Dear Friends,

One can’t report on 2009 without addressing the serious global economic crisis or the health risk posed by an unpredictable novel influenza strain, both of which had profound implications for Albany Medical Center. As we started the year we were entering another month of declining hospital volume and practice visits. Close to home and across the nation, it seemed that anyone who could possibly delay health care was doing so. At the same time, the threat of the H1N1 flu was looming and we had to ensure that our emergency health infrastructure was prepared to address the anticipated epidemic.

As always, we were very well prepared and, when called upon, responded in the effective manner our region has come to expect of us. Despite reductions in government support for our services and tight capital markets, we managed to end the year with a positive bottom line, making critical investments in our infrastructure throughout. Our emergency department and physician offices responded efficiently to the influx of patients with flu-like symptoms; we instituted precautions and public awareness efforts to prevent the spread of illness; and we provided vaccines to employees and patients.

The challenges of 2009 allowed us to showcase the many strengths of Albany Medical Center: our ability to respond to immediate needs while being mindful of the future, and positioning ourselves for long-term success.

We are able to do this because we work at it 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Throughout this publication you will see examples of how in an instant or over a sustained period of time, Albany Medical Center changes lives—be it shepherding the tiniest infants to health, employing the latest techniques to educate tomorrow’s physicians or dedicating a lifetime to discovering a vaccine. We’re caring, educating and discovering 24 hours a day, 7 days a week because our community deserves the very best we can give to it now and in the future. And in return, the community generously gives back to support our missions 365 days a year.

Both of us are incredibly proud of the progress made at Albany Medical Center during 2009—progress that would have been remarkable even in less challenging times. And, we are grateful to the people of Albany Medical Center who make it such an invaluable resource to Northeastern New York and beyond. The people who define the character of our medical center range from highly trained medical specialists to those who keep our systems running, from faculty challenging our medical and graduate students to think in new ways to onsite day care providers teaching the fundamentals of reading from those handling medical appointments to those conducting clinical trials from the alumni who pledge long-term support to actors who present their symptoms so that students can learn diagnostic techniques and countless others doing equally important work. It is the sum of every individual effort to complete a shift, workday, lecture, experiment, project or fulfill a commitment that has collectively helped to improve the medical center and our community.

Thank you for all you do for Albany Medical Center 24/7, 365 days a year.

Sincerely,

James J. Barba
President & Chief Executive Officer

Wayne Diesel
Chairman of the Board of Directors

We are incredibly proud of the progress made at Albany Medical Center during 2009—progress that would have been remarkable even in less challenging times.
6:45 AM
Cardiothoracic surgeon Dr. Stuart Miller performs open heart surgery, an example of nearly 600 cardiac surgeries performed at Albany Medical Center annually. In addition to surgery, our team of experts considers the best options for patients with cardiac conditions from lifestyle changes and medication to a broad range of interventional technologies.

9:00 AM
As the region’s highest level trauma center, and one of the busiest in New York State, Albany Medical Center must maintain state-of-the-art technology and skilled professionals. Cory Seaburg uses imaging equipment to get a precise diagnosis right in the emergency department where diagnostic equipment is in use 24 hours a day.

12:30 PM
Our specialists’ ability to care for patients goes beyond diagnosis and treatment of complex medical needs. As a member of Albany Med’s Faculty Practice, gastroenterologist Dr. Amee Mapara-Shah, like her 299 colleagues, provides patients with the confidence that comes from knowing you are working with an expert who cares.

3:15 PM
Many of the physicians who practice at Albany Medical Center, whether as members of the faculty or as community physicians on the medical staff, appreciate the availability of well-qualified colleagues for advice to ensure that we are providing the best care for our patients. Dr. Steven Stat, chief of the department of surgery, regularly consults with other top-notch surgeons such as vascular surgeon Dr. Clem Darling.

5:00 PM
Delivering patient-centered care of the highest quality demands a dedicated team of medical professionals, provided with the tools they need to help them do what they do best. Like many of our compassionate nurses, Kim Borsare, RN, promotes consistent quality practices throughout the hospital.

8:30 PM
In 2009, 70,573 people used Albany Medical Center’s emergency department. About 76% received care and were discharged with instructions on how to care for their wound or illness or a follow-up appointment; the other 24% were admitted to the hospital. In addition to people who seek care at all hours of the day and night, increasingly other hospitals transfer patients to Albany Med where high-end specialty services are uniquely available 24/7.
Albany Medical Center’s patient care services, including 30 fully staffed operating rooms, are available around the clock to the 3 million residents of its 25-county service area. The wide range of specialists available at any hour have made Albany Med one of the busiest trauma centers in New York State, and solidified its position as the “hospitals’ hospital” in the region, with more than 4,000 patients transferred to Albany Med from community hospitals in 2009. The list of “only in the region” attributes for Albany Med is long and includes the Children’s Hospital, the highest level neonatal intensive and pediatric care units, the LAMNet medical transport helicopter, the state-designated AIDS treatment center, and the regional resource center for emergency preparedness. In other words, Albany Medical Center is an indispensable health care resource that area residents and visitors count on to be available whenever they might need it.

In addition to providing expert care, the 299 members of Albany Med’s faculty practice, and the numerous community physicians with privileges at the Medical Center, serve as teachers and mentors, and engage in biomedical research. Despite the demands on their time, most of these physicians have elected to serve in an academic center where they work with highly qualified colleagues, skilled nurses and specially trained allied health professionals and state-of-the-art equipment. The result? A dedicated team of experts committed to delivering quality in everything they do, day in and day out.

In 2009, we received significant recognitions for the care we provided in the areas of heart, stroke, critical coronary, and obstetrics and gynecology, as well as for practices we employed to avoid central line blood infections in the NICU among others—recognitions that are even more meaningful when considered in context of the complex needs of the patients we serve and the corresponding level of care they demand. Quality practices are being enhanced throughout the medical center with the implementation of electronic medical records. The records are populated with images already available to clinicians for consult at all hours and at remote locations, truly allowing us to provide expert care 24/7.
10 Years of Progress

2009 was a milestone birthday for one of Albany Med’s forward-thinking success stories—the opening of the South Clinical Campus at the site of the former Child’s Hospital on Hackett Boulevard. Over cake, administrators and staff reflected upon 10 years of the facility’s top-notch care.

“We have a small town feel with all the technical and professional benefits of a major teaching hospital. It’s a perfect combination,” said Christine Hunt, RN.

“We have evolved and added many services over 10 years. When I sat down to document it all, it was very clear how much we have grown,” said SCC Hospital Director Timothy Duffey.

Originally envisioned as a regional hub for same-day and other specialized surgery, SCC became that—and so much more. Today, the facility boasts eight upgraded operating rooms along with expanded and renovated pre- and post-op care units; an extended care monitoring unit; a comprehensive Breast Care Center; radiology and imaging services including a multi-slice CT scanner and a Bone Densitometry (DEXA) Unit; and an expanded pathology lab. And, recently, as additional office space opened up after the purchase of the adjacent Child’s Nursing Home, departments including psychiatry, endocrinology, nephrology and bariatrics have relocated to take advantage of the convenience and appeal of South Clinical Campus.

Joining Forces to Improve Stroke Care for All

Neurologist Dr. Gary Bernardini, an expert in stroke, wants everyone to keep in mind that a stroke is an emergency that requires fast action. Albany Medical Center and Saratoga Hospital joined forces in 2009 to improve stroke care and increase awareness.

The partnership includes collaboration between the two hospitals to speed and enhance the evaluation and treatment of stroke patients from the Saratoga Region—and to give them faster access to cutting-edge treatments at Albany Medical Center, when appropriate. The hospitals are linked electronically, allowing emergency physicians at Saratoga Hospital and the team of stroke specialists on-call 24/7 at Albany Med to view patient scans simultaneously in real time, and consult on the best course of treatment. Recently, for one patient who arrived at Saratoga Hospital within three hours of the onset of a serious stroke, collaboration resulted in intravenous treatment in Saratoga with the clot-dissolving drug tPA, and afterwards a transfer via air ambulance. At Albany Med, neurointerventionalist Dr. Junichi Yamamoto removed what was left of the blood clot. The patient benefited from a minimally invasive procedure employing the corkscrew shaped “MERCI” device that in the region is only available at Albany Med.

Time, Teamwork and Technology Saves Lives

It’s 3 a.m. and an ambulance crew is responding to a call from a 55-year-old man at home in Brunswick who is experiencing chest pain and is breathing rapidly. With a history of high blood pressure and high cholesterol, his situation is dire and he is in need of immediate clinical intervention. The emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and paramedics hook him up to a 12-lead electrocardiogram (EKG) to monitor his heart; give him aspirin; hustle him into the ambulance; and begin an IV drip.

But, they are not alone in caring for this patient. Back in Albany Med’s emergency department, Dr. Michael Dailey is receiving the patient’s EKG transmission which has traveled via high speed, wireless technology to his computer screen. He recognizes the signs of acute coronary syndrome caused by blockages in the arteries and puts in a call to activate the on-call cardiac catheterization team.

“The sooner a blocked artery is opened, the better the outcome. And we are committed to reducing that time for our patients,” says Dr. Dailey. Early transmission of a 12-lead EKG, now in regular use at the Medical Center, has shortened the “door to balloon” time by at least 30 minutes—which can significantly reduce a heart attack victim’s risk of permanent disability or death.

By 3:45 a.m., the cath lab team members, including Dr. Augustine DeLago, cardiovascular and medical imaging technicians, and specially trained lab nurses, have assembled and readied a room for their patient. Immediately upon arrival, the patient bypasses the emergency room and is sent directly to the cath lab on the seventh floor of the hospital, cutting wait time significantly. By 4 a.m., Dr. DeLago is already performing angioplasty—successfully opening three blocked arteries, inserting stents and restoring the patient back to health. By 5 a.m., the patient is resting comfortably with family beside him and ready for his room in the cardiac wing where he will be monitored by another highly skilled team.

In 2009, the average time from “door to balloon” at Albany Medical Center was 60 minutes, the fastest time in New York State—time enough to make a significant difference in someone’s life.
Interventional Radiology Suites Run Like Clockwork

At 7:30 in the morning, the interventional radiology suites are already busy. Doctors and residents go over patient X-rays and scans, coordinating procedures, rooms and care for the day. The procedure rooms—seven in all, including two advanced biplane angiography suites—will be filled all day long with patients whose conditions can be managed using minimally invasive, catheter-based techniques, rather than surgery. At noon, Dr. Gary Siskin, an interventional radiologist, uses freezing therapy to completely obliterate a kidney tumor. Alongside him in the next suite, vascular surgeon Dr. Manish Mehta inserts a stent into his patient’s blocked carotid artery to prevent a future stroke. Nearby, in the biplane suite, neurosurgeon Dr. Alan Boulos ties off the blood supply to an aneurysm that has been causing bleeding in the brain.

By 7:30 that evening, there’s a lull in the action, until a few hours later when Dr. Siskin, on call, returns to look for the source of internal bleeding in a car accident victim. At 7:30 the next morning, Dr. Siskin says good morning to colleague, Dr. Singh, as he arrives ready to perform a needle biopsy, and the cycle starts again for another day.

Working collegially and collaboratively in this setting are interventional radiologists, vascular surgeons, and neurosurgeons. In 2009, more than 6,000 procedures were performed in the endovascular suites at Albany Medical Center—the region’s hub for this type of high level, minimally invasive care.

Strong Medical Team Aims to Develop Strong Children

In 1979, the first annual production of the Melodies of Christmas concert was held to help support children at Albany Med in their battle against cancer. Thus began a holiday tradition that has garnered support from such generous and influential corporate partners as Price Chopper, Freihofer’s Baking Company and CNN and has generated more than $6 million to support patient care needs and research initiatives. In 2009, Albany Med’s child cancer program was renamed the “Melodies Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders” in honor of 30 years of success.

Since the inception of Melodies of Christmas, great strides have been made in childhood cancers, with nearly 80 percent of pediatric cancers now curable. But that’s not the only area where Albany Med is making monumental leaps in pediatric care. At the heart of the Children’s Hospital’s success is a collaboration of exceptional physicians recruited in a wide range of specialties—and 2009 was no exception. We expanded our pediatric surgical capabilities with the addition of Dr. Christine Whyte—chief of the division of pediatric surgery and one of only a handful of female pediatric surgeons in the country—and Dr. Anthony Georges, both of whom specialize in advanced minimally invasive surgery. We also welcomed Dr. Matthew Adams, a pediatric neurosurgeon, who brought with him new cutting-edge procedures for complex neurological conditions in children, and pediatric endocrinologist Dr. Daniela Sima, among others.

The team of professionals in the Children’s Hospital at Albany Med is committed to ensuring that this unique range of pediatric services remains available to the Capital Region, earning the gratitude of the community for another 30 years...and more.
EDUCATING 24/7

7:00 AM

The learning environment for the more than 550 medical students and 405 residents at Albany Medical Center introduces them to components of clinical care that provide them with experiences and skills that will be of benefit to their patients throughout their careers. As part of their clinical rotation, third-year medical students employ a workstation on wheels to access and input patient information while rounding with critical care attending physician Dr. Sophia Socaris in the Surgical Intensive Care Unit (SICU).

10:30 AM

Although students have increasing access to resources online, Schaffer Library continues to provide a stimulating environment for students to study and socialize throughout the day. With a vast collection, including web access to journals and studies, medical databases and more than 150,000 print and multimedia resources, it is a valued location for some 250 students pursuing Ph.D.’s and master’s degrees at Albany Medical College, as well as medical students. It also serves as a continuing education resource for the entire Albany Med community.

1:15 PM

Dr. Ingrid Allard, associate dean for community outreach and medical education, is developing service learning opportunities for students in conjunction with community groups that promote public health. Albany Medical College has earned a reputation for curriculum innovations that incorporate courses and readings related to broader health care policies and societal trends and their associated impact on the delivery of health care.

3:45 PM

Cadaver dissection in the anatomy lab complements first- and second-year med students’ coursework to master an understanding of how the body’s organs and systems work together. Basic clinical skills, such as how to conduct an exam and perform procedures, are introduced in years one and two but students in years three and four truly begin to integrate their medical science knowledge with the development of clinical skills through clerkships and clinical rotations.

5:00 PM

Members of Albany Medical College’s faculty play many roles, and most of them chose careers in academic medicine because the environment provides the opportunity to practice, teach and engage in research. In addition to serving as chair of the department of medicine and overseeing the department’s clinical, academic and research activities, Dr. Richard Blinkhorn also finds time to interact with third-year medical students rotating on the medicine clerkship and conducts weekly chairman rounds in which students present and discuss cases.

EDUCATING 24/7

11:15 PM

Students pursuing a master’s degree in bioethics from Albany Medical College do most of their coursework online. These participating in nurse anesthesiologist and physician assistant programs as well as med and science students, can review lectures and compare notes late at night by way of Sakai, a software system that allows for collaboration and learning 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

EDUCATING 24/7

11:15 PM

Albany Medical Center
Our faculty members recognize that there is a great deal to learn and only a limited number of hours in the day. In fact, since many of them serve as teachers, mentors, researchers and clinicians, they know better than most the importance of balancing competing priorities.

Throughout our educational programs, we employ innovative techniques, equipment and curricula, and have gained a reputation for creating opportunities for non-traditional students. Albany Medical College students have expressed gratitude for a curriculum that combines academic and practical learning experiences, and employs technology both to keep them engaged and to provide a resource for the lecture they may have missed.

At Albany Medical Center, education is not limited to our med students, the students in our growing physician assistant or nurse anesthetist programs, those pursuing a master’s degree in bioethics, our graduate or doctoral scientists or even participants in our 33 accredited residency programs. Albany Medical Center offers an academic environment where learning occurs all day every day. Skilled clinicians, particularly nurses, are always educating patients and their caregivers, and we spread knowledge about medical conditions and treatment options throughout the community via seminars, health checks staffed by volunteer students and staff, and public awareness initiatives.

Despite Busy Schedule, Med Student Maintains Priorities

For medical student and student council president Tim Johnson, a typical day starts at 6 o’clock in the morning when he heads to the hospital to begin rounding—checking on patients and updating their charts. Later, he discusses his patient caseload with the attending physician and a team of residents and other med students. The remainder of the day is spent in classes followed by myriad student-led organization meetings. By 6 o’clock in the evening, he wraps up and heads to the library for a long night of studying.

After one of those long nights, on the walk to his car, it occurred to Tim that he’s not the only student leaving the College this late at night and wondered about his fellow classmates’ safety. Soon thereafter the “Shuttle You Home” program was presented to Tim and he enthusiastically approved it on behalf of the student body. The program provides a door-to-door shuttle service so students and faculty can have a safe ride home at night. Tim’s considerate, compassionate nature is no surprise to those who know him well. In 2009, Tim also spearheaded the reopening of the Senthil Raj Alaguraj Memorial Student Courtyard. This once neglected outdoor space was completely renovated and picnic tables were added for students to have lunch and study while enjoying the outdoors.

Tim well represents the 556 medical students enrolled at Albany Medical College in 2009 who despite long days and nights of hard work, manage to find time to make a difference in the lives of others. And, as Tim has proven, that is just as important as acing the next test.
One Student’s Race for Higher Learning

For marathon runner and Capital Region health reporter Benita Zahn, every day for nearly two years was a race in and of itself. The race started promptly at 7 o’clock in the morning when she would hit the ground running. Arriving at the news station, every hour was its own mile marker as she returned phone calls, researched stories, interviewed health care professionals, and anchored the 5 and 6 o’clock nightly newscasts. But her day didn’t end when the cameras stopped rolling By 7:30 p.m., it was time to hit the books. Five hours later and one exhausting day done, she would head to bed and get some much needed rest before the next day’s race.

Benita’s personal marathon began in 2007 when she enrolled in the Alden March Bioethics Institute (AMBI) at Albany Medical College. Wanting to pursue her master’s degree without compromising her already active lifestyle, Benita was pleasantly surprised when an email arrived in her inbox promoting Albany Med’s new online master’s program. It was her “aha” moment. “The timing was right. Not only would it answer questions I had about bioethical issues inherent in society, but it was an opportunity to advance my role as a health reporter,” said Zahn.

To Benita, AMBI boasts one of the nation’s most prestigious master’s programs in bioethics, available in a traditional, on-site format, as well as online. Founded in 1993 by Dr. John Balint, the Institute is able to provide unique programs, like the online master’s degree, through continued support and donations. In 2009, Dr. Balint established a $250,000 trust in support of the Institute.

But like many Albany Med students, she managed to be successful in her professional and academic pursuits while being active in the community. She continued to serve as Honorary Chair for the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Run and participated in a number of speaking engagements. As a singer, her theater credits are numerous and during the time she performed in Cabaret at the Woodstock Park Playhouse.

In May of 2009, Benita received a Master of Science degree in Bioethics. She admits that there were days when it seemed as though the marathon would never end and that she never lost sight of the finish line. “I thank myself for all the miles I’ve logged,” Benita says. “It’s easy to become overwhelmed, but never give up.”

For a working professional like Benita Zahn, the format of the two-year curriculum required only one week of rounding in the hospital to meet the curriculum’s practical experience component, while the remaining coursework and discussions could be completed online—coordinated around her already busy schedule.

The 3-D Virtual Brain Model software was developed by professors Dr. Charles kite and Dr. Tara Lindsley with help from foremost anatomist Dr. Norman Strominger in the Center for Neuropharmacology and Neurosciences. Recruited as an integral member of the team was medical student Joseph Rozell, who is credited with identifying software and painstakingly building 3-D images from 2-D MRI images taken in sequence.

The program, which has been made available to medical students and faculty worldwide on the Albany Med website, provides virtual images of 79 brain structures and pathways in the nervous system. And it is user-friendly—it takes just the click of a button to see the name of structures, zoom in, rotate, center or change the opacity and color or to access pre-built or custom-built models. For the first time in history the human brain has jumped out of textbooks to allow medical students to better understand the intricacies and complexities of its true nature.

Virtual Victims Expand Learning Opportunities

The clock is ticking and the attending physician on staff in the Emergency Department is preparing to intubate a patient in respiratory distress with a severe neck injury following a car crash. The technique is critical to saving the victim’s life. There is no time for error. Fortunately, because she is working at the region’s major trauma center, the physician is experienced in difficult intubations—both simulated and real—and the procedure goes well.

Albany Med has long been employing simulation to enhance the students’ and emergency medical professionals’ educational experiences, beginning in 1993 with the establishment of curriculum that uses individuals to role play symptoms and assist students in developing their diagnostic and interpersonal communication skills. As the technology has evolved, so has Albany Med, purchasing equipment to provide students and practitioners with the high-tech tools needed to perfect procedures.

In 2009, construction began on the Clinical Competency and Patient Safety Center—the only one of its kind in the area and one of only a handful in New York State. The state-of-the-art center will provide a virtual learning environment using a variety of high-tech mannequins built to mimic a variety of illness and injuries, as well as rooms specially designed to represent a typical medical setting including a trauma suite or a cardiac diagnostic lab. In fact, the mannequins used in the center are so realistic that they can emulate such detailed human characteristics as beads of sweat glistening on the forehead and, as in the case of intubation, fluid build-up in the lungs.

With support from government funding sources and contributions from regional supporters, including a $70,000 grant from the Wright Family Foundation, the Center will be completed in 2010 and established as a true regional resource.
Most of our scientists are constantly thinking about their discoveries. Their schedules can be dictated by precisely timed aspects of experimentation as well as the availability of collaborators overseas. Dr. Michelle Lennartz is collaborating with research colleagues in Japan as part of her continued research on inflammation and autoimmune diseases, supported by a four-year, $1.2 million renewal grant from NIH.

9:45 AM
Albany Medical Center’s four interdisciplinary research centers complement areas of clinical expertise in cardiovascular disease, cell biology and cancer, immunology and microbial disease, and neuropharmacology and neurosciences. Scientist Dr. Alex Mongin works with his colleague, Maria Hyzinski, on developing novel pharmacological approaches to minimize brain damage in stroke patients.

12:45 PM
Physicians on staff at Albany Medical Center engage in innovative treatment initiatives and participate in studies to determine the associated outcome on patient health. Dr. Kevin Castellino conducts clinical research while making house calls to follow up on patients after they have been released from the hospital to help them manage chronic conditions, and to prevent readmission.

3:00 PM
Students pursuing a Master of Science or Ph.D. at Albany Medical College have the opportunity to work in the labs of basic science faculty and potentially contribute to discovery. Through continuous collaboration with colleagues and students, Dr. Dorina Avram furthers her research studies on the role transcription factors may play in a wide variety of diseases such as leukemias and autoimmune disorders.

6:00 AM
Students and residents assist faculty in doing meaningful research or interpreting scientific studies. These findings are presented on posters throughout the College and often these studies will have clinical implications for patients at Albany Med.
The very nature of research requires round-the-clock dedication to experimentation, monitoring of effects, and adjustment of factors. The representatives of Albany Medical Center’s research enterprise embody this 24-hour commitment to biomedical discovery whether at the laboratory bench or at the bedside. The men and women engaged in research at Albany Med, both full-time scientists and clinicians who engage in clinical trials, are motivated by a quest to make discoveries that will improve lives.

The passage of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 created additional funding opportunities for research that was quickly capitalized upon by Albany Medical College’s scientists. Albany Med has always performed well in the competitive grant arena despite the modest size of its research enterprise. This year, it secured some of the largest grants in its history, particularly from the National Institutes of Health, bringing prestige to the institution and new funds into our regional economy.

Our focused interdisciplinary research centers marry basic science with areas of clinical expertise making discoveries in cardiovascular disease, cell biology, and cancer, immunology and microbial disease, and neuropharmacology and neurosciences. These centers have attracted scientists to Albany from across the country and throughout the world who are actively engaged in research partnerships all over the globe at all times of the day and night.

**Scientists Tackle Elusive Terror Agent**

The hunt is on in the laboratories at Albany Medical College and time is of the essence. The goal to find a vaccine for a deadly form of bacteria before bioterrorists get hold of the substance and use it against the population sounds dramatic, but the government is concerned enough to label pulmonary tularemia a Category A (the highest) bioterrorist threat because of its high infectivity (very little exposure is needed to cause disease), ease of dissemination, and substantial capacity to cause illness and death. In 2009, a group of scientists at the Center for Immunology and Microbial Disease received a $4.6 million stimulus grant for their continued study of Francisella tularensis, the bacteria that causes tularemia. The research projects involve the study of a nasal spray vaccine for pulmonary tularemia, the potentially weaponized form of the disease that would be breathed in. In addition to understanding how a nasal spray approach confers immunity against pulmonary tularemia, the scientists are hard at work studying the method of delivery and whether vaccines combining killed bacteria with other boosting substances may be even more protective and/or safer for eventual human use.
Helping Patients Keep Track of Time

A 50-year-old woman is late for an appointment. Try as she may, she can’t remember where she put her car keys the night before. She furiously racks her brain, and finally, after many long minutes, recalls that they are in her desk drawer. Is this normal aging or an early sign of an insidious disease that will eventually rob her of her “self”? In Alzheimer’s disease, the passage of time can mean subtle changes in the brain. But, when do these changes start? When people are in their fifties, forties, or earlier? Can the cascade of events be identified, and someday even halted, years before the disease takes its devastating toll?

These are the questions that clinical researchers, including those at Albany Med, would like to answer. To that end, in 2009 Albany Med added to its roster of Alzheimer’s studies by joining a large stimulus-funded national trial aimed at finding techniques to diagnose Alzheimer’s even in its earliest stages.

Albany Med is able to enter into such critical national trials because of its reputation as a leading academic medical center with physicians devoted to taking the time to seek answers and better the lives of their patients, and, indeed, their future patients. As those living unknowingly with the seeds of Alzheimer’s.

In 2009, clinicians at the Medical Center were actively involved in 425 clinical trials—the highest number in the Capital Region. These included the study of an experimental drug to treat Parkinson’s disease; studying whether a blood test can help determine who needs a CT scan after a concussion; looking at a steroid-free regimen for kidney transplant recipients; and determining whether regular, post-surgical “house calls” can help elderly people avoid nursing homes.

Understanding Mysterious Pain Symptoms

It’s 3 o’clock in the morning, and Dr. Frank Rice has just reached colleague David Bowsher in Liverpool, England by phone at the beginning of Dr. Bowsher’s day so they can consult about some tissue samples Dr. Rice has just received from Dr. Bowsher’s office. For Dr. Rice, this early morning phone call is a small sacrifice when he considers the more pressing issues plaguing the individuals he is fighting for—people suffering from excruciating, chronic pain conditions who are in desperate need of relief.

Thanks to the pioneering work of Dr. Rice and other scientists in the Center for Neuropharmacology and Neuroscience, we are closer than ever before to understanding the root cause of unrelenting pain and finding a cure.

Their studies, reported in 2009 in the journal Pain, have revealed that the human body has an entirely unique and separate sensory system aside from the nerves that give most of us the ability to touch and feel—overturning years of assumptions that pain only originates from nerve endings on the skin. Dr. Rice’s analyses found that sensations also come from sensory nerve endings on small blood vessels and sweat glands, which are embedded in the skin, vessels and glands that were previously assumed to only regulate blood flow and sweating.

“Problems with these nerve endings may contribute to mysterious pain conditions such as migraine headaches and fibromyalgia, the sources of which are still unknown, and thus making them very difficult to treat,” said Dr. Rice.

Next steps? Dr. Rice and colleagues at Albany Medical Center and around the world are working feverishly to further understand the source of pain in hopes of developing therapeutic strategies to stop it before it has the chance to start.
A Long Term Fight Against Flu

On September 25, the Centers for Disease Control reported that the novel flu virus (H1N1) was widespread in 22 states. That same week, a report found that 15 states including New York could run out of hospital beds during the peak of the outbreak. In less than two weeks, the flu had arrived in our region and Albany Med began to feel the impact—on the emergency department and at our primary care sites gathered forces and responded to the immediate need at hand—to take care of the sick and prevent the spread. Behind the scenes, scientists at Albany Medical College were also responding with the same sense of urgency they had been for years.

Awareness of the likelihood of a global flu epidemic is at the heart of numerous ongoing vaccine research projects at Albany Medical Center, including work on developing a universal vaccine for flu that would protect individuals from all forms of influenza—regardless of the latest strain or mutation. In 2009, researchers received a $1.6 million, 4-year grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in support of research aimed at developing better nasal spray vaccines for influenza, and scientists continued their work aimed at finding treatments to prevent bacterial infections that follow flu—a major cause of death. The H1N1 crisis only served to strengthen their resolve to stay at least one step ahead of the flu.

Turning Thoughts into Actions

An Albany Medical Center research team led by Dr. Anthony Ritacco, director of the epilepsy and human brain mapping program, along with international collaborators, has successfully developed and demonstrated a new brain mapping procedure that enables neurosurgeons to navigate and protect in real-time—on the operating table—areas of the brain that control essential functions such as language and fine motor skills. Safer and faster than previous approaches, this map is vital for the surgeon to be able to preserve patients’ quality of life long after their surgery to remove brain tumors and other abnormalities is over.

Electrodes are implanted on the surface of the brain to map brain activity. “If someone is thinking about moving their left thumb, we can locate the specific area of the brain the person is using,” said Ritacco.

Now, Dr. Ritacco and colleagues are taking brain mapping a step further by exploring ways not only to record one’s thoughts, but turn those thoughts into actions—a promising development for those who suffer from severe paralysis and debilitating diseases such as ALS. The team is using brain computer interface (BCI) technology to literally translate thoughts into commands. One study already has successfully shown how a subject used her mind to command a computer to type 20 characters per minute with nearly 100 percent accuracy.
January
With assistance from the Susan G. Komen Foundation, a $30,000 grant in 2009 enabled Albany Med to expand the Breast Health Education and Outreach Project. In just six months of the grant period (June-December), the project made possible the detection, treatment and follow-up for 28 people who may not have had access to quality health care. Overall, the goal of the project is to reduce risk factors for breast cancer through education and awareness endeavors. One of Albany Medical Center’s leaders in this effort is surgical oncologist Dr. Donna Pietrocola.

April
With a $50 million gift from the Marty and Dorothy Silverman Foundation, Albany Medical Center annually presents America’s largest prize in medicine to researchers and physicians who are leading the way in advancing medical science. The 2009 Albany Medical Center Prize in Medicine and Biomedical Research was awarded to three scientists whose groundbreaking discoveries have transformed the field of immunology. The endowment helps call attention to the wide array of biomedical research underway at Albany Medical Center, referred to by some as our “silent mission.”

May
Kid-friendly play spaces found in different areas of the Children’s Hospital are available to relieve the pressures of illness and medical care through painting and other activities. Albany Medical Center’s surrounding community, including private foundations such as the Paul Robert Care Foundation, corporations and individual donors, recognizes the importance of providing distractions for our young patients and generously supports this aspect of care provided by the region’s only hospital for kids—the Children’s Hospital at Albany Med.

June
July
Serving the needs of more than 70,000 patients in 2009, downtime does not exist for our region’s only level I trauma center—Albany Med’s Department of Emergency Medicine. Continuing to support the specialized and advanced care, the annual Light Up the Night benefit held at Saratoga National, raised a record-breaking $150,000 in 2009.

September
Funding a medical college education can be difficult for many but with significant support from alumni and passionate advocates of quality medical education, the burden can be light. In 2009, more than $1.7 million was received in the form of cash and pledges for student scholarships. Standing with Mary Dubon ’12 are scholarship donors Charles Lothridge and James McGirr, who contributed $70,000 toward the William E. Lothridge Memorial Scholarship.

December
The holiday season bustles with excitement, energy and incredible generosity. Two of Albany Medical Center’s largest fundraising events—Dancing in the Woods and Melodies of Christmas—collectively raised more than $750,000 to support the Melodies Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders. Toshiko Nonaka is one of our talented Child Life Specialists who explain medical procedures and help patients share their feelings through play.
All day, every day, while Albany Med students learn, researchers discover and medical professionals care, individuals and organizations throughout our community step forward to support our missions. From outright gifts and bequests to gala events and grants, members of the Albany Med community give of themselves to raise funds and awareness in support of the region’s only academic medical center. It may be because our Medical Center changed the course of their own life, touched the life of someone they love, enabled a promising career, or because they recognize it as a pillar of strength. Whatever the reason, Albany Medical Center is grateful for the support.

So much of what makes Albany Med special are those things that are not funded by insurance or tuition, and could not possibly be paid for by those who benefit from them most. The extraordinary skills that help a family through a difficult time, the depth and breadth of experience of a seasoned faculty member and the scientific exploration inherent in great discovery all are bolstered by philanthropic support. Endowed chair positions help Albany Med maintain current knowledge in a field of medical specialty which, in turn influences education, research and patient care. Scholarships provide opportunities to qualified, motivated, compassionate students to pursue their dreams of improving the health of others. Grant funding advances biomedical discovery; provides for the purchase of equipment and leads to the establishment of specialized programs. Special events raise awareness and generate support for our unique and essential programs and services. And alumni “pay it forward” by maintaining their ties with their alma mater, financially supporting areas in need and inspiring their classmates to do the same.

In turn, Albany Medical Center supports its community. First and foremost by fulfilling its patient care, education and research missions, but also by being a good corporate citizen—providing good jobs and good benefits, fostering economic growth and supporting community initiatives to improve health. The result: a cycle of support that improves the quality of life throughout our region 24/7, 365 days a year.

Leading by Example

Visitors and patients at Albany Med who are watching an ABC News program at almost any time of the day or night have the chance of seeing one of the Medical College’s most familiar alumni, Dr. G. Timothy Johnson. Regularly on World News Tonight, Good Morning America and 20/20, viewers rely on the medical insight and analysis provided by “Dr. Tim,” who is highly regarded as a trusted source. Deeply immersed in our nation’s public health issues, Dr. Johnson has shed light and offered advice on myriad illnesses and ailments—from the H1N1 virus to childhood obesity and cancer.

Though it has been 40 years since he sat in the classrooms at Albany Medical College, the chief medical editor for ABC News continues to contribute to his alma mater in many ways. He is an active member of the Dean’s Council and generously takes part in Albany Medical Center Foundation fundraising efforts. In 2009, Dr. Johnson and his wife Nancy thanked the institution that he says “took a chance on me” with a second $1 million unrestricted gift—allowing the money to be used in areas of the College that need it most.

A Big Move for the Tiniest Patients

Yesterday, a newborn baby with a congenital heart defect was flown to Albany Medical Center just minutes after he was born. Today he is resting comfortably in a bassinet alongside another precious baby who was born 10 weeks prematurely. They, along with several other infants in critical condition, are receiving the highly specialized care provided by the region’s only level 4 Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

Considered state-of-the-art when it was opened in the early 1990s, the NICU needs to modernize and grow—too often it operates at maximum capacity, with care being provided to as many as 50 babies at any one time. Trustco Bank and the Ronald McDonald House Charities have given $500,000 and $250,000 respectively to support the development of a new NICU to help ensure that, every day, our community’s smallest residents will be provided the best possible care in the best equipped setting. As a result of the generosity of these community leaders and others, valuable space, beds, and new technology will transform the NICU, while increasing the bassinet capacity to care for 56 infants. Importantly, the plans call for a complete suite of rooms including a kitchen, laundry facility and sleeping rooms to help parents and other family members stay close to their little loved ones.
A Growing Commitment

Every year Michael Burke, senior vice president & chief financial officer of Albany International Corp., learns more about Albany Medical Center and every year he gives to the institution more of his time, talents and resources. As his appreciation for Albany Med’s vital contributions to improving and enhancing the quality of life in our region grows, so does his commitment.

In 2007, Michael joined the Board of Directors—and gained immediate insight into the depth and breadth of professional talent assembled here. Michael was asked to participate as a member of the Hospital Affairs Committee and the Board’s Investment Committee. A little over a year later Michael stepped up to chair the Hospital Affairs Committee and become a vice chair of the Medical Center Board. Later, Michael joined the Horizon Committee of the Board; addressing strategic issues that will shape the Center’s direction well into the next decade. Just two years after becoming involved with the Medical Center, Michael and his wife Joan were moved to pledge a gift of $250,000 to the Medical Center—$100,000 to establish an endowed fund for cancer research and $150,000 to support our upcoming expansion efforts.

Michael and Joan Burke are examples of many who generously lend their time and financial support to Albany Medical Center; and recognize that together—as a community—we can build upon the institution’s rich history and ensure its future success—one day, one dollar, one family at a time.

Mr. Burke is one example of many who generously lend their time and financial support to Albany Medical Center; and recognize that together—as a community—we can build upon the institution’s rich history and ensure its future success—one day, one dollar, one family at a time.
In 2009, the following community and alumni leaders offered their generous support and advocated for the continued success of the Albany Medical Center:

Our Partners in Leadership

Albany Medical Center was built upon a solid foundation, supported by the strength of its generous benefactors and the surrounding community. In 2009, nearly 800 individuals, organizations and businesses demonstrated their support by joining us as Partners in Leadership. The Albany Medical Center Foundation recognizes exemplary leadership and philanthropy through its Partners in Leadership awards. The 2009 honorees included Carl E. Toohy, the Artstor Publisher for Publishing and Arthur Hunsicker, Volunteer of the Year; David Falk, M.D., ‘43, Individual Philanthropist of the Year; and Walmart, Corporate Philanthropist of the Year.

In support of the Albany Medical Center with gifts of $1,000 or more in a single year, Support Partners represent more than 75 percent of total gifts to Albany Med.

Chairman’s Circle - ($25,000+) |
Acme Hardware Stores
Albany Medical Center Auxiliary
The AcuRay Charitable Foundation Board of Directors
Jean and John Baitz, MD
Rory and Jeff Bittig
Estate of John L. Herbert, Jr.
Marjorie B. Keating
Robert H. Martin
Mark S. Myerbrook
Martha A. Nardini
Estate of Bernadette M. Pinto-Balain
USA

Chairman’s Circle - ($15,000+) |
M.J. and Charles Lothridge, PhD and James McGirr

Chairman’s Circle - ($10,000+) |
John Nigro

Chairman’s Circle - ($5,000+) |
James A. Barlow

Founders’ Circle - ($500+) |
Diana Honet, RN ’58 and Joseph Honet, MD ’64

SUPPORTING 365 DAYS A YEAR
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SUPPORTING 365 DAYS A YEAR

In 2009, Albany Med moved forward with plans for the largest hospital expansion in Northeastern New York, paving the way to the future of health care in our region. With an expansion of this magnitude comes the need to sustain the level of excellence provided by an academic medical center. As we expand our patient care capacity we also must continue to strengthen our work in education and research, preparing the next generation of biomedical professionals for practice.

Members of the Pillars Society have created a lasting legacy using their wills, life income gifts or retirement plans. Participating in their employers’ matching gift program allows donors to double, even triple, the value of their gifts to Albany Med. The following companies provided matching funds to the Medical Center in 2009.

Pillars Society
Anonymous
William Allen
Mary Louise and Anthony Arna, MD ’60
Joan and John Balt, MD
Ginna Benvenitz
Rose and James Barba
Corina Beiler
David Bensel, MD ’54, FACP
Mary and Louis Bedford, MD ’47
Priscilla and Matthew Bender IV
Alison and William Bennett
William Beutner, MD ’70
Diane and Philip Buranos, MD ’63
Christine Borden
Diane and John Boxo, MD ’61
John Brouwer, MD ’56
Friederic Brondini, MD ’56
Barry Brandow
Charlotte and Charles Bushman
Patricia Bulter
Greene Butler
Christina Burn, MD ’01 and George Burns, MD ’72
Margaret and Donald Caproni, MD ’85
Barbara Carter
Carol and Samuel Cassell, MD ’59
Claudia and David Cazenovia, MD ’59
Jenn and James Claghorn, MD ’54
Herbert Clark*
Veronica Crute
Emo Velstad and Ronald
D’Alexander
Phyllis Dake
Charles D’Agostino, MD ’58
Cynthia and Dennis Delacoe
Adrian Dols, MD ’78
and Martin Auster, MD
James Dougarty, MD ’51
Mary Espin
Laurenne Esposito*
Lois and Ivan Edelheit
David Fania, MD ’93
David Faris, MD ’53 and
Arthur Farkas, MD ’53
Joseph Fawke
Mary Farkas, MD and
William Fafar
Bruce and Michael
Freish, MD ’58
Miriam Freidstein, MD and
Lester Gravelle
Jean Fritz
Deborah and Pasquale
Fugate-Castillo, MD ’58
Corrine and David Galiano, MD ’49
Francis and Steven Gilman, MD ’78
Janet Green, MD ’94
Isabelle Massonneau and
Stansley Gils, MD
Helen Gravelle
Alan Gulick, MD ’78
Beatrice and Robert Herman, PhD
Barbara and James Heflin, MD
Judith and Eugene Hering, MD ’59
Diana Hines, MD ’58
Joseph Hines, MD ’37
Scha and Seymour Kesselman, MD ’37
Nancy and George Howard, MD ’59
Len Howard, MD, MCP, FACP*
and
Harrell Alexander
Richard A. Hughes, Jr., MD
Julian Hyman, MD ’47
Nancy and G. Timothy
Johnson, MD ’47
Mary Kahl, MD and William
Kahl, PhD
Cynthia and Marko Kromer, MD ’41
Olga Kohne
Madlina Kesseli, RN ’59
and Robert Kessel, MD ’50
Peggy and Leonard
Kinsieh, MD ’41
John Keating
Ruth and John Kowalczyk, MD ’50
Nancy Carlton and
Ralph Kraner, MD ’76
John LaMore, MD, MPH ’72
Mary Jean Lawrey
Evelyn and Charles
Leinhardt, MD ’53
Martha Lepow, MD
Leona and Jerome
Lucy, MD ’58, FACP
Mary Jean Lawrey
Evelyn and Charles
Leinhardt, MD ’53
Ann Marcelle and Justin Guidi
Robert Markel, MD ’80
Cori and William Pizer, Jr., MD
William Murray, MD ’14
Miriam Nettler Berg
Mary* and Robert
Newhouse, MD ’56
Barbara Noon, MD ’41
George Plaft
Norma and Fred Phillips, Jr., MD
Nancy and Wellington
Poskanzer, MD ’54
Alexandra and Charles
Poskanzer, MD ’54
Diana Hines, MD ’58
Pulitzer, MD ’45
Helen and Matthew Prince, MD
Vera and Richard Proops, MD ’41
Lucia Richards
Ann Miller and John Robinson
Framed Rosenbach
Leila and Carl Sahnin, Jr.
Wilkins Saunders
Susanne and Martin
Scheeres, MD ’57
Thelma and Daniel Shapiro, MD ’49
Barbara and Nathaniel Skin, MD ’58
Betty and Richard Sokolov
Patricia and Springer Stansell
Jane and Robert Steble, MD ’53
Elizabeth and David Steward, MD ’48
Elaine and William Van-Orts, MD ’54
Nancy Weiser
New and Jane Viss
Rosemary Vogt
Roberts and John Wawaloski, MD ’80
Carol and Martin
Winn and MD ’56, FACP
Priscilla and Matthew Winger
Nancy Wamba, MD ’54 and
Jerry Womn, MD ’62

Expanding Our Impact

Participating in their employers’ matching gift program allows donors to double, even triple, the value of their gifts to Albany Med. The following companies provided matching funds to the Medical Center in 2009.

Microsoft Matching Gift Program
IBM Corporation Matching Grants Program
AXA Foundation
The Capital Group Companies
GE Foundation Matching Gifts Center
Google Matching Gift Program
BPI Corporate Matching Grants Program
Match at These Companies

Prudential Foundation Matching Gifts Program
National Grid Matching Gifts Program
Microsoft Matching Gifts Program
PNC Foundation
Pfizer Foundation Matching Gifts Program
Postman Matching Gifts Program
The Reader’s Digest Foundation, Inc.
The Saint-Gobain Corporation Foundation
The Wachovia Foundation
The Verizon Foundation/Cybergrants
The W. Frank and James L. Haddad Foundation

* Deceased
### Hospital/Patient Care
- **Licensed beds (includes SCC)**: 651
- **Licensed bassinets**: 20
- **Patient admissions (includes SCC)**: 32,849
- **Patient days (includes SCC)**: 188,658
- **Outpatient visits (includes SCC)**: 627,612
- **Average length of stay**: 5.8
- **Percent occupancy**: 82.3%
- **Average daily census**: 517
- **Surgical cases (includes SCC)**: 26,446
- **Emergency dept. visits**: 76,773

### Employees (Full Time Equivalents)
- **Total**: 5,959
  - **Faculty**
    - Full-time physicians: 299
    - Voluntary physicians: 575
    - Residents: 405
    - Basic science faculty: 117
  - **Graduate Studies**
    - Graduate students (total enrollment): 170
  - **Medical College**
    - Medical students (total enrollment): 558
    - Freshmen: 100
    - Average GPA (of incoming freshmen): 3.0
    - Medical school applications: 8,835
  - **Research Funding ($ millions)**
    - Total sponsored research: $21.9
    - Basic science: $10.8
    - Clinical science: $1.5
    - Awards applied for: 408
    - Active awards: 212
    - Peer reviewed publications: 169

### Business Operations
- **Unrestricted Revenue: $811.4 (in millions)**
  - Patient Service: 89.2% $723.9
  - Grants/Grants: 3.1% $25.3
  - Tuition and Fees: 3.8% $30.5
  - Other Revenue: 3.9% $31.7

- **Unrestricted Expenses: $795.9 (in millions)**
  - Salaries and Benefits: 55.9% $444.8
  - Supplies and Purchased Services: 33.0% $262.4
  - Depreciation/Interest: 6.1% $48.9
  - Bad Debt: 2.7% $21.7
  - Other Expenses: 2.3% $18.1