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DEDICATED AND COMMITTED: Doctors helping doctors

By Danielle Brody

The Westchester County Medical Society has been advocating for physicians and their patients since 1797. Over the past three centuries, there have been many breakthroughs and changes in health care.

Dr. Joseph Tartaglia, society past president and Westchester Academy of Medicine president, said the past 20 years have brought more changes to the system than ever before. The medical society helps physicians navigate these changes while protecting and supporting them through advocacy and education. This allows members to focus on their main goal, which is to provide the best care for patients.

“The medical society helps promote and protect the integrity and health of the medical profession both individually and collectively,” said Dr. Thomas Lee, society past president. “Without a healthy, well-respected and well-educated medical profession, quality health care and quality health care access cannot be delivered. That’s what we’re here to do, to make sure physicians are happy and healthy, follow good protocol and are financially sound. That way the patient can receive the best care possible.”

The county medical society’s main purposes are to:

- Advance the state of medical science and practice;
- Provide protection and improvement of public health;
- Establish the standards of medical practice;
- Educate the public about medicine and public health; and
- Promote and protect the rightful and desirable interests of the medical profession.

In this supplement, in addition to some fascinating historical facts, you will read about five physicians who today play important roles in the medical society. Each of them brings a different scope of experience – whether it’s research, education or politics – to contribute to the mission of the organization. Each also touches on these focus points:

PHYSICIANS BENEFIT FROM MEMBERSHIP

As a group, the medical society publishes position statements about all related issues. Some examples of these issues have included drug dispensing, environmental health, genetics, health insurance coverage and practice management. These statements are a guide to physicians, the government and the public on physician involvement and actions in the state on these issues. Only doctors that are part of the society can advocate for and contribute to these important resources. The society has written positions on medical ethics and how the new technologies should be used to help physicians understand their position in a profession where science

with associated high cost can be misused.

Dr. Gino Bottino, the society president and ethics committee chairman, said the medical society discusses issues that come up at work. The society recently issued a position on euthanasia, which is if the state allows it, the person administering the fatal drugs should not be a doctor.

“Physicians are healers and under no circumstances should they aid in murder,” Bottino said. “We’re not against the idea, just doctors shouldn’t be involved.”

CONTINUING EDUCATION

The medical society is also a resource for doctors regarding public health issues and educates physicians to keep up to date and provide the best care. The society has many practice resources available for doctors about topics ranging from practice-management guides to physician burnout. The academy of medicine can certify lectures to qualify as continuing medical education, ensuring physicians receive quality education at high standards and have to follow up on what they have learned. Dr. Tartaglia said this medical education is important because it is objective – it is not coming from a hospital or company with other interests.

SUPPORT

The medical society serves physicians of all specialties at all points of their career. Doctors are invited to gatherings, such as golf outings, pool parties and wine tastings, to socialize with each other. The network of the society allows doctors to enjoy camaraderie, to learn what others are doing, stay up to date on medical information and seek professional advice, said Dr. Kira Geraci-Ciardullo, the current Medical Society of the State of New York speaker.

Dr. Lee said members often become mentors for one another, which was the case for him.

SOCIETY BENEFITS PATIENTS

The society is an outspoken advocate for patients. Physicians have their patients’ best interest in mind when advocating for legislative changes whether in Albany or in Washington, D.C. “The overall majority of physicians care more about their patients than themselves,” Dr. Bottino said.

The society’s legislative advocacy in Albany for patients is key because it gives physicians a voice. The advocacy is based on medical evidence and best practice coming from the physicians, rather than coming from large hospitals and insurance companies.

“In our current medical age, most doctors have become hired by hospitals and insurance companies – physician advocacy for patients is more important than ever.”

The medical society also does direct outreach to educate the public at different venues, helps patients navigate a constantly changing health care system and

acts as an administrative resource to patients for physician referrals and questions.

Dr. Tartaglia said one of his patient’s insurance companies refused to pay a test he administered. Through the medical society, he was able to file a complaint with the state Attorney General’s office and resolve the issue. “The medical society helps me with my work. It helps smooth over problems and provides information. It gives me comfort knowing someone’s supporting me.”

The medical society interacts with the American Medical Association about the code of ethics and dealing with the public, patients, technologies, insurance companies, hospitals and more to maintain best practices.

What have been key legislative issues over the past two years?

The medical society advocates for physicians in Albany and Washington, D.C. on the most important issues facing physicians today, acting as a collective voice for physicians. Society members lobby on behalf of physicians and patients at the House of Delegates. Some current issues have been:

- **The opioid epidemic** – The society has been advocating for patients by changing the protocol for prescribing, recognizing the history and how physicians can help in the future.
- **Retail clinic** – The society works to preserve reasonable and accessible ability for patients to see their doctors and maintain continuity of care.
- **Out of network bill** – The society was integral in passing the “Surprise Bill Law.”
- **Scope of practice.**
- **Lowering the amount of malpractice for independent doctors.**
- **Reducing the amount of time spent on paperwork.**

How is the medical society involved in the community?

The organization sponsors prizes for winners of the Westchester Engineering Science Fair. It provides judges for the fair and offers 70 cash prizes to winners. Dr. Tartaglia said this recognition encourages students to go into medicine.

Medical society members also participate in the New York Medical College student-mentoring program. Many of the physician members, like Dr. Malcolm Reid, president of the Medical Society of the State of New York, are independently active volunteers in their own communities. Dr. Reid, who grew up in Mount Vernon, returns with other doctors to mentor students and foster interest in science and medicine. The medical society has affiliations with several other county, state and national organizations that are involved in community outreach.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN: A FASCINATING GLIMPSE INTO THE PAST

EXCERPTS FROM

“The History of the Westchester County Medical Society”

By *Thomas Lansen, M.D.*

▶ Prior to 1700 colonists in Westchester depended on midwives, neighbors and the physicians of Stamford, Connecticut, or even more remote New York City, for their medical care. The first physician of record in Westchester, a Dr. Devaney, practiced in Rye. His name appears in the Rye Vestry Book in 1724. Physicians practiced from their homes, usually as an avocation to supplement their farming or mercantile income.

▶ Westchester's French Huguenots gave the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University its first professor of medicine, Richard Bayley. A surgeon in the British Army during the Revolution and a descendant of New Rochelle and Pelham Huguenots, Bayley became the first professor of medicine and anatomy at Columbia College. ... Bayley was the leader of his generation of physicians in New York. He died of yellow fever while treating immigrant victims of an epidemic of the disease.

▶ Mordecai Hale not only practiced medicine but, like many prominent physicians of the young republic, served as a member of the New York Assembly from Westchester County in 1796 and 1797. He lived in Tarrytown, practiced in Sing Sing and died in 1832 at age 70.

▶ Although there had been legitimate attempts to educate and credential physicians in the colonies, most notably by the Society of Gentlemen, which met regularly in New York to read the latest discoveries in medicine, medical education remained spotty and unstandardized. In the British system, gentlemen dabbled in “physic” philosophically as members of the Royal College of Physicians and rarely earned their living from the healing professions. A rung below the physicians were surgeons, who were considered artisans, belonging to the same guild as barbers and beneath these two groups were the apothecaries who belonged to the guild of craftsmen. Quackery and folk medicine abounded among the common people.

▶ **On May 8, 1797, eight physicians rode over the paths of Westchester to convene at the home of William Barker at the corner of Spring Street and Rockledge Avenue in White Plains. There they founded the Medical Society of the County of Westchester.**

▶ They (medical society founders) were not the most notable or educated men in the region, nor were they unqualified quacks trying to wedge their way into the post-colonial medical establishment on a point of law. They were men of varied backgrounds and educational levels responding to a new call for credentialing ...molding their fledgling society into a source of education and communication for their medical colleagues throughout the Hudson Valley.

▶ The second meeting of the medical society at the Bedford home of Major Jesse

Hally, a prominent revolutionary officer, on June 13, 1797, was well attended, some 17 local practitioners joining the original group. The increased attendance was probably the result of several factors: the published threat of the consequences of not joining the young society; the possibility of enhancing individual prestige and therefore one's medical practice by association with the medical society; and the announcement in the Danbury and Mount Pleasant newspapers of the formation of the medical society.

▶ A strange thing happens at this point (1831) to the history of the Westchester County Medical Society. It vanishes. All of the records of the society from 1798 to 1831 are simply gone.

▶ Nothing weakened the medical profession more than the bitter feuds and divisions that plagued doctors through the late 19th century. Partly, the hatreds were sectarian; partly they were personal. They were open and acrimonious and as common in the high tiers of the profession as in the low.

▶ This animosity and internecine rivalry was commonplace in 19th century American medicine because of a lack of internal standards and regulation, which engendered intense competition for patients from a broad range of licensed and unlicensed specialists.

▶ **At the 1841 meeting Dr. Stanley led the way in this new educational direction by delivering a paper on “Rubeola as an epidemic, occurring in the town of Mamaroneck and Rye in December 1840 and February 1841.” This presentation was one of the earliest papers on public health presented in the United States. With the introduction of the medical society as a forum for the ongoing education of practicing physicians, as well as the mechanism for their accreditation, began an enviable academic tradition of continuing medical education in Westchester County that has flourished for more than 150 years. This was an extraordinary turning point in the history of the society.**

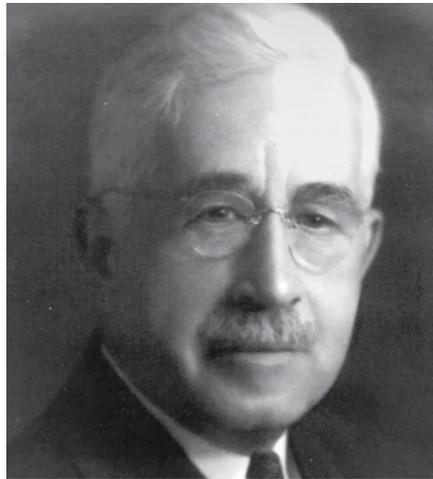
▶ Philander Stewart was president of the society in 1851 and 1852. An undergraduate at Yale, he graduated from the Jefferson Medical

College of Philadelphia in 1844. Stewart practiced for more than 30 years in Peekskill. (As an operating surgeon, for years he was among the first in all the region. His manipulations and operations for strangulated hernia were very frequent and successful, as was his management in cases of difficult parturition. He performed many amputations. His hand was steady, his instruments many and various, his knives were sharp, his determination almost dogged, his judgment good and he was never taken by surprise....' James Hart Curry memorializing Stewart for the medical society in 1874.)

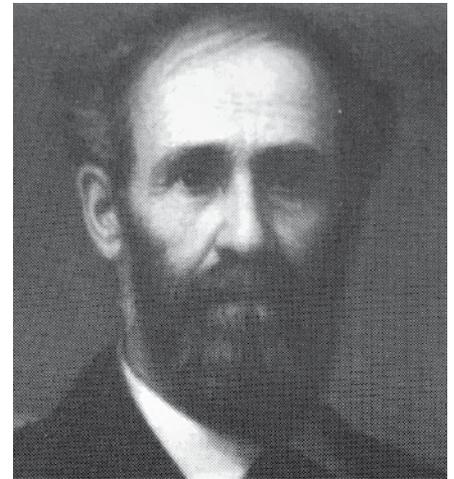
► In 1863, H. Ernest Schmid joined the Westchester County Medical Society. At the time of Dr. Henry Kelly's history of the society, presented in 1922, Dr. Schmid was the oldest living member and was a figure of local endearment and prestige.

This remarkable man, born in Saxony in 1824, had emigrated to Virginia in 1853. He studied medicine at the University of Virginia and went to Japan as an Episcopal medical missionary in 1859. This led to an adventurous sail around the world, culminating in his arrival in White Plains in 1862 at age 39. He remained in White Plains for the rest of his life. Schmid was largely responsible for the development of the White Plains Hospital in 1893. He had been a colorful figure in the community for 30 years - a horse-and-buggy doctor minus the buggy. A towering, picturesque figure, he went about on horseback making his calls at all hours of the day and night.... During a pneumonia epidemic, he once made 44 calls in a single day... from one end of the county to the other. He had the largest practice in Westchester and one of the largest hearts. ... His concern for the horses of doctors attending the hospital (White Plains Hospital) continued until the automobile finally took over undisputedly.

► In 1871, Drs. Shove, Hodgson, Stewart, Pelton and C.E. Lee were appointed a committee to negotiate with a committee of the County Board of Supervisors, which had been empowered to regulate physicians' fees. **Dr. Redway, in his description of this episode, which had occurred 75 years before, strikes a familiar note: 'At this date, 1947,**



Dr. Henry Kelly



Dr. Seth Shove



The William Barker house in White Plains was the site of the first meeting of the Westchester County Medical Society in 1797.

the matter has a familiar sound and deserves mention. Seventy-six years ago the long negotiations commenced, which have continued since with the apparently endless agencies of government: supervisors, county officials, officials of state agencies, federal bureaus, alphabetical agencies too numerous to catalogue here, Veterans Administration after the World Wars and now the shaky specter of world government with which doubtless, the profession of medicine will have to negotiate fee schedules ad infinitum....' Physi-

cians 50 years after Redway still echo these sentiments, as the concern about the domination of the profession of medicine by government is still foremost in the minds of American doctors.

► Samuel Swift, society president in 1889.. joined J. Foster Jenkins in practice in Yonkers. In addition to being a skilled and brilliant physician, Swift served as president of the Yonkers Board of Education and, in 1882, was elected mayor of Yonkers.

► In 1890, another woman was admitted to the society (Elizabeth H. Bates of Port Chester



Dr. (Edward W.) Weber

was the first woman admitted) - Florence Belknap of Mount Vernon, an 1886 graduate of the University of Michigan.

▶ Dr. (Edward W.) Weber became the youngest president of the Westchester County Medical Society at age 33 in 1913. He would continue to practice for a total of 50 years at White Plains Hospital, retiring at age 84.

▶ **On May 8, 1922, the society held its 125th anniversary dinner at the Commodore Hotel in New York. Reflecting the new trend in medical education, the membership, which numbered 312, was 98 percent male and 2 percent female.**

▶ At the September 1927 (medical society) meeting at Grasslands (doctors) spoke about outbreaks of a little-known disease in the area and the possibility of its treatment with convalescent serum. These physicians could not predict the tragic poliomyelitis epidemic, which would plunge the nation into grief and hysteria two decades later....

▶ **In 1934, the medical society transferred its offices from the Medical Center building in White Plains to new quarters at 171 E. Post Road. The Workmen's Compensation Law had been passed in 1935, and the medical societies were to arbitrate its application. In order to do so, official incorporation was necessary. And so the Westchester County Medical Society became formally incorporated in 1935, nearly 150 years after its founding.... Thus the medical society had evolved from a credentialing organization in 1797, to an educational association in 1853, to a semi-official arbiter of public funds with its reincorporation in 1935.**

▶ The county society's response to the bill (Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill, 1943): We do maintain: 1) That no national system of compulsory insurance is required by the health conditions or problems of the country. 2) That no such system could improve the quality of

medical care. 3) That such a system would stifle the incentive of the individual physician toward the progressive development of his science. 4) That the state should not destroy but should encourage voluntary efforts by local communities or by self-supporting cooperative groups to solve local problems in medical economics. 5) That the introduction of federal government control into the medical picture can only debase the quality of medical care and reduce the calling of medicine from an independent profession to a politically subservient trade.

▶ In 1950, Christopher Wood served as president of the society.... Among Wood's committee chairpersons were Louis J. Berg, the medical director of the new General Motors plant in Tarrytown, as chairman of the Committee on Industrial Health, and Herman Tarnower, a Scarsdale cardiologist, as director of scientific education. Tarnower would become famous as the 'Scarsdale Diet Doctor' and even more famous as the victim of a highly publicized homicide.

▶ **In 1952, Margaret Loder, the chief of pathology and the soul of United Hospital in Port Chester, became the first female president of the Westchester County Medical Society.**

▶ **In perhaps the most significant development for the medical society in 1956, Carl H. Pforzheimer, a longtime director of the Westchester Cancer Committee, provided the use of the mansion of former governor Herbert Lehman in Purchase, as the new headquarters for the Westchester County Medical Society....**

▶ Arthur Diedrick, one of the most colorful leaders of the county medical society, became president of the 1,473-member group in 1960... and was the perfect example of how a physician saw service to organized medicine as a responsibility rather than as a vehicle for personal aggrandizement.

▶ President Barney Silverman was inaugurated in 1997 for the bicentennial year of the Westchester County Medical Society.... Silverman graduated from the University of Louisville School of Medicine and completed his training in obstetrics and gynecology at



Arthur Diedrick

the University of Pennsylvania. Silverman, a friendly and commonsense leader, pioneered a re-exploration of the relationship between organized medicine and trade unionism.

▶ While the issues of the first two centuries of the Westchester County Medical Society's existence were substantially less complex than those which faced the medical profession at the millennium, there were more similarities between the 18th and 20th century physicians than differences. Both groups wished to protect the autonomy and dignity of their profession.

The medical profession, buffeted by an occasionally resentful culture, distrustful of cliques and privilege, by an unreasonable system of liability tort law, by declining economic fortune and loss of control, remains one of the most coveted professions in America. Medical school applications have never been higher. The simple concepts of serving oneself and one's family while doing genuine good for others remains unalterably appealing to the doctors of today and tomorrow. The Westchester County Medical Society, the constant voice of the doctors of Westchester County for the past 200 years continues to gain relevance and strength like the profession it represents. These facts lead the members of the society at the turn of the 21st century



Christopher Wood

to have no doubt that a medical historian will describe the activities of our descendants in the first 300 years of the medical society in 2097, perhaps with even greater confidence and optimism.

For the complete history of the Westchester County Medical Society, turn to Thomas Lansen's book, which is available at the society's office.



Author: Dr. Thomas Lansen is professor of neurosurgery, New York Medical College, director of strategic operations for the neurosciences at Westchester Medical Center and a past president of the Westchester County Medical Society.



The Pforzheimer Building in Purchase, home of the medical society since 1957.

PRESIDENTS WESTCHESTER COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

Archibald McDonald, 1797
Elias Cornelius, 1797-1798
Ebenezer White, 1798

The records of the medical society are lost for a number of years. However, the names of William H. Sackett, Epenetus Wallace, Seth Milier, Henry White, Isaac Gilbert Graham, Jeremiah Drake Fowler, John Ingersoll, Elisha Belcher, Mordecai Hale, and Nathaniel Drake figure prominently in the early records of the county society; and of the state society, as it bears on Westchester history. Therefore, it is at least possible that some, or all, of these men may have served as presidents of the WCMS during the period for which the records are lost.

David Rodgers, Jr., 1817, 1820
No record for 1821 - 1824
Matson Smith, 1825, 1828 - 1830
William Hoffman, 1831
No record for 1832
David Palmer, 1833, 1834
James Fountain, 1835, 1844, 1845
Peter Moulton, 1836, 1837
Amos W. Gates, 1838, 1839
William S. Stanley, 1840, 1841
Seth Shove, 1842, 1843
Benjamin Bassett, 1847
Joshua W. Bowron, 1848
John Collett, 1849, 1850
Philander Stewart, 1851, 1852, 1855, 1856
George W. Hodgson, 1853, 1854
George J. Fisher, 1857, 1858
Caleb W. Haight, 1859, 1860
J.F. Jenkins, 1861, 1862
Thomas Snowden, 1863
Hosea Fountain, 1864
S. F. Pelton, 1865
J.H. Curry, 1866
E.F. Arnold, 1867, 1868
George Bayles, 1869
James W. Scribner, 1870
H. Caruthers, 1871
J.J. Linson, 1872, 1873
William H. Helm, 1874, 1888
Z.E. Lewis, 1875
Platt R.H. Sawyer, 1876
Isaac G. Collins, 1877
H. Ernest Schmid, 1878, 1893
G. P. Balch, 1879
Henry L. Horton, 1880
Champion H. Judson, 1881
Archibald M. Campbell, 1882, 1896
J. Francis Chapman, 1883
Edward F. Brush, 1884, 1885
N. H. Freeland, 1886
C. S. Benedict, 1887
Samuel Swift, 1889

Charles Mason, 1890
Newton F. Curtis, 1891
William F. Greene, 1892
Stuart B. Carlisle, 1894
Philander Collard, 1895
Edgar M. Hermance, 1897
R. Condit Eddy, 1898
Archibald T. Banning, 1899
A. O. Snowden, 1900
P.A. Callan, 1901
Robert T. Howe, 1902
Robert T. Irvine, 1903
Charles F. Chapman, 1904
T. F. Goodwin, 1905, 1906
H. Beattie Brown, 1907
C.P. Byington, 1908
W. A. Miner, 1909
George A. Peck, 1910
S. Oscar Myers, 1911
Frank E. Russell, 1912
Edward W. Weber, 1913
John W. Smith, 1914
Samuel E. Getty, 1915
Bertrand F. Drake, 1916
W. Stuart Woodruff, 1917
Henry Moffat, 1918
William L. Russell, 1919
Clarence C. Guion, 1920
William H. Purdy, 1921
Francis R. Lyman, 1922
Edwin G. Ramsdell, 1923
A. S. Corwin, 1924
Charles C. Sweet, 1925
Henry T. Kelly, 1926
H. W. Titus, 1927
Elton G. Littell, 1928
W.H. Cantle, 1929
Walter Weseley Mott, 1930
Louis B. Chapman, 1931
Louis V. Waldron, 1932
Andrew A. Eggston, 1933
Mortimer W. Raynor, 1934
Harrison Betts, 1935
Theodore West, 1936
Morley T. Smith, 1937
Erich H. Restin, 1938
Ralph T. B. Todd, 1939
Henry J. Vier, 1940
Reginald A. Higgons, 1941
George C. Adie, 1942, 1943
Merwin E. Marsland, 1944
Laurance D. Redway, 1945
Isadore Zadek, 1946
Robert B. Archibald, 1947
William G. Childress, 1948
Waring Willis, 1949
Christopher Wood, 1950
Henry McGarvey, 1951
Margaret Loder, 1952

Reid R. Heffner, 1953
W. Alex Newlands, 1954
David Fertig, 1955
Harold J. Dunlap, 1956
John N. Dill, 1957
William P. Reed, 1958
Donald R. Reed, 1959
Arthur H. Diedrick, 1960
Charles M. Brane, 1961
Thomas C. Jaleski, 1962
James M. Jones, 1963
Wallace M. Sheridan, 1964
James Q. Haralambie, 1965
Maurice L. Woodhull, 1966
William A. Brumfield Jr., 1967
Robert E. Healy, 1968
Francis T. Rogliano, 1969
Allison B. Landolt, 1970
Katharine L. Friedmann, 1971
Robert A. Mayers, 1972
Albert B. Lowenfels, 1973
William P. Clark, 1974
Thomas Dignan Rizzo, 1975
William J. Mccann, 1976
John A. Ramsdell, 1977
Bertram J. Oppenheimer, 1978
Charles A. Bertrand, 1979
Michael Sierp, 1980
Kenneth W. Trout, 1981
Peter B. Farnsworth, 1982
Armond V. Mascia, 1983
Richard L. Fenton, 1984
Stanley M. Mendelowitz, 1985
Robert C. Mickatavage, 1986
Richard L. Petrillo, 1987
William J. Walsh, 1988
Pellegrino J. Tozzo, 1989
Ann C. Cea, 1990
Sanford A. Kaplan, 1991
Thomas A. Lansen, 1992
Mark Fox, 1993
Stephen O. Schwartz, 1994
Paul S. Carton, 1995
Robert Soley, 1996
Barney B. Silverman, 1997
Howard F. Stock, 1998
Carl P. Weber, 1999
Peter S. Liebert, 2000
David E. Bank, 2001
Kira Geraci-Ciardullo, 2002
Andrew Kleinman, 2003
Michael Rosenberg, 2004
Bonnie Litvack, 2005
Peter F. Rizzo, 2006
Alfred Tinger, 2007
Amy E. Newburger, 2008
John J. Strangel, 2009
Joseph J. Tartaglia, 2010
Abe Levy, 2011
Thomas Lee, 2012
Robert Lerner, 2013
Louis McIntyre, 2014
Thomas Lester, 2015
Gino Bottino, 2016

JANINE MILLER

Executive Director WESTCHESTER COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

Janine Miller has been leading the Westchester County Medical Society (WCMS) as its executive director since March 2015. Prior to her role with the medical society, Miller held positions at Columbia University and the Bronx County Medical Society. In her role with WCMS, Miller is in charge of overseeing the day-to-day operations and functions of the administrative office. Her roles encompass the whole of society functions, including administrative, legislative, meeting organization and overseeing the continuing medical education program through the Academy of Medicine.

What are the biggest challenges you face in running the medical society?

“One of our biggest challenges at the moment is connecting with early-career physicians and getting our message out to that population. The practice of medicine has changed dramatically over the last 15 to 20 years and as a society we have to find new ways to engage our young doctors in order to remain relevant. Another major challenge for us is keeping and continuing to grow our membership. As many physicians have become members of their specialty societies, they have begun to feel as though that is enough. It couldn't be further from the truth. We advocate for all specialties and for issues relevant to the practice of medicine, which affect physicians in all specialties who practice in the state of New York. This is one of the most misunderstood functions of our organization by nonmembers and former members alike.”



What is the most exciting aspect of running the society?

“Advocacy, hands down, is the most exciting part of this organization. It is amazing to see what can be done by this incredible group of physicians who care so deeply and so passionately about what they do and the care of their patients. Watching their hard work and effort actually make a difference in how patients receive care is pretty exciting.”

What is the most important role of the society?

“I believe our most important role, aside from our advocacy efforts, is connecting the physicians of Westchester with one another. All too often, we as people don't stop to take the time to get to know one another. We rush through our lives and our day to day only to get up and repeat it again tomorrow. I believe the society connects people within the medical profession who have common interests, concerns and issues and creates an environment where members can rely on one another for advice, consultation and even friendship. There is something to be said about organizations that bring people together for a common goal and it is a tradition that is rooted deep in our history that we continue today.”

What are the society's plans for the future?

“My plan for the Westchester County Medical Society is to see it grow, very simply.

“MY PLAN FOR THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY IS TO SEE IT GROW, VERY SIMPLY. THERE ARE MANY PHYSICIANS IN WESTCHESTER AND IF YOU THINK ABOUT WHAT COULD BE DONE IF EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THEM BELONGED TO THE SOCIETY, THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS. THERE IS TREMENDOUS STRENGTH IN NUMBERS; THE MORE MEMBERS WE HAVE, THE MORE WE CAN DO.”

There are many physicians in Westchester and if you think about what could be done if each and every one of them belonged to the society, the possibilities are endless. There is tremendous strength in numbers; the more members we have, the more we can do. I would also like to see us participate more directly and actively within the communities we serve through education and interaction. It is important to not only stay relevant within the physician community, but within the community as a whole. We are all patients at one point or another and that is our commonality.”

GINO BOTTINO, M.D.

ETHICS MATTERS

Ethics are the heart of Dr. Gino Bottino's practice and the Westchester County Medical Society – the first medical group in the country to have a code of ethics.

The medical society takes positions on ethical issues that come up in their members' practices and nationwide, such as torture, the role of health care professionals in aiding police investigations, fertilization and more.

"These are very different issues and they're brought up often because a patient wants to do something (ethically questionable) and they want to find a doctor who will do it," Dr. Bottino said. "Even if you can do it, doesn't mean you should do it."

As an oncologist, ethics have always played a crucial role in decisions regarding his patients. Dr. Bottino said when he started his career, people were wary of cancer treatments because the results were not often satisfactory.

"When I was a young oncologist, there were a lot of questions about what I was doing and the ethics of it," he said.

Even though cancer treatments are now widely accepted, Dr. Bottino faces issues such as how many resources to employ to keep someone alive in the last six months, who to treat and for how long.

Why did you choose oncology as your specialty?

"I felt part of something important. People wanted me there, I felt I was helping."

Dr. Bottino said in this specialty, he felt he had the most impact on patients compared with other practices.

Why did you join the Medical Society?

"It gave me the ability to give back to my profession by helping with political advocacy and contributing to the code of ethics." Dr. Bottino joined the WCMS in 2003.

He has provided an avenue for physicians to discuss issues outside of the workplace. Now the president of the society, he has also served as head of the ethics committee for the society and the Medical Society of the State of New York.



EDUCATION AND CLINICAL TRAINING

- Swarthmore College, B.S.
- New York Medical College, M.D., won the New York State Surgical Society award for best surgery student in the state, 1977.
- Residency, Montefiore Hospital, Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx, 1979.
- Hematology fellowship, Montefiore Hospital, Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx, 1980.
- Oncology fellowship, National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute, 1981.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Researcher, medicine branch of the National Institute of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, 1981-1984.
- Private practice, 1984 to present.
- Northern Westchester Hospital, built Cancer and Wellness Center, 2009.
- Hudson Valley Hematology Oncology Group, 2015 to present.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Chairman, Northern Westchester Hospital blood bank committee, 1996 to present.
- Chairman, Northern Westchester Hospital cancer committee, 1995 to 2012.
- Board member, Westchester-Rockland-Putnam Region of the American Cancer Society, 2004 to present.
- Member, Medical Resource Council of Gilda's Club, 2005 to present.
- Cancer liaison physician, American College of Surgeons for the northern Westchester area, 1996-2013.
- Member, Westchester County Medical Society, 2003 to present.
 - Chairman, ethics committee, 2009 to present.
 - Board member, 2010 to present.
 - President, 2016-2017.
- Member, American Medical Association, 1997 to present.
- Member, Medical Society of the state of New York, 2003 to present.
 - Member, ethics and cancer committees, 2009 to present.
 - Delegate, 2012 to present.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

- New York University, 1984-2000.
- Emergency room, Northern Westchester Hospital, 1984-2000.
- New York Medical College, 1984 to present.

Why is the Medical Society necessary?

"The very heart and soul of the medical practice is the doctor-patient relationship. The society focuses on laws and situations that hurt that and make it difficult for interaction."

The society reviews public health laws, interacts with the health commissioner and tries to ensure that doctors have as much leeway as possible to do what is best for patients without roadblocks, according to Dr. Bottino.

He said the society has taken issue with insurance companies and contracts prohibiting doctors from divulging patient information, forcing them to order medicine or tests based on government or insurance companies.

He said New York state has the highest malpractice insurance in the nation. Lawyers wanted to pass a law so that there would be an indefinite maximum on insurance costs. The society was instrumental in defeating that.

What are some issues for patients?

"Every day I listen to people having a hard time getting access to medical care. It gets harder and harder for patients to get good medical care."

Dr. Bottino said he is willing to care for all patients independent of any reimbursement, without means to pay or any insurance. The Open Door Clinics send him all their hematology oncology patients and the large medical groups will send him patients that have no insurance or Medicaid. The Catholic church recognized Dr. Bottino by awarding him the Bishop's Father Rufin Compassionate Caregiver Award in 2012.

How do you get involved in the community?

Besides being a doctor, Dr. Bottino is also a teacher. He has given talks in Westchester County at the Italian Society, for large companies like PepsiCo and IBM, for the American Cancer Society events, at local churches, the Port Chester Knights of Columbus and many other venues.

More formally, he teaches students at New York Medical College, where he has won numerous teaching awards. Most recently he won the Chancellor's Award for Exceptional Service to the College in 2014.

What is your hope for the future of the Society?

"With better numbers we'd be more effective in Albany. Medicine has become a political football between insurance companies, government and big businesses. We, the physicians, are not even in the conversation, we're on the sidelines. We need to change that dynamic. We need to become a player."

KIRA GERACI-CIARDULLO, M.D.

CAREER-LONG DEDICATION AND EDUCATION ADVOCATE

As a new doctor starting her own practice 30 years ago, Dr. Kira Geraci-Ciardullo said she could not have done it without the resources at the Westchester County Medical Society. The society helped her with the nuanced aspects of owning a practice, such as how to manage overhead costs, staff and contracts.

“You don’t learn business skills in medical school,” Dr. Geraci-Ciardullo said. “You have to go to the medical society.”

When did you join the medical society?

“I joined the medical society the minute I got out of training. I saw it as a professional obligation.”

Why did you choose to go into medicine?

“As a young person I was always science-oriented. I was also a people person and I’m an empathetic person. Medicine was an excellent fit for that.”

She went on to receive her medical degree at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. She wanted to be a surgeon, but changed course when she decided to pursue pediatrics. During her residency at New York Hospital, she handled many cases of asthma. Around this time, doctors were encouraged to become subspecialists rather than go into primary care, she said. Dr. Geraci-Ciardullo decided to go into her own private allergy and asthma practice to be able to manage her schedule and family obligations. She did so for 30 years in Rye and Mamaroneck.

How has the medical society benefitted you in your career?

“The medical society gave me a way of introducing myself to my colleagues and the socioeconomic, political and logistic issues here.”

That knowledge helped Dr. Geraci-Ciardullo get to know the community, which was necessary as a solo practitioner. She visited schools and implemented an asthma-education program through the American Lung Association to raise



EDUCATION AND MEDICAL TRAINING

- Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, M.D., 1980.
- Residency in pediatrics, New York Hospital, 1980-83.
- Fellowship in allergy and asthma, New York Hospital, 1983-85.
- New York Medical College School of Public Health, MPH in health care policy and management, 2007. (Received an award for best thesis.)

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Board-certified allergist in private practice for 30 years.
- Completed a five-year term as chief of allergy at White Plains Hospital.
- On staff at Westchester Medical Center, the New York Presbyterian Hospital and Montefiore New Rochelle Hospital, and White Plains Hospital.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Member of Medical Honor Society Alpha Omega Alpha.
- Fellow of the American Academy of Allergy Asthma and Immunology.
- Fellow of the American College of Allergy and Immunology.
- Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- Speaker of the Medical Society of the State of New York.
- Elected to the American Medical Association Council for Science and Public Health.
- Serves on the patient safety and education committee of the Board of Directors of Liability Mutual Insurance Co.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

- Holds academic appointments at both Weill Cornell Medical College and New York Medical College.

awareness and connect with her community.

What is the Westchester Medical Society’s impact on health care?

“The society reminds legislators that we’re dealing with humans.”

She and other board members have represented all physicians in the state legislative meetings.

She has held positions on the board, including Westchester County Medical Society president, and is now speaker of the Medical Society of the State of New York, running the annual meeting where regulation and legislative issues are discussed.

“I make sure all voices are heard,” she said.

Why do physicians need to be a part of the medical society?

“There’s been a volcanic eruption in health care in the past 30 years since I’ve been in practice.”

Dr. Geraci-Ciardullo said doctors who are members of the society have the opportunity to be engaged in changes in their profession and to learn more about medicine through what their peers are doing.

“Doctors need to learn from each other,” she said.

An advocate for education who received her master’s degree in public health, she established continuing medical education programs for members of the society.

How do informed, engaged physicians benefit patients?

“The health insurers, trial attorneys and hospitals have their voice. The doctors need their voice. The physicians’ voice is closest to the patients’ voices.”

She encourages patients to ask their doctors which professional associations they belong to and encourages doctors, who are closest to the patients, to be on alert.

She credits the doctor in Flint, Michigan, for detecting that many young patients had elevated levels of lead in blood tests, which led to the discovery of the water crisis in that city.

“Every doctor can be a public health champion like she was,” she said.

THOMAS T. LEE, M.D.

PROTECTING HEALTH CARE THROUGH LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

When Dr. Thomas Lee was a relatively newly minted neurosurgeon in 2000, he performed emergency brain surgery on a patient for free after her insurance company denied coverage the day before the operation was scheduled.

Dr. Lee's mentors, two past presidents of the Westchester County Medical Society, encouraged him to become a member and soon after he became a member he was honored by the society for his act of compassion.

What is the significance of the medical society?

"We believe ourselves to be a consistently strong advocacy group for physicians and their patients," Dr. Lee said.

He works to protect patients from gaps in care at the state and federal levels. He was the chairman of the society's legislative committee and now serves on the Medical Society of the State of New York as the 9th district councilor, chairman of the medical insurance committee and assistant commissioner of the division on governmental relations.

Dr. Lee has held several roles in the Westchester County Medical Society, the state medical society and the Westchester Academy of Medicine, ranging from finance, insurance, government relations, to membership events for physicians and physicians-in-training.

He studies health care issues intensely and represents society members in Albany to both houses of the Legislature and to the governor's office. He said he receives input from many different voices in the society. Although members come from different geographic, economic and professional backgrounds, they share many of the same goals: improving education, quality, patient access and standard of care.

What do you hope comes out of your work with the medical society?

"I'm hoping to shape the system so patients can continue to access quality care. The system has given me a lot and I believe it's important to give back."

Some of the issues Dr. Lee focuses on are the consolidation of health care systems, limited choice and access to the health care system and personal and professional treatment of the patients. He said the consolidation of the health care marketplace has resulted in increased deductibles and premium rates and limited patient access to care – issues the medical society foresaw and warned ahead of the passage of the Affordable Care Act.



EDUCATION AND CLINICAL TRAINING

- University of California at Berkeley, B.A., magna cum laude, Department of Biochemistry high honor, 1989.
- University of California at Los Angeles School of Medicine, M.D., Dean's Scholar, 1993.
- Surgical intern and resident, Department of Neurological Surgery, University of Miami-Jackson Memorial Medical Center, Miami, 1999.
- George Washington University, M.B.A. in health care, 2007.
- Board certified in neurological surgery by ABNS, 2001-2011, re-certified 2011-2021.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Private practice in neurosurgery, Westchester County, 1999 to present.
- Chief, neurosurgery, St. John's Riverside Hospital, Yonkers, 2001 to present.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Medical Board, St. John's Riverside Hospital, Yonkers, 2003-2005.
- Board of Trustees, St. John's Riverside Hospital, Yonkers, 2006 to present; chairman 2012-2016.
- Board of Directors, Westchester County Medical Society, 2007 to present.
 - President, 2012-2013.
 - Secretary, 2010-2011, vice president then president elect, 2011-2012.
 - Chairman, legislative committee, 2007-2015.
 - Legislation and Physicians Advocacy Committee, 2010 to present; and Executive Committee of the Legislation and Physician Advocacy Committee, 2012 to present; formulates MSSNY annual legislative agenda for council approval and adoption.
 - Alternate delegate, House of Delegates, 2011 and delegate, 2012-16.
- President, Westchester Academy of Medicine, 2014-2015.
- Board member, Hudson Doctors IPA, 2014 to present.
- Consultant, Abbott Laboratories, Austin, Texas, 2006-2008.
- Special advisor to the president, Osprey Biomedical, Manhattan Beach, California, 2006-2008, and 2010 to present.
- Consultant, Zimmer Spine, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2010-2011.
- New York State Governor's Workgroup on Out-of-Network Reimbursement, 2016 to present.
- Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB), appointed for 2016-2017.
- New York State Department of Health (DOH) 2016-2017.
- New York State Department of Health (DOH) Board for Professional Medical Conduct (BPMC), appointed for 2011-2016.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

- Clinical adjunct faculty, Department of Neurosurgery, New York Medical College-Westchester Medical Center, Valhalla, 2013 to present.
- Clinical assistant professor, Department of Neurosurgery, Mount Sinai University School of Medicine, New York City, 2005 to present.

His hope is to level the playing field so high-quality, smaller practice health care providers can continue to deliver professional and personalized care for patients, and to afford smaller medical groups the option to stay afloat independently. "Patients should have access to various practice models of their choices: small practice, large group and facility-based practices. Competition is good for both physicians and patients," said Dr. Lee.

What drew you to neurosurgery?

"It is a specialty where physicians at all levels show a tremendous degree of professionalism and dedication to their patients."

Dr. Lee, who received his medical degree at the University of California at Los Angeles School of Medicine, said he applied to a neurosurgery residency last minute after he found, during an initial short gap-filler rotation, that the neurosurgery attending and resident physicians were highly dedicated to their patients and were great teachers for the next generation of physicians. Initially Dr. Lee had done rotations and research in cardiovascular surgery, with the goal of becoming a cardiovascular surgeon. He also considered doing academic research, but wanted to participate in direct patient care and did not want to be routinely involved in the politics of that professional path. He realized he wanted to provide relief to patients with serious neurological conditions and subsequently completed his residency in neurosurgery at the University of Miami-Jackson Memorial Medical Center.

What are some of your accomplishments in your field?

Dr. Lee said he has done research in clinical neurosurgery, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and neuronal regeneration. He has published more than 20 peer-reviewed journal articles on brain and spinal cord disease, and has written more than 10 neurosurgery textbook chapters. Dr. Lee has presented at more than 50 professional meetings and has received numerous honors and awards. He has faculty appointments at New York Medical College and Mount Sinai University School of Medicine.

How has the medical society helped you throughout your career in Westchester County?

"The medical society is not just an institution. It has the tradition of us mentoring each other. Even though we work for different folks, we share a lot more in common in terms of the professional practice."

In 1999, Dr. Lee joined a practice in White Plains, and in 2001 started his own neurosurgery practice with help from the medical society. Having just moved to White Plains from Tennessee, where he was in a spine fellowship, the medical society provided Dr. Lee with mentorship, support and a chance to become involved in health care policy.

MALCOLM REID, M.D.

MEDICAL COMMUNITY LEADER

Education has always been important to Dr. Malcolm Reid. Growing up in Mount Vernon, he excelled in science and math and liked working with people, which led him to medicine. He simultaneously earned his medical degree and his master's degree in public policy from Harvard University in 1987.

"I wanted to supplement my medical training with a solid background in public health policy," he said. "It really enhanced what I was learning in medical school."

That background helped Dr. Reid, chairman of the department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Mount Sinai St. Luke's and Mount Sinai West, with his other roles as president of the Medical Society of the State of New York since April. The society is involved with advocacy for physicians and patients and influencing health care legislation.

What do you think the future of health care will look like?

"There will be fewer solo practitioners and small-group practices. Hospitals are bringing these physicians in. It's going to be rare to find solo practitioners in the future."

The increasing emphasis on using electronic medical records and increasing numbers of unfunded mandates are making it difficult for solo practices to keep up and survive, Dr. Reid said.

"You used to be able to open a practice with one or two physicians; that is becoming less feasible given the increasing consolidation of hospitals and increased regulatory burdens."

What is an example of a current problem with our health care system?

"I was on call one weekend last year when a patient on my acute inpatient rehabilitation medicine unit, whose health insurance company (from the Health Exchange) was bankrupt and she was concerned that she would be thrown off our rehabilitation unit. I assured her that she was not going to be prematurely discharged."

This patient spoke to the MSSNY department



EDUCATION AND CLINICAL TRAINING

- Fordham University, B.S., cum laude, 1982.
- Harvard University, M.D., master's degree in public policy, 1987.
- Internship, Winthrop University Hospital, Long Island.
- Residency in rehabilitation medicine, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

- Assistant professor of rehabilitation medicine, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Chief resident, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center.
- Governor's appointee to the New York State Hospital Review and Planning Council.
- Chairman, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Mount Sinai, St. Luke's and Mount Sinai West.
- Associate medical director, Mount Sinai, St. Luke's and Mount Sinai West.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Member, Mount Sinai's continuing medical education committee.
- President, New York County Medical Society.
- President, Manhattan Central Branch of the National Medical Association.
- Chairman of the Board of Trustees, New York County Medical Society.
- Medical Society of the State of New York.
 - Councilor.
 - Co-chairman, federal candidate evaluation subcommittee.
- Vice-chairman, communication and membership committee.
- Member, National Medical Association.
- Member, American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.
- Member, New York Society of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

of government affairs and expressed her concerns about how she felt let down by a government health care plan that had failed. Dr. Reid and other society members have articulated this patient's concern both in Albany and Washington, D.C.

Dr. Reid stated "there are thousands of patients with this same type of story; similarly, there are countless numbers of physicians, in New York state, awaiting compensation for the care that was rendered to these patients."

What is the significance of the Westchester County Medical Society?

"It is a strong advocate for physicians and patients. This group lobbies locally in Westchester County and at the state and federal level. The society helps to improve the health care environment for physicians to practice in Westchester County."

Dr. Reid said many changes are occurring in health care throughout the county, state and country, which is why doctors need to be informed and engaged. He said the Westchester County Medical Society and MSSNY need to constantly make their relevance known to the physician community, especially our younger physicians.

"Our younger physicians are entering a different landscape," Dr. Reid said.

What drew you to a career in physical medicine and rehabilitation?

"I did rotations in physical medicine. Physical medicine and rehabilitation deal with restoring a patient's function and independence. Given the importance of lifelong exercise and the fact that most people desire to be as independent and as functional as possible at all ages, I often state, 'all roads lead to rehabilitation.'"

How do you stay involved in your community?

"I bring a group of physicians from MSSNY, typically on an annual basis, to speak to students at Mount Vernon High School, to encourage the students do well academically and to consider careers in medicine and science. As a 1978 graduate of Mount Vernon High School, I am proud to return to my alma mater and bring some of my colleagues to address the students."

Dr. Reid has been honored with the Distinguished Physician Award from the One Hundred Black Men Inc., of New York City and was selected as one of the 50 Most Outstanding National Medical Fellowship Scholars in 1997. In 1996, he was inducted into the Mount Vernon High School Hall of Fame for his scholarly and athletic accomplishments.

JOSEPH TARTAGLIA, MD

THE HEART OF THE SOCIETY

For Dr. Joseph Tartaglia, medicine is a family affair. His father was a respected doctor in the Bronx and was the president of the Bronx County Medical Society, and his wife, Antonella, is a physician.

Dr. Tartaglia aims to bring camaraderie to doctors in the Westchester County Medical Society through events and activities. He is president of the Westchester Academy of Medicine, the nonprofit arm of the medical society, which accredits continuing medical education programs and also sponsors social events. He has planned wine tastings, pool parties, mixers, lectures and more to connect to doctors and to raise funds. “We’re trying to create and preserve an environment where doctors can thrive,” he said.

Many physicians train in New York, but move elsewhere, he said. Social events, especially those with New York Medical College students, are an effort to keep them in the area.

What is your background in medicine?

As a student at Duke University, Dr. Tartaglia said he originally considered being a paleontologist or marine biologist. His propensity for science and growing up with a physician father led him to pursue medicine. He studied at the rigorous University of Rome where classes were taught in the native language. There, he met Antonella.

Dr. Tartaglia trained at North Shore University Hospital, Cornell University Medical College in pathology. He completed his residency in internal medicine at Montefiore Hospital North and his fellowship in cardiology at North Shore. Cardiology was significant to him because a heart attack forced his father to give up his practice. The concentration also suits Dr. Tartaglia because it “involves a little bit of



EDUCATIONAL AND CLINICAL TRAINING

- Duke University, B.S., cum laude, 1977.
- Wagner College, M.S., magna cum laude, 1978.
- University of Rome, M.D., summa cum laude, 1984.
- Pathology internship, North Shore University Hospital, Cornell University Medical College, Manhasset, 1984-1985.
- Medicine residency, Montefiore Hospital North, major affiliate of New York Medical College, Valhalla, 1985-1988.
- Cardiology fellowship, North Shore University Hospital, Cornell University Medical College, Manhasset, 1988-1990.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Director, Enhanced External Counterpulsation, United Hospital, Port Chester, 1995-2004.
- Treasurer, medical board, St. Agnes Hospital, White Plains, 2002-2003.
- Section chief, geriatric medicine, St. Agnes Hospital, White Plains, 2002-2003.
- Director, Health Enhancement Cardiac Rehab and Enhanced External Counter Pulsation, Yonkers, 1995-2004.
- Director, cardiac rehabilitation, St. Agnes Hospital, White Plains, 1998-2003.
- President and CEO, Medical Associates of Port Chester, United Hospital, Port Chester.
- President of New York United Hospital medical staff, 2001-2004.
- President of Westchester County Medical Society, 2010-2011.
- President of Westchester Academy of Medicine, 2012.
- State Council of the American College of Cardiology, Westchester County, 2011-2013.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Fellow, American College of Cardiology.
- Member, Westchester Chapter, American Heart Association.
- President, member, Westchester County Medical Society.
- Member, American Medical Association.
- President, Westchester Academy of Medicine, date
- Development Committee American Heart Association, Westchester Chapter, 1993-1995.
- Westchester County Task Force on Bioterrorism, 2001-2003.
- Chairman, Committee of Public Health, Westchester Medical Society, 1997-2001.
- Chairman, public relations, Westchester County Medical Society, 2001 to present.
- Member, Critical Care Committee, White Plains Hospital.
- Member, National Steering Committee International EECF Patient Registry, 1995.
- Epidemiology Data Center, University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public Health, Pennsylvania.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

- Chief resident in medicine, Montefiore Hospital North, Bronx, 1987-1988.
- Fellow in medicine, Cornell University Medical College, New York, 1988-1990.
- Clinical assistant professor of medicine, New York Medical College, Valhalla, 1990 to present.

everything,” he said, such as electrophysiology, science and consulting.

What are your career highlights?

“I’m a noninvasive cardiologist in local community hospitals, Cornell and Westchester Medical Center. I also research stem cells at Westchester Medical Center.”

Dr. Tartaglia’s research covers increasing stem cells in people with angina in order to grow heart muscle and blood vessels, a project he calls his “life’s work.” His dream is to be able to regrow hearts noninvasively.

How has the medical society helped you?

“It’s been invaluable for staying in touch with the pulse of medicine.”

He joined the society around 1993 and has received advice and legal services, has stimulating discussion with other doctors and has done volunteer work. He has also helped develop continuing medical education courses, including CDs about smoking cessation.

The medical society distributes information about pertinent issues and has lobby power through House of Delegate members, allowing the society to propose resolutions. He calls the society a watchdog.

“It keeps you aware of what’s going on,” he said. “Because it’s a political world, doctors need to get involved or they are going to lose.”

What is a major issue for physicians?

“We need to reduce the bureaucratic burden so physicians can focus on the patient. The society is invaluable in keeping the medical practice in check.”

Dr. Tartaglia said doctors now spend three quarters of their time on paperwork, something the society is lobbying to change.

With the many changes in medicine, such as conglomerates, he said the society is instrumental in policy change. Another issue the society has taken on is a proposal to remove the limit on the amount of time a patient has to sue for malpractice, which would benefit lawyers.

“You need the medical society because it protects the physician autonomy from other interests,” Dr. Tartaglia said.

The doctors’ biographies were compiled by Danielle Brody of Westfair Communications.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE RIGHT LEGISLATION

By Dr. Thomas Lee

The Westchester County Medical Society works closely with the Medical Society of the State of New York (MSSNY) on many legislative issues important to physicians and patients. MSSNY's legislative agenda is the culmination of input from MSSNY staff recommendations and the MSSNY physician advocacy and legislative committee, which fall under the Division of Governmental Relations on which I am the assistant commissioner. Input from state specialty societies and county medical societies are also sought. Medical societies work on public health, health care access, patient protection and physician work condition/wellness issues all the time. The WCMS has helped pass physician and patient friendly laws and has opposed laws, which impair access to care and reduce quality of care patients receive. Here are just some examples of the laws passed.

S. 6779 Hannon/ A.9335-B Gottfried, 2016

Laws requiring reporting of each paper and phone prescription to the Department of Health, including after hours, would have impeded access to life-saving medications. MSSNY staff and WCMS worked to push for the passage S. 6779 Hannon/ A.9335-B Gottfried (2016), which eases the onerous reporting burden on physicians every time they need to issue a paper prescription in lieu of e-prescribing. This bill was signed into law by the Governor. The bill passed this year affords a much more preferable alternative by allowing physicians and other prescribers to make a notation in the patient's chart indicating that they have invoked one of the three statutory exceptions. Patients would not lose important



New York state Sen. David Carlucci and NYS Assemblywomen Sandy Galef. Courtesy of the office of Assemblywoman Sandy Galef.

access to needed new medication or renewals after hours because of onerous technical and regulatory requirements, as a result of the passage of the laws.

Out-of-network Transparency Laws, 2014

The Westchester County Medical Society and its physician leaders are some of the original advocates of out-of-network insurance laws. This is verbiage from MSSNY on passage of the 2014 Out-of-Network (OON) Transparency Laws: **"The final 2014 Budget negotiated between the Governor and the Legislature contains provisions to provide greater transparency of a health insurer's out-of-network coverage,** broader availability of a patient's right to go OON if the insurer's existing network is insufficient, provisions to assure that OON benefits are more comprehensive and provisions to address payments for emergency care and 'surprise bills' by OON physicians." The physicians who worked on the bill were able to persuade the Senate to include the bill as part of its one-house budget bill proposal in both 2013 and 2014 and subsequently persuaded

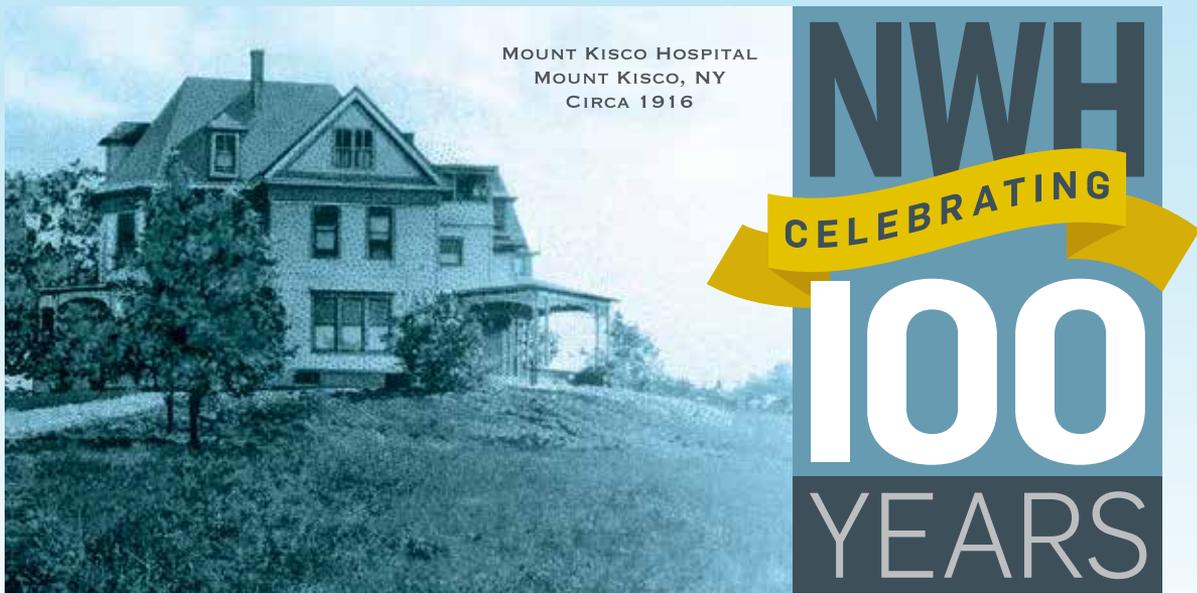
the Governor in 2014 to include the bill in its executive budget proposal as well. The provisions include transparency requirements on both the insurer and provider sides with out-of-network care, protection for patients receiving emergency care, availability of out-of-network benefit availability to patients in small-group markets and establishment of independent dispute resolution.

Public playground smoking ban bill, 2013

WCMS worked with principal authors New York state Assemblywoman Sandy Galef and New York state Sen. David Carlucci and advocated the passage of the public playground smoking ban bill in 2013. Below are excerpts from the New York Senate press release from the joint press conference: "The newly signed law (A.4205/S1643-Chapter 102 of the Laws of New York 2013) **will prohibit smoking at public playgrounds where children under 12 are present during the hours between sunrise and sunset. This legislation would not prevent local municipalities from enacting or applying more rigorous anti-smoking policies.**"

Northern Westchester Hospital celebrates 100 years of care in the community.

We are proud to support the **Westchester County Medical Society** and its dedication to improvements in the healing arts as well as the general good of humanity.



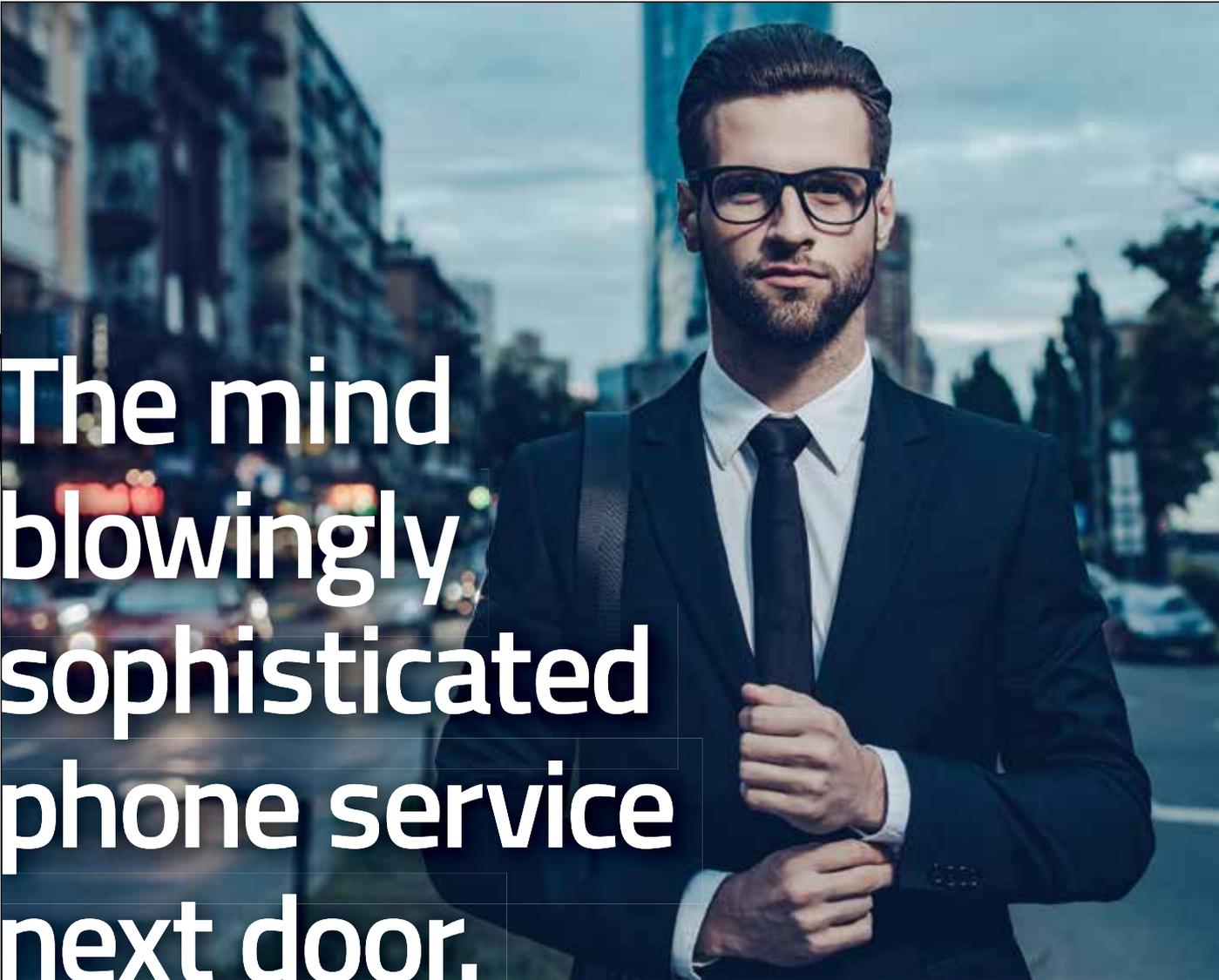
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Anurag Anand	<i>IM Internal Medicine</i>	Maryann Buetti-Sgouros	<i>PD Pediatrics</i>
Nandini Anandu	<i>IM Internal Medicine</i>	Lauren Hilary Burack	<i>D Dermatology</i>
Margaret Mary Andersen	<i>IM Internal Medicine</i>	Sergio Bures	<i>IM Internal Medicine</i>
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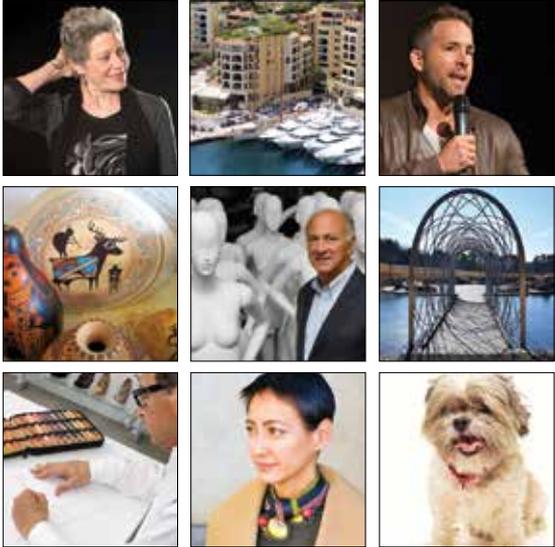


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Three generations of orthopedic surgeons and members of the medical society, practicing at the Hospital for Special Surgery and the Lawrence Hospital in Bronxville. From left: Thomas Dignan Rizzo (president of the society in 1975,) Peter F. Rizzo and Peter-Cyrus Rizzo.



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