



# Pass the Torch

Educating the next generation of physicians

FALL 2008

## Faith Fitzgerald: A legendary teacher

By Michael A. LaCombe, M.D.,  
FACC, MACP

Most of us – whether clinician, investigator or simply devoted parent – aspire to the role of great teacher. And most of us, in our private moments, pride ourselves on being so. But what qualities separate the great teacher from the merely ordinary?

Too often in these times the attending who simply pauses to teach is labeled as a “good teacher” when all that is meant is that the person so designated bothers to take the time. Let us agree that the *good teacher* is one who knows subject matter well, cares to teach others about it, wins teaching awards in his or her institution, but is not widely known beyond that locale. These people are the unsung heroes of medical education – commonly not paid for their time, yet revered by grateful students. That is payment enough for them.

The *great teacher* is known beyond the institution, is invited to teach elsewhere, has often studied the art of teaching to perfect skills, and is commonly a leading investigator in

his or her field. With great teachers, one has a sense that you are getting the final word on the subject, that your comprehending the material is of paramount importance to the teacher, and that this teacher *cares* that you have learned. Bob Kreisberg of Birmingham and Marvin Turck of Seattle are two such examples. Sad to say, the great teachers of today support themselves professionally in other ways – through grants, through patient care, through (often suffocating) administrative duties. Such was not the case before the advent of “modern” medicine.

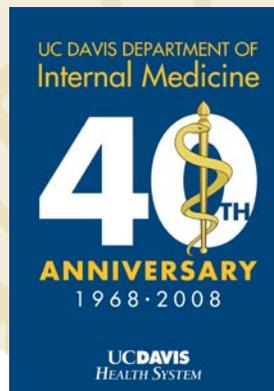
What of the *legendary teacher*? What separates him or her from the legions of great teachers in the history of medicine? Legendary teachers were polymaths, with an encyclopedic knowledge not just of medicine but of other sciences and of the arts as well. They earned their rare status



Faith Fitzgerald, M.D.

not merely through force of intellect, but through love of learning. In addition, they shared an uncommon drive to teach – not to gain fame or fortune, but because of their shared conviction that in medicine as in other disciplines teaching is primary.

For them, teaching was not a sideline, not an afterthought, not something carved out of an otherwise very busy day in the lab or in the clinic or after budget meetings and conferences with the dean. Teaching came first. They were recruited, paid and valued to do so, and remembered primarily as legendary teachers.



*Continued on page 2*

FAITH FITZGERALD *continued*

These legendary teachers loved their students, became parent-surrogates to them, were described by history as “affectionate guardians” to them.

Given the long span of recorded medical history, the list of legendary teachers is surprisingly short. Hippocrates, father and founder of medicine, has been remembered as a legendary teacher. Avicenna (980–1037) the greatest physician of Islam and arguably of all medical history, was an unparalleled polymath revered by his students and was author of a medical text used in the medical schools of western Europe for seven centuries.

Thomas Linacre (1460–1524) taught Erasmus, Sir Thomas More, Prince Arthur and Queen Mary. His portrait hung above William Osler’s



Hippocrates

mantle together with those of William Harvey and Thomas Sydenham. Herman Boerhaave (1668–1738), the legendary Dutch teacher of medicine, was sent students from all over Europe and from as far away as China. Osler himself was a legendary teacher at McGill, Hopkins, and



Thomas Linacre

Oxford — though I doubt that the academicians of today who devote so much time to adulating Osler and to styling themselves after him would even briefly consider giving him a

job were he to walk out of the woods of Ontario today.

Who are the legendary teachers of today? In my experience only one exists, and she is at UC Davis. Faith Thayer Fitzgerald, in my estimation the finest, most knowledgeable



internist in America today, owns an encyclopedic knowledge gained through love of learning. Beyond that, she is driven to teach, and is valued, respected and paid by your institution for doing so. As one of your former deans, Joseph Silva, once said to me, “I have been content to let Faith be Faith.”

Places of medical learning that have sponsored her visits talk of her for years later. She is the single most sought-after visiting professor in the world.

She loves her students and residents at UC Davis. She has told me that she regards them as her children. Encompassing the encyclopedic knowledge of Avicenna, the scholarship of Linacre, the affectionate guardianship of students of Boerhaave, and the gift of language and of bedside teaching of Osler, she is unrivaled as a teacher.

It is great testimony to UC Davis that you value her as you do, and share this treasure with the rest of the world. As an institution, you are rare, perhaps unique in doing this. Whether out of financial pressures, misplaced value systems, or simple professional jealousy, Faith Thayer Fitzgerald would be buried treasure almost anywhere else.

But not at UC Davis. Not by you. Above all your achievements, take pride in this.

*Michael A. LaCombe, M.D., FACC, MACP, of Augusta, Maine, is a director emeritus of the American Board of Internal Medicine, and a regent emeritus of the American College of Physicians.*

These are just a few tributes from Dr. Fitzgerald’s students:

- “Amazing diagnostician! Very friendly and approachable. Excellent rapport with patients. I have tremendous respect for Dr. Fitzgerald.”
- “Morning rounds with Dr. Fitzgerald are not only an education in medicine, but also a lesson in history, ethics and philosophy.”
- “Dr. Fitzgerald is truly inspirational — not just as a physician, but as a human being. Her warmth and care for patients are incredibly genuine. Her enthusiasm for the field of medicine and her desire to teach are impressive.”

Dr. Faith Fitzgerald expresses appreciation to a supporter:

“Many thanks for your generous contribution to the UC Davis Internal Medicine Education Fund. It will, I promise, be well used in the education of resident doctors and medical students, our most valuable work. Most valuable, I say, because without their skills, knowledge, aspirations and character, all of our science, data and technology will not- by themselves- be properly applied to the service of others. These young doctors of wonderful intelligence and dedication, are eager to achieve excellence and your gift allows us, their teachers, to spend the time with them and their patients that shows them how to do that. Whatever good they accomplish in consequence of this teaching is the good that you have done for all of those they help in their careers.”

“...if each one of us would light a candle, we’d have a tremendous light.”  
—Sister Thea Bowman

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

FREDERICK J. MEYERS, M.D., MACP

## Educating our young people is at the heart of our mission

We take great pride in being one of the country’s most dynamic centers of academic medicine as well as the largest department at UC Davis. Our team includes 230 faculty, 375 support staff, 142 residents and fellows, and 400 volunteer clinical faculty. We offer a broad spectrum of patient care services, research and education. In this special year we celebrate the Department of Internal Medicine’s 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the UC Davis Centennial.

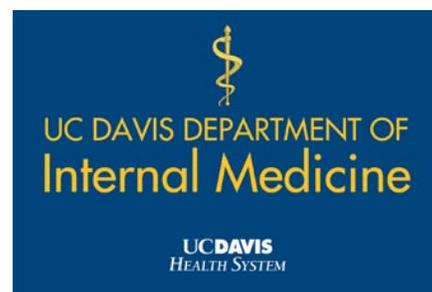
Our Academic Forum was a magical event at which 32 of our best and brightest residents and fellows, the future academicians and physicians of the Central Valley, presented their innovative research posters to more than 100 community leaders, grateful patients, donors, faculty and staff. **Educating our young people is the heart of our mission to discover and share knowledge to advance health.** With them, we pass the torch of medical education to a new generation.

Internal Medicine pays tribute to two rare individuals who personify our mission of education and community service: Faith Fitzgerald, M.D., and Joe Sullivan.

We thank our supporters from all walks of life. Please join us to make the dream of our Internal Medicine Education Professorship, to be named in honor of Faith Fitzgerald, M.D., a reality. Dr. Fitzgerald is the finest living teacher of medicine in the United States. More than 100 supporters have helped in the quiet phase to raise the first \$100,000 toward our \$1 million goal.



We are building support to start a Joseph Sullivan Endowed Professorship in Cancer Education



and Research, thanks to Joe Sullivan’s lead gift. Joe became my friend a few years ago. Please read his amazing story on page 4. I believe you will be touched as I was. The UC motto is “Let there be light.” Joe’s light shined brightly as a powerful example of sacrificial service and generosity. **Each of us can ask, what is the light that we give to the world?** We want to match Joe’s legacy of service with donations from you, our community supporters. I need your help. An envelope is included for your use. Linda and I thank you for your support and friendship.

Yours in Service,

Frederick J. Meyers

## Simple Ways to Leave Your Legacy

**A shared vision for the future.** Remembering the UC Davis Department of Internal Medicine in your estate plans is easy and has a lasting and positive impact.

**Bequest through your will or living trust.** Talk with us about ways to include Internal Medicine in your estate plans. We will work with you to ensure that your estate plans accurately reflect the intended use of your gift.

**Life Insurance Beneficiary Designation.** A simple approach to gifting an unneeded life insurance policy is to designate Internal Medicine as a beneficiary.

**Individual Retirement Account (IRA) Beneficiary Designation.** Avoid the potential double taxation (income tax and estate tax) of your IRA by designating Internal Medicine as a beneficiary.

**Heritage Circle.** The Heritage Circle recognizes the thoughtful generosity of donors who have remembered us through their estate plans. Participate in the UC Davis Health System and Internal Medicine legacy by becoming a member!

**Need more information?** For specific bequest/designation language or answers about your planned giving options, please call (916) 703-5117.

# Joe Sullivan, a special man and unique philanthropist

## **Decorated Army veteran and self-made business man donates entire estate to Internal Medicine**

Sacramentan Joe Sullivan toiled as an agricultural worker before establishing his own business. He lived comfortably yet frugally. Now UC Davis cancer research will benefit from the generosity of Sullivan, who died at age 88 on 23 June 2008.

Sullivan's stucco house and half acre of land in Del Paso Heights are a testament to his self-made success. Born Joseph Franklin Sullivan on 8 August 1919 in Augusta, Georgia, as one of 10 children of Seaborn and Mary Sullivan, he finished third grade, then spent most of his early years picking cotton and plowing the earth behind a mule. Sullivan served in the U.S. Army's 987 Quartermaster Service Company in World War II, then started a small trucking business. He bought his parcel of land in 1963, on which he built his home in 1979.

Sullivan befriended Fred Meyers, M.D, professor and chair of UC Davis' Department of Internal Medicine, years ago. In 2004 Sullivan decided he would leave his entire estate to fund cancer research under Meyers' direction.

"Why not put the money some place where people will get something good out of it?" Sullivan said. Meyers was touched that the capital retiree bequeathed his home and land to aid UC Davis cancer research. "Joe's story is heartwarming and inspiring.



Dr. Fred Meyers enjoys seeing photos of Joe's friends and family.



His extraordinarily generous gift touched us all. Joe is our Oseola McCarty," Meyers said. (McCarty was a humble washerwoman who made international news at the age of 87 in 1995 when she donated \$150,000 to the University of Southern Mississippi to support student scholarships.)

Sullivan's friends in Internal Medicine were organizing a birthday party for him when they learned of his passing. Proceeds from his estate will be used to support cancer education and research under the direction of

Dr. Meyers. Joe Sullivan is a modern day example of what renowned author Horatio Alger, Jr., wrote about: inspiring individuals who overcame adversity through unyielding perseverance. Sullivan, an active Veterans of Foreign Wars member, received a veteran's burial and California National Guard military honors.



"Joe's story demonstrates that being a philanthropist does not require you to bear the name of Carnegie or Rockefeller. Everyone can help. What's required is what Joe had: caring for others and the deep desire to be a force for good in this world. I am filled with pride that UC Davis Health System's own commitment to transforming the world around us matched Joe's..." said Claire Pomeroy, M.D., M.B.A., vice chancellor, UC Davis Human Health Sciences, and dean of the UC Davis School of Medicine.

[Some background information for this article was derived from a *Sacramento Bee* news story by Dorsey Griffith, published 16 Feb. 2004.]

## **A Tribute to my Uncle Joe**

I remember my Uncle Joe as a tall, handsome man. I was a little girl looking up in wonder at this statue of a man, in awe of his height, his home and his big black dog. In my mind, I will always see him as kind, caring and with a big smile. As an adult, I have learned that my uncle is all that I imagined him to be when I was a little girl, and more. He was a good, honest man with a big heart who gave generously out of what he had to help people and to fund cancer research led by Dr. Fred Meyers at the UC Davis Department of Internal Medicine.

My only regret is that my son and daughter did not get to meet Uncle Joe, who lives in my mind and heart as a gentleman. I will have, however, the opportunity to tell them about their great-uncle who believed in hard work, determination and self-sufficiency. I will teach them to be generous and kind, and to remember to look down at young children with a smile; you never know what impression a smile will leave on a young person.

**Terri L. Sexton**

# Internal Medicine Academic Forum lights the way for a bright future

Following voting by more than 120 community supporters, Drs. Joseph Vu, Jenny Draper and Vishal Goyal were presented “Peoples’ Choice Awards” at the Academic Forum on 29 May for their outstanding research posters. Vu’s topic was “Subclinical Thyroid Disease Predicts Risk of Hip Fracture”; Draper presented “Cellulitis as the Initial Presentation of Felty’s Syndrome”; and Goyal’s poster was titled “Lifting Weights Can Blow Your Mind: Spontaneous CSF Rhinorrhea.”

The photo shows (from left) Susan Murin, M.D.; Craig Keenan, M.D.; Mark Henderson, M.D.; Vishal Goyal, M.D.; Jennifer Draper, M.D.; Joseph Vu, M.D.; and Frederick J. Meyers, M.D.



## RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT

### Timothy Stocker, M.D.

Dr. Timothy Stocker exemplifies the high standards of professionalism that we expect of our physician colleagues. Stocker is a second-year UC Davis Health System internal medicine resident who seeks to improve care for uninsured patients in Sacramento County. As a medical student, Stocker served as co-director for the student-run Clínica Tepatí, where he worked most Saturdays caring for members of Sacramento’s underserved Latino population. There he learned firsthand about the impact of diabetes and the power of outpatient treatment to slow disease progression.

In 2006 he joined the Department of Internal Medicine as a primary-care resident with a continuity clinic at the Sacramento County Primary Care Center (PCC). The PCC performs nearly all of the outpatient medical care for the region’s uninsured popu-

lations. Stocker sought to analyze the quality of comprehensive diabetes care that residents deliver to medically underserved patients at the county clinic. As an intern, Stocker received a grant from the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) F. Daniel Duffy Small Grants Program. His was one of only 10 grants awarded for this nationally competitive program.

Stocker’s study concluded that residents can significantly improve the lives of patients through the quality of care they perform. His research won first place at the California/Hawaii Regional Society of General Internal Medicine Annual Meeting.

“I value the diversity at UC Davis. Our patients come from many different walks of life, and my training has given me an understanding of the challenges that uninsured patients face to get medical care. After resi-



dency I plan to work toward reducing health-care disparities for the uninsured. The strong support I received from Drs. Davis, Harris, Keenan and Fancher during the challenges of residency makes the UC Davis Internal Medicine program exceptional,” Stocker said.



After Roche donated more than \$1 million to UC Davis during the past several years, Drs. **Fred Meyers** and **Lorenzo Rossaro** presented a certificate of appreciation on 31 March from Chancellor Larry Vanderhoef to



Dr. Lorenzo Rossaro, Abram Doncel and Dr. Fred Meyers.

Abram Doncel, western region sales director for Roche. Virginia Nunez-Brock and Vernon Turner of Roche in Northern California were instrumental in committing an additional \$55,000 to support Team Donate Life's eight-person bike team to raise funds for organ donation and transplantation awareness.

**Lorenzo Rossaro, M.D.**, chief of the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, visits with **Jason Weckworth** and his wife **Kristen** the day after she underwent surgery to remove her kidney for donation to dialysis patient Staci Smith. "The day before I



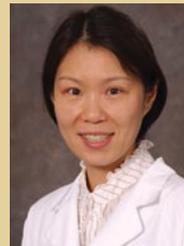
Dr. Lorenzo Rossaro with the Weckworths.

first talked with Kristen, I had been on dialysis for five years, and was praying the whole time," Smith said. "When I knew we were a match, I was at peace. It was divine intervention. I've been calling Kristen my 'kidney sister.' My prayers are answered." In 2003, Jason donated one of his kidneys to his father.



Members of the **Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine** celebrated the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their division, led by its chief, Dr. Timothy Albertson (wearing blue blazer, front center).

Dr. **Joy Jiang** has won the 2008 John Joseph Moakley Postdoctoral Research Fellowship.



Internal Medicine's **Darin Latimore, M.D.**, has been named the UC Davis School of Medicine's first director of student diversity. Latimore, a 1994 graduate of our medical school, is

working in the Office of Medical Education to coordinate support for students who come from disadvantaged backgrounds or who have been marginalized because of sexual



orientation or gender identity. The position encompasses outreach and admissions, with an emphasis on premedical students who need guidance in achieving their goal of acceptance into medical school.

Dr. **Susan Murin** has been appointed to the prestigious Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.



The American Cancer Society (ACS) has presented an extramural grant and special award to Dr. **Fred Meyers**, second from the left in the photo below with the society's Beverly Saldivar, Quincy Suckow and Gary Wilson.

"The society is proud of the work of Dr. Meyers to address cultural disparities in cancer care. We applaud this society-funded researcher, for his bold step toward palliative care for our patients," said Paula Birdsong, ACS regional vice president.



## Sources of pride

- **Anne Knowlton**, M.D., has been working with Norwood Junior High School science teacher Ginna Meyers to engage students and teach them about science and biomedical research.
- The Molecular, Cellular and Integrative Graduate Group has presented Internal Medicine's **Larissa Iselin** with the Carlson Award, the highest honor that the graduate group bestows. The award recognized her superior scholarly achievement and promise for teaching and research.
- Three Internal Medicine faculty members received the Dean's Award for Excellence in Mentoring, which recognizes individuals who play a special role in the academic development of junior faculty. The award winners are **Kit Lam**, M.D., Ph.D., professor and chief of the Division of Hematology and Oncology; **Reen Wu**, Ph.D., professor of cell biology and human anatomy; and **Nancy Lane**, M.D., professor of internal medicine.

- The CURE program, a two-year cancer science curriculum, helps prepare high school students enter four-year institutions and succeed in majors relevant to cancer medicine. Internal Medicine's Dr. **Tonya Fancher** helped establish a new unit in which UC Davis Internal Medicine resident physicians teach Sacramento High School CURE students about a different type of cancer each month.



Sacramento High School student Nakita Chapel and Ripple Sharma, M.D., participated in the CURE program.

## Sacramento Magazine Honors Dean Pomeroy

**Claire Pomeroy**, M.D., M.B.A., UC Davis vice chancellor for Human Health Services, and dean of the UC Davis School of Medicine, was selected among *Sacramento Magazine's* 100 most Influential people in this region. She oversees the UC Davis Health System's academic, research and clinical programs (including the 800-physician medical group and 577-bed acute-care hospital) and a \$1 billion operating budget. More importantly, she has raised UC Davis' national and international profile. She's been instrumental in growing the medical center campus and establishing a nursing school. She is an expert in infectious diseases and a professor of internal medicine and microbiology and immunology.

## Lois O'Grady, M.D., an Internal Medicine Pioneer

Lois O'Grady, one of the original faculty members of the UC Davis School of Medicine and the first woman on faculty, has given \$450,000 of her estate to create a Hematology-Oncology Endowed Lectureship.



"Lois' generous gift will allow us to bring Nobel laureates and other medical heavyweights here for our residents and fellows – the future, premier physicians and academicians of the Sacramento region, to learn from the very

best and brightest – all thanks to the generous endowed lectureship to be named in her honor," said Fred Meyers, M.D., chair of the Department of Internal Medicine and longtime colleague and friend of O'Grady's.

O'Grady was born on 9 June 1936 in Medford, Massachusetts. She received her bachelor's degree from Simmons College in Boston and her medical degree from Boston University. She completed residency training in internal medicine, and fellowship training in hematology and oncology. She died at her Sacramento home on 23 December 2007.

In 1967, O'Grady became one of the original seven faculty members – called the "Lucky Seven" – of the

then-new UC Davis School of Medicine. In 1978 the dean of the school, C. John Tupper, asked O'Grady to formulate a new admissions policy for the school in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the Bakke case. In that decision, the court barred quota systems in college admissions but affirmed the constitutionality of affirmative action programs giving equal access to minorities.

"Dr. O'Grady was a strong mentor and advocate for women faculty," said Lydia Howell, vice chair and director of anatomic pathology. "Many of the women on the faculty at UC Davis Health System owe at least part of their careers to Dr. O'Grady."

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*Divisions and sections within the Department of Internal Medicine: Allergy and Rheumatology • Cardiovascular Medicine • Endocrinology, Clinical Nutrition and Vascular Medicine • Gastroenterology and Hepatology • General Medicine, Geriatrics, Bioethics • Hematology and Oncology • Infectious and Immunologic Diseases • Nephrology • Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine, including the Hospitalists Section • Transplant Nephrology and Hepatology*

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## Lois Franz Honors Late Husband, Rod

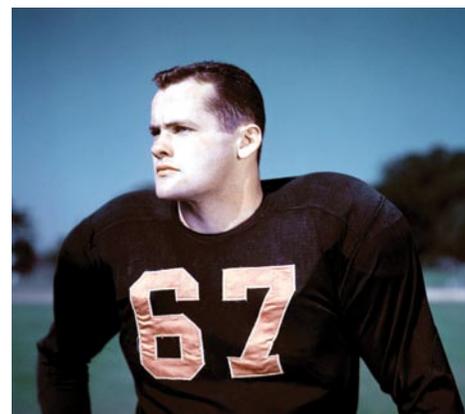
Lois Franz has been a long-time supporter of the Department of Internal Medicine in appreciation for the care her late husband Rod received here. Rod Franz battled prostate cancer until his death in November 1999 at 74 years of age. Internist Frederick J. Meyers, M.D., MACP, a specialist in hematology and oncology, treated the disease. Lois credits Meyers with

extending her husband's life by nine years.

"We were blessed to have Dr. Meyers take care of Rod. He made a house call on Christmas, which was just one example of the level of care we received," Lois said. "Cancer is insidious, and Dr. Meyers helped us through the toughest time of our lives. We would not have considered going anywhere else except UC Davis Medical Center. Dr. Meyers was also an angel when Rod was in hospice for many months at the very end of his life."

Lois Franz has served as a Community Advisory Committee member for Internal Medicine and has helped to generate support for our mission.

Rod Franz played football from 1946 to 1949 at UC Berkeley, where



*The late Rod Franz*

he later coached. He played as guard and remains the only three-time All-American in Cal history. The Bears posted perfect 10-0 records during the 1948 and '49 seasons, Franz was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1977.

Rod and Lois had seven children and 16 grandchildren.



*Lois Franz*