Upcoming Events

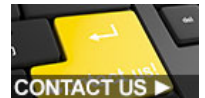


### Founder's Dinner

Sunday, October 14, 2018  
DoubleTree by Hilton, Tarrytown, N.Y.

Join fellow alumni at this special gala event featuring dinner, entertainment and presentation of NYMC's awards, featuring past professor, William Campbell, Ph.D., receiving the William Cullen Bryant Award

Alumni receive a 50% discount on tickets. For more information, please visit the [Founder's Dinner website](#).



Alumni Connections is New York Medical College's e-newsletter distributed to all alumni, published quarterly by the Office of Public Relations. Suggestions for story ideas are always welcome. Please call or email with your comments and inquiries at (914) 594-4536 or [public\\_relations@nymc.edu](mailto:public_relations@nymc.edu).

