

## New endowed scholarship for clinical lab sciences honors Drs. Colleen and Michael O'Leary

The Colleen E. O'Leary, MD, and Michael R. O'Leary, MD, Endowed Scholarship for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (CLS) has been created to help alleviate a critical national shortage in lab professionals and attract quality candidates into the CLS program. The scholarship was established by the Upstate Foundation, Upstate's Department of Anesthesiology and the Upstate administration upon the recent retirement of Dr. Colleen E. O'Leary.

An anesthesiologist and CHP clinical faculty member, Dr. O'Leary served in numerous roles for the



university including interim medical director of Upstate University Hospital, interim chair of the department of Anesthesiology, president of the Medical Staff and member of the Upstate Foundation Board of Directors. Her husband Dr. Michael O'Leary is a pathologist and retired CEO and medical director of the Laboratory Alliance of Central New York. Both are alumni of Upstate's College of Medicine and have been involved in many community-based philanthropic initiatives.

"Together, the O'Learys have contributed so much to the lives of patients and their families in Central New York. It's no surprise that their generosity continues through the establishment of this fund," commented CLS program chair **Susan Graham, MS, MT(ASCP)SH.**

The CLS program celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2015 and averages 18 graduates each year.

"Colleen O'Leary also was very involved in the clinical education of cardiovascular perfusion students when they rotated through operating rooms at University Hospital, and was an excellent classroom instructor for their pharmacology studies," according to **Bruce Searles, MS, CCP '93**, CVP program chair. "Her contribution to our department was significant."

For more information, visit the CHP alumni website.

## \$1.2 million federal grant enhances PA clinical training

The Upstate Physician Assistant program has been awarded a five-year, \$1.2 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to enhance the clinical year of training for students. The plan is to develop a "continuity of care" curriculum for the clinical year that is modeled after the College of Medicine's Rural Medicine Program.

Collaborating with the Rural Medicine Program, the PA program is establishing interdisciplinary clinical training sites utilizing a longitudinal primary care model, according to program chair **Sandra Banas, MST,**

**RPA-C (BS/MT '77).** Specifically, the proposed clinical experience will be an integrated clerkship model of medical education in which PA and medical students train in a community-based team with one clinician serving as the preceptor for both students simultaneously. Under this model, students will be trained in rural communities throughout upstate New York.

"This interdisciplinary training experience provides students with the opportunity to fully engage in continuity experiences with preceptors, patients and families at both the health care delivery and

community levels with the goal of practicing team-based medical care. Evidence suggests that such a training model can improve the quality of patient care, as well as improve recruitment efforts for primary care providers," Banas said.

The grant is the fourth HRSA award to the PA program since 2010, when the degree program began. Over the past six years it has received a total of \$3.4 million for student scholarships, student stipends, educational resources, high fidelity simulation equipment,

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## Health Professions AlumniConnection

The SUNY Upstate Medical University Health Professions Alumni Association publishes *Alumni Connection* quarterly. Distribution is free to college alumni, faculty, staff, students and friends.

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## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

# Interprofessional fall prevention research project highlighted



*Melanie Melewski, DPT Class of 2018 presenting at Ross Student Research Day*

First-year DPT student **Melanie Melewski** is extending a helping hand to the wider community through her research.

With a keen interest in the effect exercise has on individual functioning, Melanie arrived at

Upstate with an undergraduate degree in kinesiology and ACSM certification as an exercise physiologist. She was selected to represent the College of Health Professions at the spring Charles R. Ross Memorial Student Research Day by presenting, "A Fall Prevention Program Led by an Interprofessional Team in an Urban Public Housing Community."

Fostering cross-collaboration and interprofessional education, Ross Student Research Day enables students

in all four colleges to display research posters, spotlighting one from each college for oral presentation.

For her project, Melanie is developing a screening tool and fall prevention program for a downtown adult public housing community, bringing together multiple scopes of practice – physical therapy, respiratory therapy, nursing and medicine. Her work identifies risk factors for falls and selects screening tools and interventions using meta-analysis studies across the disciplines. She chose the subject because "working on an interprofessional team would allow me a better understanding of how to improve patient care; and, in the environment of public housing, people often lack transportation and financial means for access to fall prevention programs they may need."

Melanie hopes to secure a grant to provide transportation for participants to an Upstate community program at the Institute of Human Performance. "This project," she said, "will further connect Upstate Medical University to the community around it."



**Elton Garvin, BS/RT '93, LRTT**, was recognized for his passion and excellence as an educator with the 2016 Faculty Gold Standard Award from Upstate Medical University. Garvin exemplifies Upstate values – innovation, respect, service and integrity – as a Radiation Therapy instructor. He is pictured with Radiation Therapy Program Chair Joan O'Brien (left) and Upstate President Danielle Laraque-Arena, MD.

## \$1.2 million federal grant *continued from cover*

faculty development and clinical site development. The PA program has grown from an inaugural class of 8 students to its current enrollment of 35

per class. Its students will benefit from the opening this Fall of the state-of-the-art Academic Building, their program's new home.

**Donate online at [www.upstatefoundation.org/chpalumni](http://www.upstatefoundation.org/chpalumni) or call 315-464-4416.**

# Commencement Showcases Student Talent and Service

Extraordinary CHP students – including two Marine veterans and a bagpiper – were a special part of the College of Health Professions Commencement ceremony in May. “We are showcasing the array of talent and service provided by our students,” said Dean Donald Simpson, PhD. “We appreciate all that they do, and think the learning environment is enriched as a result of them being in our College.”

The impressive sound of bagpipes filled the Crouse Hinds Theater in Syracuse as **Michael Miller, MBT Class of 2017** helped usher in the Class of 2016 – 163 graduates from eight programs. “I feel honored to be a part of the Commencement ceremony,” said Miller. “It’s a privilege not many get the chance to experience. It’s nice to play for the friends I’ve made over the past year at Upstate.”

Miller said his father played the pipes and instructed him since the age of 10. The last four years, Miller has competed at the highest level for bagpipes, Grade 1, traveling to Glasgow, Scotland, for the World Pipe Band Championships. A dean’s list student in medical biotechnology, Miller chose the program because he is on a path to graduate school to pursue medical discoveries in the lab involving immunology and infectious diseases.



Bearing the United States and New York State flags were Marine Corps veterans and students

**Louis Demarco, RT Class of 2017** (bottom photo, left) of Candor, NY, a 10-year veteran; and **Andrew Brown, RADT Class of 2017**, of Baldwinsville, with almost six years in service.

Demarco served in Iraq and is a former police officer with a criminal justice degree. “I represent veterans in whatever I do, and I was happy to be there both as a flag bearer and for the graduating class of respiratory therapists.” Demarco decided to leave law enforcement for this health profession after watching his mother being treated by RTs as she beat lung cancer and continues to struggle with COPD.

Brown was a machine gunner who sustained a serious leg injury from a roadside bomb in Afghanistan. His two years of inpatient/outpatient experiences led him to study radiation therapy – a career that would give him “a real sense of purpose like the military did.” Brown was selected to receive the 2016 **Lisa A. Parlato / Clark M. Brown** (no relation) **Continuing Education Scholarship** awarded through the CHP Alumni Association. A volunteer for veterans’ causes, Brown also gives time to help those with disabilities in his church and community.

## FACULTY UPDATE

### Dedicated RT educator retires, remains in adjunct role



Nancy Feocco

of premature infants to the elderly and her

**Nancy (Berault) Feocco, BS, RT, RRT-NPS**, an alumna with a 1976 Respiratory Therapy AAS and a 1978 Cardio-respiratory Sciences BS, retired this spring after 24 years of teaching at Upstate. Feocco’s expertise ranges from the care

career spanned serving as a staff RT at University and Crouse hospitals, and as a contract RT. Active also with the local level of the NYS Society for Respiratory Care, “Nancy has left an indelible mark on the lives of her co-workers, colleagues, students, patients and everyone with whom she has had contact over the course of her 40-year career,” noted department chair **Joseph Sorbello, MEd, RT ('73/'77), RRT, FAARC**. Feocco will remain as an adjunct instructor teaching ACLS, PALS, NRP, and the neonatal course, he said.

## BY THE NUMBERS

### 2016 CHP GRADUATES

Cardiovascular Perfusion: 8

Medical Biotechnology: 1

Medical Imaging Sciences: 24

Medical Technology: 22

Physical Therapy: 56

Physician Assistant: 34

Radiation Therapy: 10

Respiratory Therapy: 8



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## RADIATION THERAPY ALUMNI

### 50th Anniversary Reunion

**Saturday, October 8, 2016**

**Noon to 5 pm**

See the new Academic Building  
and visit with friends!

To register, visit

[www.upstatefoundation.org/RT50](http://www.upstatefoundation.org/RT50)



Upstate Radiation Therapy  
Alumni & Students

## Albany Clinical Site Boasts Many Alumni



*Upstate alumni and NYOH colleagues: Megan Farrar (left) with Casey O'Keefe; and, from left, Ashley Benincasa, Rachel Brunez, Dr. Justin Juliano and Mary McCann.*

**Megan (Monroe) Farrar, RT(T) '01**, director of services for Radiation and Imaging for New York Oncology Hematology (NYOH) since 2012, reports that NYOH, with seven facilities in the Capital District, has three comprehensive cancer centers with radiation oncology departments that are clinical sites for Upstate radiation therapy students.

In addition to Farrar, NYOH employs a number of CHP alumni – some serving as clinical instructors – including a radiation oncologist, chief therapists, dosimetrists and therapists. They are (by CHP graduation year): **Mary McCann, RT(T) '89; Justin Juliano, MD '02, RTT '94** (a graduate of both the RADT program and Upstate's College of Medicine); **Michael Murray, RT(T), CMD '96; Brian Hotaling RT(T) '97; Sandra (Weinman) Gibson RT(R)(T) '03; Ashley (Gardner) Benincasa RT(T) '05; Terri Leonard, RT(R)(T) '09; Jamie (Sherman) Field, RT(T) '09; Rachel (Warwick) Brunez, RT(T) '12; Heather Broekema, RT(R)(T) '13; Casey O'Keefe, RT(T), CMD '14 and Brandee Schoonmaker, RT(T) '16.**

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been promoted or published?**

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