



# Focus

JUNE 2001

## Make Your Voices Heard

A common theme informed this year's commencement exercises for the Colleges of Nursing and Health Related Professions, the College of Medicine, and School of Graduate Studies. In remarks delivered by both students and invited guests, one message was paramount: The need to act swiftly and forcibly to eliminate health disparities, especially among minority and underserved populations.

In her welcoming remarks to allied health and nursing students, Executive Dean Dr. Jo Ann Bradley urged graduates to be guided by compassion and social commitment. "Compassion means 'to suffer with'—may it be your beacon," she said.

CHRP graduate Carlene Pitter amplified these remarks by reminding her classmates that "good education is a privilege," adding: "You are here today because you have been called to serve by being part of a healthcare team."

CON valedictorian Kimberly Valez urged her fellow graduates to become socially active. "You are the architects of your future," she said. "Be proactive." Describing herself as a nurse, union representative, and mother of two who has held down two jobs while attending classes, she stated, "I don't expect everyone here to be as active as I am, but it doesn't take long to make a phone call or write to your congressman. We must make our voices heard."

"Do not accept things the way they are," urged Martha N. Hill, R.N., Ph.D.,

the keynote speaker at these ceremonies. Dr. Hill, who also received an honorary doctor of humane letters degree, is professor of nursing and director of the Center for Nursing Research at Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing. The first nursing professional to serve as president of the American Heart Association, she is internationally known for her work in preventing and treating hypertension, especially among minority populations.

"Just as Dr. Bradley stressed the importance of compassion, I want to stress the importance of the word *why*," she said. "Why are there such glaring health disparities based on race, ethnicity, age, gender and economic background?"

Explaining that racial and ethnic disparities are among the most difficult problems to analyze for lack of comprehensive data, she pointed out that bias too plays a part. Healthcare providers and their patients have unconscious prejudices due to differences in culture, communication styles, and training.

"Evaluate your own biases and stereotypes," she advised. "Health is tied to social justice. We need to act."

The keynote speaker at commencement ceremonies for the



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## NATIONAL HOSPITAL WEEK: "Caring People, People Caring"

In recognition of National Hospital Week, UHB hosted a series of health education activities in early May for patients, neighborhood residents, and members of the campus community. Kicking-off the celebration, a community health fair was held in the Grove, replete with clowns, tents, steel drums and, most important, lots of useful health information. In the days that followed, there were many festive celebrations in appreciation of our nursing staff and the customers they serve.

The events also included a children's fair and a breakfast for Community Advisory Board members, at which Dr. Steven Liverpool, a Family Health Services physician and honorary chair during National Hospital Week, received a special recognition award. Capping-off the week-long celebration, President John LaRosa and other hospital administrators traded their white coats for aprons and served everyone ice cream sundaes as their way of saying "thank you for your good work" on Employee Appreciation Day.



One scoop or two? Jeannette Marrero, chief nurse executive, helps dole out the goodies on Employee Appreciation Day.

## NURSING CAREGIVERS RECOGNITION AWARDS

On May 9, during National Hospital Week, UHB held its annual celebration honoring nurse caregivers. In her welcoming remarks, Jeannette Marrero, R.N., AVP for patient operations and chief nurse executive officer, confided that she does not believe in setting aside a special day to honor nurses.

"I feel this way not because I love and admires nurses any less," she explained, "but because I believe that nurses' contributions are evident and deserve to be recognized every day of the year."

Echoing these words, Dr. John A. Fallon, senior vice president for clinical affairs, said, "We never want to forget that the most important part of the term 'health care' is the word 'care.' We are inspired by the advances we see in medicine, but we are most proud of the professionals who exhibit acts of caring toward our patients every day of the year."

Following congratulatory remarks by President John LaRosa, Dr. Julius Berger, interim medical director, Dean of Nursing Mary Ella Graham, Phyllis Collins, president of the New York State Nurses' Association, and others, the following individuals received special recognition:



Senior Vice President for Clinical Affairs John A. Fallon, Chief Nurse Executive Jeannette Marrero, R.N., Jackie Heron, R.N., and Sarah Marshall, R.N., who coordinated this year's Nurse Recognition Day, congratulate two of the honorees: Hospital Clinical Assistant of Excellence Trina Greenfield (second from left) and runner-up Roxanne David (far left).

Educator of the Year  
**Maureen Rodríguez, R.N.**

Registered Nurse of Excellence  
**Corina Florece-Ruiz**  
**Patricia Lucas** (runner-up)

Licensed Practical Nurse of Excellence  
**Marie Abelard**  
**Violet Bartley** (runner up)

Hospital Clinical Assistant of Excellence  
**Trina Greenfield**  
**Roxanne David** (runner-up)

Escort of Excellence  
**Laurel Marks**  
**Alex Burgos** (runner-up)



*Congratulations!*  
*Class of*  
*2001*



## Make Your Voices Heard *(continued from front page)*



Dean of Medicine Eugene Feigelson, M.D., awards an honorary doctor of science degree to Seymour Furman, M.D., a pioneer in the development of the cardiac pacemaker.

College of Medicine and School of Graduate Studies echoed these concerns. Vivian Pinn, M.D., associate director for research on women's health and director of the National Institutes of Health Office of Research on Women's Health, urged graduates to "make a conscious commitment to alleviate suffering and expand scientific knowledge of the human body and mind."

"You have seen the extremes of wealth and poverty and their resulting effects on health. You yourselves have brought to this institution a marvelous array of cultural diversity...."

"Think about how the revelations of the sequencing of the human genome will affect the practice of medicine. Miraculous

innovations in biomedicine offer the promise of untold benefits for humankind worldwide, but you will be responsible for seeing that those benefits are available to *all* who need it."

Following her address, Dr. Pinn was honored with the Ailanthus Award for her contributions to women's health. Seymour Furman, M.D., '55, professor of surgery and medicine at Albert Einstein and a pioneer in the development of the cardiac pacemaker, received an honorary doctor of science degree, and Richard Reynolds, M.D., a highly respected educator and administrator for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, received an honorary doctorate in humane letters.



Dr. Jo Ann Bradley welcomes Dr. Martha Hill, who delivered the CON/CHRP keynote address.



Dr. Judie LaRosa and COM keynote speaker Dr. Vivian W. Pinn are longtime colleagues.

## COMING EVENTS

**June 28**

### President's Forum

All members of the campus community are welcome; 12:30 - 1:30, Alumni Auditorium

**July 9**

### UHB Annual Golf and Tennis Outing

Ridgeway Country Club, White Plains. Call Maxine Simson (ext. 4762) for information.

**July 14**

### Healthy Downstate Walkathon

A walk through Prospect Park for employees and their families. Call Rose Jackman. (ext. 4786) for further details.

## LOGO CONTEST

Please help us design a logo to represent our organization. Doctors Against Murder (DAM) is an organization of emergency medicine residents and physicians at SUNY Downstate/Kings County Medical Center who want to prevent weapon-related injuries through anti-violence education.

## CONTEST RULES

Anyone is welcome to enter.

- The logo should include the words "Doctors Against Murder" or "DAM" within a square or round border.
- Limit the design to three colors, max.
- All submissions should be on 8.5" x 11" paper.
- Deadline: June 30, 2001.
- Contest prize: \$500.
- Send submissions to Betty Chang, M.D., Dept. of Emergency Medicine, Kings County Medical Center.

For more information, call 245-3320.

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