

Keeping  
up with the  
**JONES  
INSTITUTE**

Anatomy  
of a  
**BASIC  
SCIENTIST**

*New spaces on campus mark*

**T** **EDUCATIONAL  
TRANSFORMATION**



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37 Celebrating a  
\$1 million gift



from the president



In September of last year, we demonstrated our commitment to the people of Hampton Roads and thanked you all for your support of EVMS.

We celebrated the opening of our new Education and Research Building with style. We wrapped the new building with a giant red ribbon and bow and presented “A gift to the community from EVMS, our Donors, the Governor and the Virginia Assembly.” Built on time and on budget, this new building is transformational for EVMS (see page 16).

The 100,000-square-foot building provides critical educational space. In August, we boosted MD program enrollment by 30 percent. In January 2012, we welcomed our largest physician assistant class ever. We will grow that program by more than 60 percent in the next few years.

We’re educating more students because this community — and communities across the country — will soon face a shortage of physicians and health-care providers. We’re doing our part to meet this challenge head on.

We’re also doing our part to address a disease that impacts nearly every family: cancer. The new building’s top floor houses the Leroy T. Canoles Jr. Cancer Research Center where, among other things, scientists are developing ways to better identify aggressive forms of cancer — those most likely to respond to treatment when caught early.

From the pioneering work of the Jones Institute (see page 20) to the medical and scientific advances perfected by our basic scientists (see page 28), EVMS has been working on behalf of the community. We see the potential for even greater accomplishments on the horizon.

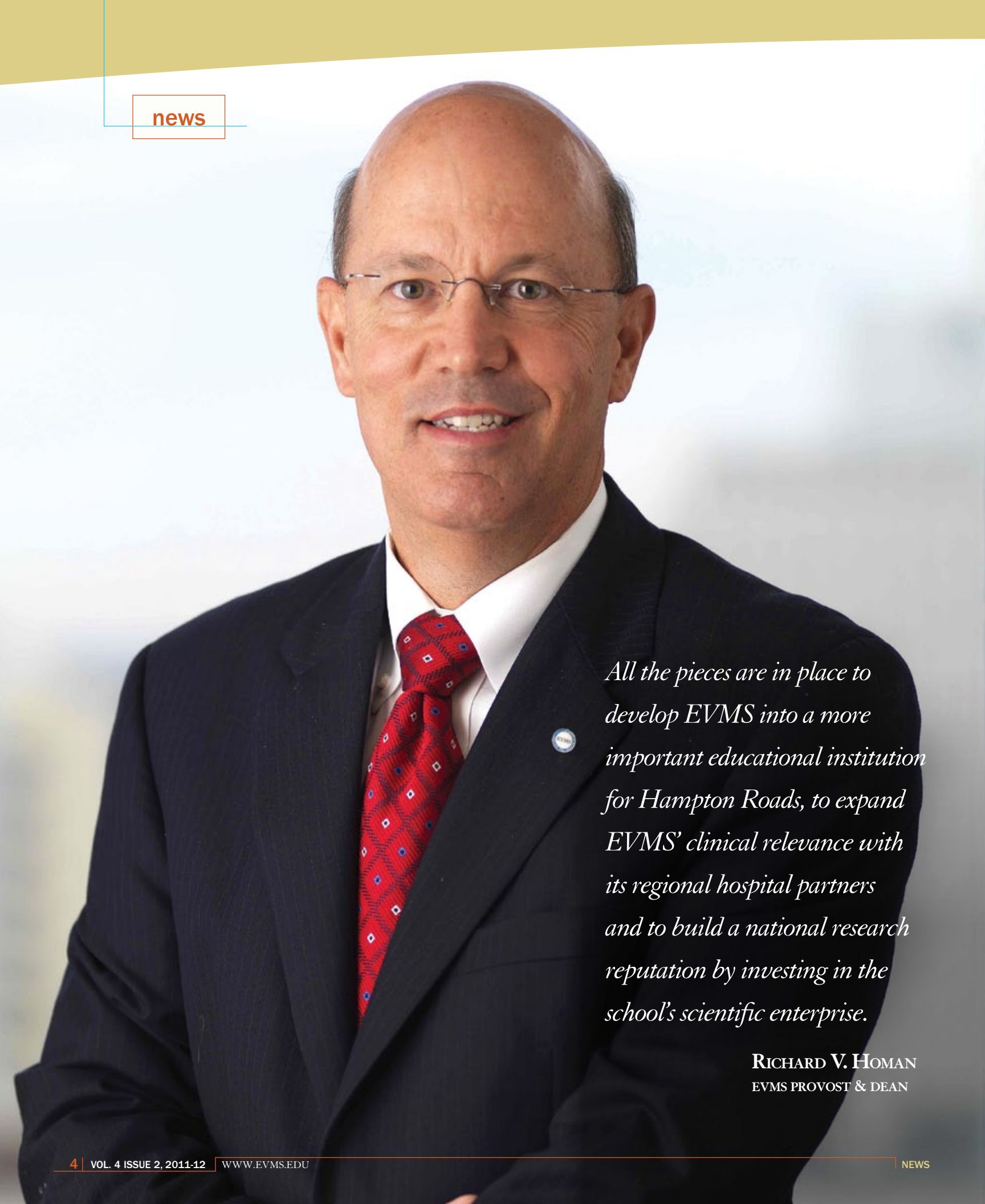
To help achieve those successes we’ve recruited a new educational leader. It is my pleasure to welcome Dr. Richard V. Homan, our new Provost and Dean of the medical school (see page 4). We are all excited to have him join our team.

All our efforts are undertaken with you in mind. Thank you for supporting our efforts to become the most community-oriented medical school in the nation.

Harry T. Lester

President

Teaching. Discovering. Caring.™

A portrait of Richard V. Homan, a middle-aged man with glasses, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a red patterned tie. He is smiling slightly and looking directly at the camera. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with a light sky and a greenish-yellow foreground.

*All the pieces are in place to develop EVMS into a more important educational institution for Hampton Roads, to expand EVMS' clinical relevance with its regional hospital partners and to build a national research reputation by investing in the school's scientific enterprise.*

**RICHARD V. HOMAN**  
EVMS PROVOST & DEAN

# NEW PROVOST, DEAN SEES OPPORTUNITY ON EVMS' HORIZON

Eastern Virginia Medical School's new academic head brings more than two decades of institutional leadership, patient care experience and keen business acumen to the job.

Provost and Dean Richard V. Homan, MD, joined EVMS Jan. 9. He has a history of transformative leadership, helping the institutions he's served develop clear paths for growth and strengthen their financial footing. At EVMS, he sees the chance to build on the school's stability and strengths.

Dr. Homan says all the pieces are in place to develop EVMS into a more important educational institution for Hampton Roads, to expand EVMS' clinical relevance with its regional hospital partners and to build a national research reputation by investing in the school's scientific enterprise.

Previously, Dr. Homan held top-level positions at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center and, most recently, at Drexel University College of Medicine, where he served as President and Dean as well as Senior Vice President for health affairs and CEO of Drexel University Physicians.

He succeeds Gerald J. Pepe, PhD, who served seven years as Provost and Dean before choosing to return to his former post as Chair of physiological sciences.

"Dr. Homan brings a superb combination of academic, clinical and business sense," EVMS President Harry T. Lester says. "He has a proven track record of visionary leadership and strategic management.

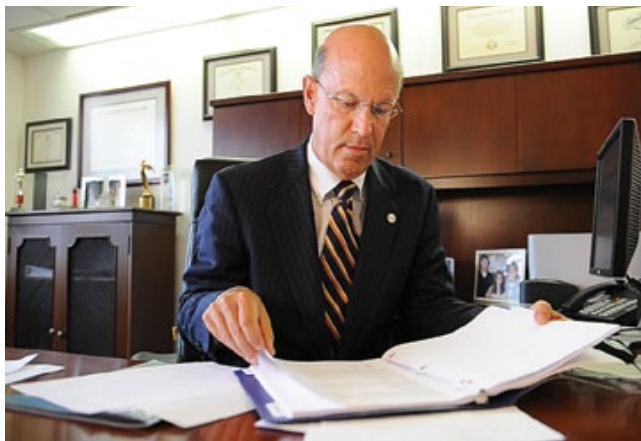
"His accomplishments demonstrate he is capable of growing programs and strengthening academic partnerships for the benefit of the school and the community it serves. I believe he's the right person to help us achieve our vision to become the most community-oriented school of medicine and health professions in the nation."

Within two years, Dr. Homan's role will expand to encompass the positions of both President and Dean, making him the first person to do so on a permanent basis in the school's history. A previous

President temporarily filled the position of Dean during a brief vacancy.

"Over the last two decades, Dr. Homan has demonstrated his effectiveness as a leader at two outstanding medical schools," says Maurice A. Jones, rector of the EVMS' governing Board of Visitors, which unanimously approved Dr. Homan's appointment. "We are fortunate to have someone of his intellect and talent to join the school's leadership. He clearly has a passion for medical education and a great appreciation for the many benefits that a medical school brings to a community."

Dr. Homan says he originally planned to pursue a career in biomedical engineering, but volunteer experiences as an undergraduate awakened an innate passion for working with people. That's why EVMS' community-focused vision resonates with him.



Dr. Homan has brought transformational leadership to institutions throughout his career. He believes EVMS has many opportunities to become an even greater asset to Hampton Roads.

While he does acknowledge challenges on the road ahead — such as the need to deliver care more efficiently in the face of both health-care reform and increasing competition in the health-care marketplace, as well as the need to evolve medical education to reflect those real-world changes — he knows EVMS can step up to meet them. He sees the school as a campus brimming with opportunities, and He credits President Lester and Dr. Pepe for bringing the stability and guidance needed for EVMS to focus on meeting the needs of the community that created it. □

## The Homan File

### Education

- ScB (Biomedical Sciences), Brown University
- MD, The State University of New York at Buffalo School of Medicine
- Residency and Chief Resident, Department of Family and Community Medicine, the Milton S. Hershey Medical Center of the Pennsylvania State University

### Selected Professional Experience/ Academic Appointments

#### *Drexel University College of Medicine, Philadelphia (2005-2011)*

- President and Annenberg Dean
- Senior Vice President for Health Affairs
- Professor of Family and Preventive Medicine
- CEO, Drexel University Physicians
- President, Schuylkill Crossing Risk Retention Group

#### *Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, Lubbock, Texas (1989-2005)*

- Dean, School of Medicine
- Board of Directors, University Medical Center
- Board of Directors, Institute for Healthy Aging
- Dean, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences
- Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs and Finance
- Founding Director, Institute of Aging
- Co-Fellowship Director, Sports Medicine Fellowship, Department of Family and Community Medicine
- Chief of Staff, University Medical Center
- Physician Representative, Credentials and Utilization Management Committee
- Chair, Medical Practice Income Plan, Policy Committee
- Medical and Executive Director, Student Health Services
- Paul and Eva Braddock Chair, Department of Family and Community Medicine
- Co-Medical Director, Primary Care Center
- Residency Director, Department of Family and Community Medicine

#### *The Whiteriver Indian Health Services Hospital of the United States Public Health Service, Whiteriver, Arizona*

- Director of Ambulatory and Emergency Services

### Certifications and Qualifications

- Board certified in Family Medicine
- Added qualifications in Geriatric Medicine
- Added qualifications in Sports Medicine
- Diplomate, National Board of Medical Examiners
- Fellow, American Academy of Family Physicians

# EVMS mourns loss of beloved educator, Dr. Tom Pellegrino

Thomas R. Pellegrino, MD, Associate Dean for Education and Professor and Chairman of neurology, died Nov. 17, 2011, following a battle with cancer.

“The school wouldn’t be where it is today if it wasn’t for Tom Pellegrino and all of his efforts, his sincerity in what he did and his genuine effectiveness with the students,” says Gerald J. Pepe, PhD, Chairman of physiological sciences.

He received his Bachelor of Science from Providence College, a master’s degree in biology from Yale University and his medical degree from the University of Kentucky. He completed his internship and residencies at Yale University Medical Center. He received numerous awards for his commitment to and excellence in teaching and education, including the Dean’s Faculty Achievement Award in Clinical Teaching and the Virginia Outstanding Faculty Award from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

Dr. Pellegrino was a member of the EVMS faculty for 31 years and served as Chairman of the Department of Neurology, director of the neurology residency and was named James E. Etheridge Jr., MD Distinguished Professor in Neurology. During part of his service at EVMS, he worked in a private neurology practice, as a partner with Neurology Specialists. In 2006, he retired from private clinical practice to assume the role of Associate Dean for Education at EVMS.



At the 2009 Match Day event, Tom Pellegrino, MD, helps the students count down the seconds until they can open the envelopes that contain the long-sought details about their residency assignments.

After learning of Dr. Pellegrino’s illness, EVMS students presented a 90-minute tribute to Dr. Pellegrino, recognizing his skills and accomplishments as a physician, teacher and mentor.

He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Jane A. Brodie Pellegrino; his son and daughter-in-law,

Daniel E. and Nicole M. Krieger Pellegrino; and his daughter, son-in-law and grandson, Alice M. Pellegrino, Bryan K. Cowan II and Andrew Thomas Cowan. □

A lectureship endowment has been created in his memory. For more information, visit [www.evms.edu/magazine](http://www.evms.edu/magazine).

## CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION RECEIVES ACCREDITATION WITH COMMENDATION

The Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) awarded accreditation with commendation to EVMS as a provider of continuing medical education (CME) for physicians. This elevated status, the highest accreditation offered, extends EVMS’ accreditation term from four to six years.

The ACCME accredits 689 national CME programs. Only the top 15 percent receive accreditation with commendation status.

“While EVMS CME programs have long met ACCME’s high standards, this is the first time in EVMS history that we have been awarded

accreditation with commendation,” says Drucie A. Papafil, MEd, director of continuing medical education.

Mrs. Papafil also holds the distinction of being one of the few certified CME professionals in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

“Accreditation with commendation validates our commitment to the mission of EVMS, our commitment to our physicians and health-care professionals and our commitment to the public that we are providing the highest standard of continuing medical education,” she says.



The ACCME rigorously evaluates the overall continuing medical education programs of institutions according to standards adopted by all seven sponsoring organizations of the ACCME: the American Board of Medical Specialties, the American Hospital Association, the American Medical Association, the Association for Hospital Medical Education, the Association of American Medical Colleges, the Council of Medical Specialty Societies and the Federation of State Medical Boards of the US, Inc. The evaluation includes a year-long self-study, documentation of compliance for all 22 criteria and accreditation interviews. □

# HEALTH PROFESSIONS STUDENT *Helps Hungry Kids* IN HAMPTON ROADS



Second-year Master of Public Health student Whitney A. Weaver at the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia

Second-year Master of Public Health student Whitney A. Weaver has a full plate: in addition to pursuing her degree, she has a full-time job planning meals for hungry children through the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia.

Ms. Weaver, oversees the Foodbank's Kids Cafe program, which provides nutritious after-school meals to more than 3,900 children. Kids Cafe is a national effort run by Feeding America, the largest hunger-relief charity in the United States. The Foodbank administers the program at 19 local sites in low-income communities, the majority of them Boys & Girls Clubs. It served 261,282 meals in fiscal 2011.

As the childhood nutrition assistant, Ms. Weaver is responsible for planning menus and coordinating food preparation and delivery. Each meal includes meat, produce, grains and low-fat milk with dinners complying with USDA guidelines. One favorite is baked barbecue chicken with macaroni and cheese, green

beans, pineapple and milk. Ms. Weaver also checks on the various sites, where she can watch children eat and collect some hugs.

"It's so rewarding and fulfilling," she says. "The only good meals these kids may get all day are the free or reduced-price lunches at school and what they eat through Kids Cafe. We have to make sure to get some nutrition in them."

Kids Cafe also introduces children to new foods and snacks such as fresh kiwi, watermelon and baby carrots and educates them about a healthy diet. "We want to teach them good eating habits that they can carry with them for life," Ms. Weaver says.

Ms. Weaver, a Hampton native, graduated from Norfolk State University in 2008 with a degree in chemistry, focusing on food science and nutrition. After she graduates from EVMS, she may make child nutrition her permanent career. It is a major public-health issue, she points out, because kids who eat healthy foods are stronger both physically and mentally.

This year, Ms. Weaver also is working with the Foodbank's BackPack program, which provides needy elementary school children with food to make five meals during weekends. Students are hand-picked by school staff — sometimes nurses who see hungry kids complaining of dizziness, headaches and stomach aches. In fiscal 2011, the local program distributed 30,115 bags, equal to 150,575 meals.

The Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia, based in Norfolk, serves more than 400,000 individuals annually. Roughly one in four of the region's residents struggles with hunger, including children, seniors, working adults and people with disabilities, according to the organization's statistics. □

For more information about the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and its child nutrition programs, visit [www.foodbankonline.org](http://www.foodbankonline.org) or call 757.627.6599.

# FIVE JOIN EVMS GOVERNING BOARD

Five local leaders in the areas of medicine and business have joined the Board of Visitors of Eastern Virginia Medical School. They are David A. Arias; I.A. “Dimi” Barot, MD; Eva Teig Hardy; David T. Lawson; and Mark R. Warden. The Board of Visitors is the governing body of EVMS.

Mr. Arias was appointed by the City of Virginia Beach. He is the president and part owner of SwimWays Corporation, a leading manufacturer of outdoor recreational products in Virginia Beach. In 2011, SwimWays was named Best Small Business to Work for in Hampton Roads by *Inside Business* and was also the recipient of Operation Smile’s corporate humanitarian award.

Mr. Arias is a Tocqueville Society board member of the United Way of Hampton Roads, and a director of the Virginia Aquarium, Heritage Bank and the Hampton Roads Civic Leadership Council.

Mr. Arias holds an undergraduate degree in economics and Spanish from Hampden-Sydney College and an MBA from the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University.

Dr. Barot is a sleep disorders specialist and founding partner of Virginia Neurology & Sleep Centers in the Chesapeake area. He was appointed by the EVMS Foundation.

Dr. Barot is a graduate of the ODU/EVMS 7-year Honors Program in Medicine. He completed a residency in neurology at the University of Miami Hospitals & Clinics and a fellowship in sleep medicine at the Yale University School of Medicine. He is board-certified in both neurology and sleep medicine and is an active faculty member at EVMS, where he lectures regularly to medical students and resident physicians who also rotate through his practice. He is also a teaching mentor for the Virginia Beach Health Sciences International Baccalaureate Program, a director of Towne Bank, and a director of the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Hardy, a veteran policy and communications executive, was appointed to the board by the Virginia House of Delegates. She spent her early career with the City of Portsmouth and in state government, notably as the Virginia secretary of health and human resources, followed by 20 years as a corporate executive. At her retirement, Ms. Hardy was executive vice president for Dominion Resources, where she was responsible for public policy, environment, communications and philanthropy. In 2009, she served as interim state director for U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner.

Ms. Hardy serves on several boards, including the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Foundation, the Oliver Hill Foundation, the George Washington Foundation and the Virginia Holocaust Museum. She has served as vice chair of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and on the board of trustees of her alma mater, Hood College, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in political science. She holds a master’s degree in government and public administration from American University.

Mr. Lawson, vice president of industrial products at Norfolk Southern Corporation, was appointed by the City of Norfolk. He has been with Norfolk Southern since 1988 and has held various sales and marketing positions. Mr. Lawson earned his undergraduate degree at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge and has a MBA. He is a graduate of the Advance Management Program at Harvard Business School and completed the executive education program at the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University.

Mr. Lawson is a trustee of Norfolk Academy. He is a past president of the National Freight Transportation Association. He was an inaugural member of LEAD Virginia, and he has served on the board of directors of the Virginia Chamber of Commerce, Norfolk Forum and the Hermitage Foundation. He has been a member of the EVMS Foundation Annual Fund Committee.

The EVMS Foundation appointed Mr. Warden. He is a principal and portfolio manager at Wilbanks, Smith & Thomas Asset Management, LLC in Norfolk. Prior to joining the firm, Mr. Warden was a vice president and head of investment research at a regional investment advisory company. He began his finance career at a predecessor bank to Bank of America, where he was a credit analyst, credit review officer and assistant vice president in corporate banking.

Mr. Warden holds an undergraduate degree in commerce from the University of Virginia and an MBA from the Darden Graduate School of Business Administration at UVA.

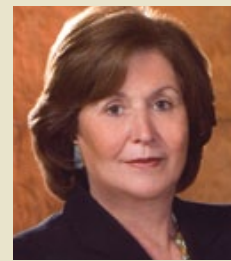
He is the chairman of the investment committee for the ODU Educational Foundation and the former chairman of the Children’s Hospital of The King’s Daughters Health Foundation Board. He has also been active with the boards of The Williams School, the Norfolk Forum and the Virginia Symphony Orchestra. □



David A. Arias, MBA



Dimi Barot, MD



Eva Teig Hardy, MA



David T. Lawson, MBA



Mark R. Warden, MBA





# EVMS BOARD ELECTS NEW RECTOR

Maurice A. Jones, JD

Maurice A. Jones, JD, president and publisher of *The Virginian-Pilot* newspaper, was elected in June as Rector of the Board of Visitors at a time he describes as “one of impressive and exciting growth opportunities.”

Mr. Jones will help lead the medical school as it adds students, faculty, buildings and infrastructure to tackle a growing shortage of doctors nationwide and changes mandated by federal and state health-care reforms. He also hopes to increase efforts to educate Hampton Roads residents about prevention of common health problems, such as high blood pressure, cancer, diabetes and obesity.

“The medical school is vitally important to this community,” Mr. Jones says. “My goal is to keep strengthening our business model and figure out the best ways to grow, so we can train more doctors and other health-care workers, help people live healthier lives and do research that further contributes to better health here and across the country.”

A native of Kenbridge in rural south-central Virginia, Mr. Jones became the Pilot’s first African-American publisher in 2008. He also is the first African-American rector at EVMS. After graduating from Hampden-Sydney College, he studied as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University and earned a law degree from the University of Virginia. He has practiced as a corporate lawyer, worked for the U.S. Treasury Department and served as deputy chief of staff and commissioner of social services under former Virginia Gov. Mark R. Warner. At press time, he was in the midst of the confirmation process to become deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Mr. Jones, previously Vice Rector of the EVMS Board of Visitors, joined the school’s governing body because of an interest in community health care. Like most Americans, he has dealt firsthand with the frustrations caused by a shortage of doctors, such as when he tried to make a dermatologist appointment for his third-grade daughter in July and faced a three-month wait.

“Clearly, there is much more demand than we have supply,” he says. “What we need to do is figure out the optimal size for this medical school and leverage partnerships with universities, health systems and doctors to allow for smart growth and to best serve our community.” □

# NEW STUDENTS

*bring talent, diverse backgrounds to EVMS*

The EVMS community welcomed 356 first-year students into the fold in August 2011. These new faces represent 10 cities and 20 counties in Virginia, 24 states and seven countries. Some are home-grown in Hampton Roads. Some hail from as far as Macedonia. They range in age from not-quite 22 to well over 50-years-old and bring with them a diverse and eclectic array of interests. Their common link: EVMS. Meet a few of the new faces including a surfing nuclear engineer, a Nigerian drummer, a community-minded triathlete and a retired world traveler.

*Of the near 5,000 MD applicants, EVMS welcomed 141 into the Class of 2015 including 81 men and 60 women, making up the largest MD class in the school's history.*



## THE SURFING NUCLEAR ENGINEER

*Jefferey M. Raunig, 31, MD Class of 2015  
Hometown: New London, Connecticut  
Graduate of the United States Naval Academy and the University of Hawaii*

If you want to serve on a submarine, you take a nuclear-power-training program. If you want to be a doctor, you go to medical school. If you want to catch a wave, you master a surfboard. If you do all three, you're Jefferey M. Raunig.

"I didn't have a plan so much as I followed my instincts and my interests," Mr. Raunig says. "I am here today because of where I have already been."

In high school, Mr. Raunig toyed with the idea of pursuing medicine because he loved biology and had what he calls an "amateur" knowledge of physiology. But the need to explore and have an adventure led him to the U.S. Naval Academy instead. After

graduation, Mr. Raunig served as a nuclear engineer aboard the USS Los Angeles submarine and was stationed in Hawaii. There, he learned confidence, discipline and surfing.

"When you catch a wave it's very peaceful but violent at the same time so it's a challenge and a therapy," Mr. Raunig says. "It's an exercise of the body and of the mind."

It was that urge to stretch and grow, to exercise his mind that inspired Mr. Raunig to study developmental reproductive biology at the University of Hawaii. There, he found his passion point.

"It just seemed so natural to me, and I was as excited reading medical books as other people are reading fiction," Mr. Raunig says. "I hadn't felt that way about academics for a long time."

The next natural step, he says, was applying for medical school. Mr. Raunig did a lot of research and says the most important factor for him was to find a place that would make him happy. Time and time again, EVMS crept its way toward the top of his list.

"From the development of new facilities, to research, to student interaction with faculty, to the strong hands-on approach of making a difference in the community, EVMS just made sense," Mr. Raunig says.

Due in part to his diverse background and interests, Mr. Raunig is considering specializing in emergency medicine, radiology or pediatrics with a sub-specialty based on the studies he has done regarding in-vitro fertilization and its effects.

In between classes and spending time with his 1-year-old son, Ziggy, and his wife, Jenna, Mr. Raunig also hopes to catch a few waves and shape a few of his own surfboards. It's a hobby, he understands, that will take a backseat to medical school.

"I just want to have fun with the entire process of exploring medicine and being a physician in training," Mr. Raunig says. "I believe the different parts of who I am will help steer my career and who I become as a doctor."

## THE NIGERIAN DRUMMER

*Temitope A. Fasusi, 24, Surgical Assistant Program  
Hometown: Beltsville, Maryland  
Graduate of Howard University*

In a fluid motion, Temitope A. Fasusi's arm moves slightly, bringing to life a series of strings on an hourglass-shaped drum and filling the room with sound.

"In Nigerian folklore, they would use the talking drum to tell stories," he says. "They don't have to say a word because the drum does all the talking."

A first-generation American and son of two Nigerian immigrants, Mr. Fasusi has played drums since he was five-years-old. The fast-paced music has been the soundtrack to his life's story. A self-described over achiever, Mr. Fasusi always knew he was destined to study medicine.

"My mom is a corporate nurse, and my father works on the financial side of the medical field. So in a way, I guess it was meant to be," he says. "I shadowed a surgeon in the operating room, saw the different procedures at work and it intrigued me because I saw something I could be doing."

With Howard University behind him, Mr. Fasusi began his search for the right surgical assistant

*Of the 2,267 applications received for Health Professions programs, EVMS welcomed 215, including 60 men and 155 women.*

program, one with an outstanding reputation and an abundance of opportunities for community service. Only one school fit that bill, he says, and that was EVMS.

"What struck me the most is that here I can take courses alongside students from other programs, medical and health professional," he says. "What better way to learn than alongside those I would work with in an operating room?"

For Mr. Fasusi, attending EVMS is an opportunity to better himself while inspiring others. After all, the images that people often have in their

minds of Africa aren't representative of the Africa he knows, Mr. Fasusi says. He encourages people to visit Nigeria, to open their eyes and hearts to the beauty of the culture and the people. In learning about the African culture, he says, people can also reaffirm their connection to their own roots and upbringing.

"I believe that having a strong connection to your culture keeps you grounded and firm in your identity," Mr. Fasusi says. "By knowing who you are you can face every challenge in life with the confidence you need in your back corner." □



## THE COMMUNITY-MINDED TRIATHLETE

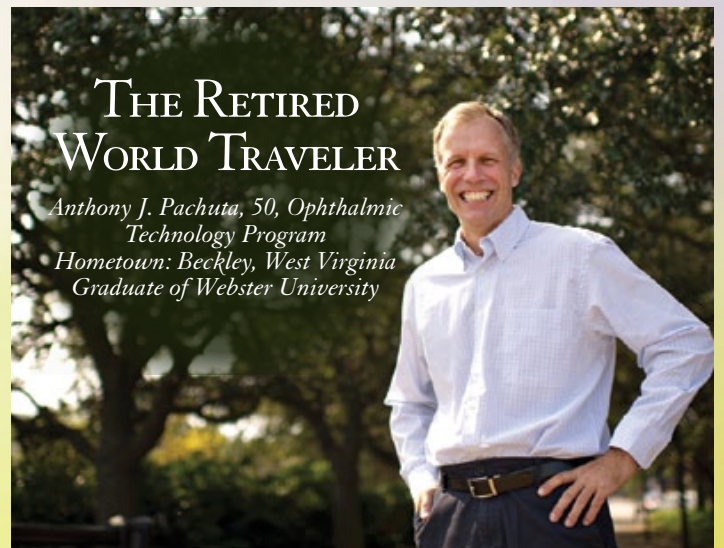
*Molly D. Cohn, 24, MD Class of 2015  
Hometown: Virginia Beach, Virginia  
Graduate of the University of Virginia*



The crunch of wet-soled sneakers hitting pavement echoes at a steady staccato as Molly D. Cohn runs toward her career in medicine. Find out more at [www.evms.edu/magazine](http://www.evms.edu/magazine).

## THE RETIRED WORLD TRAVELER

*Anthony J. Pachuta, 50, Ophthalmic Technology Program  
Hometown: Beckley, West Virginia  
Graduate of Webster University*



After a 27-year career in the Navy, Anthony J. Pachuta has hung up his captain's hat and is setting sail into a new career. Find out more about his eye-opening adventure at [www.evms.edu/magazine](http://www.evms.edu/magazine).



## EVMS VOLUNTEERS GET A TASTE *of medicine in Appalachia*

**E**VMS faculty and students traveled to Southeastern Virginia in July 2011 to volunteer at one of the nation's largest free clinics.

Led by Terri W. Babineau, MD, director of community outreach, and Joseph A. Aloï, MD, clinical director of the Strelitz Diabetes Center, the EVMS team worked alongside medical volunteers from across Virginia at the three-day Remote Area Medical (RAM) clinic.

The annual RAM event temporarily transforms the Wise County Fairgrounds into a makeshift hospital and attracts thousands of patients who lack insurance or have difficulty finding care in the rural, mountainous community.

"It's been unlike any other volunteer experience I've had. The needs of the patients here are so great," said Neil C. Zaki, MD Class of 2014, who worked alongside local Lions Club



volunteers to conduct eye exams and hand out donated eyeglasses. □

Watch the EVMS team in action in rural Wise County at [www.evms.edu/magazine](http://www.evms.edu/magazine).

## EVMS LIONS CLUB FOCUSES ON THE

EVMS students have joined with the Lions Club to create a student chapter of the international service organization.

Lions members provide disaster relief around the world, such as assisting after the earthquake in Haiti, Hurricane Katrina and the tsunami that devastated Japan. The club also has sight programs that provide vision screenings, support eye banks and recycle glasses.

The club impacts our campus and communities around the world while connecting students, faculty members and business leaders, Sandeep S. Samudre, PhD, MPH, says.

The 40-member club supports other local Lions branches by participating in Lions Assisted Medical Projects (LAMPs) around the Hampton Roads area. LAMPs sponsor vision, hearing and diabetes screenings and eyeglass distribution,

improving the quality of life for community members without health insurance.

In July 2011, the club also sent volunteers to Remote Area Medical, a three-day health screening in rural Wise, Virginia. In addition to volunteering, the club will focus on fundraising to purchase a portable instrument that measures pressure in the eye, which is often elevated in patients with glaucoma.

# EVMS Health Services family-medicine practices *recognized for patient-centered care*

The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) recognized two EVMS Health Services primary-care practices for meeting the rigorous standards of a patient-centered medical home.

Ghent Family Medicine and Portsmouth Family Medicine received formal recognition under the NCQA's Physician Practice Connections — Patient-Centered Medical Home (PPC-PCMH) program, making them two of just five practices in Hampton Roads to achieve that status.

The NCQA says it identifies practices that promote partnerships between individual patients and the doctors, rather than treating patient care as a series of disconnected office visits. According to NCQA President Margaret E. O'Kane, the active relationship between a patient and a clinician in medical homes supports the goals of staying healthy and preventing illness in the first place.



The team from Ghent Family Medicine in Norfolk.

"I'm pleased that [Assistant Professor] Dr. Rob Ringler brought together a team from the Department of Family and Community Medicine to achieve the highest level of recognition," says Department of Family and Community Medicine Chair and Professor Christine C. Matson, MD, who also credited Richard M. Bikowski, MD, a professor in the department, for leading the information-technology team that provided tools necessary to the practices' success.

"This practice transformation means partnering with our patients to improve their health while increasing value of services," Dr. Matson says.

Practices that earn recognition, which lasts for three years, must demonstrate their ability to meet the program's key elements of a medical home. The standards, according to the NCQA, are aligned with the joint principles of the patient-centered medical-home model established with the American College of Physicians, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Osteopathic Association.

The NCQA evaluates practices based on several key factors, including:

- Written standards for patient access and enhanced communications
- Appropriate use of charting tools to track patients and organize clinical information
- Responsive care-management techniques with an emphasis on preventive care
- Adaptation to patients' cultural and linguistic needs
- Use of information technology for prescriptions and care management
- Use of evidence-based guidelines to treat chronic conditions
- Systematic tracking of referrals and test results
- Measurement and reporting of clinical and service performance □

To learn more about patient-centered medical homes, visit [www.evms.edu/magazine](http://www.evms.edu/magazine).



The team from Portsmouth Family Medicine.

## COMMUNITY

"A handful of our members are EVMS ophthalmologists that really extend the reach of our club," says Evan M. Berger, MD Class of 2014 and club president. "Residents and attendings help train medical students on equipment, oversee volunteers at vision screenings and conduct slit-lamp examinations for patients that need this level of care. We are grateful for their participation." □



Chapter President, Evan M. Berger



# “Top Doctors”

Sixty-seven physicians associated with EVMS, including 18 EVMS Health Services providers, are listed as “Top Doctors” by *U.S. News and World Report*.

The publication’s list of leading physicians in the U.S. is built from recommendations submitted by other doctors. Physician-led teams at Castle Connolly Medical Ltd., publisher of the guide “America’s Top Doctors,” review the submissions. Those who meet the selection criteria are added to the list of high-ranking caregivers.

The EVMS-affiliated physicians, which include members of both the full-time and community faculty corps, cover a wide range of medical specialties. The 18 EVMS Health Services doctors are:

- **Alfred Z. Abuhamad, MD**, professor and chair of obstetrics and gynecology (ranked in top 1 percent nationally in his specialty)
- **L.D. Britt, MD, MPH**, professor and chair of surgery (ranked in top 1 percent nationally in his specialty)
- **Daniel A. Bluestein, MD**, professor of family and community medicine
- **James H. Carraway, MD**, professor of surgery and chief of plastic surgery (ranked in top 1 percent nationally in his specialty)
- **Bonnie J. Dattel, MD**, professor of obstetrics and gynecology
- **David H. Darrow, MD, DDS**, professor of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery (ranked in top 1 percent nationally in his specialty)
- **Stephen S. Davis, MD**, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology
- **Craig S. Derkay, MD**, professor of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery
- **James G. Dixon, MD**, associate professor of internal medicine
- **Joseph K. Han, MD**, associate professor of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery
- **Daniel W. Karakla, MD**, associate professor of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery
- **Thomas J. Manser, MD**, associate professor of internal medicine
- **Christine C. Matson, MD**, professor and chair of family and community medicine
- **Stephanie Moody-Antonio, MD**, assistant professor of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery
- **Mark E. Shaves, MD**, assistant professor of radiation oncology and biophysics
- **John T. Sinacori, MD**, assistant professor of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery
- **Barry Strasnick, MD**, professor and chair of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery
- **Scott S. Williams, MD**, assistant professor of radiation oncology and biophysics

To view the complete list of EVMS-affiliated doctors, visit [www.evms.edu/magazine](http://www.evms.edu/magazine). □

## *Pilot program offers free rides for EVMS staff and students*

Paulette R. Jardin uses every free moment she has to study — even on the morning commute to campus. Ms. Jardin, surgical assistant program Class of 2013, is taking advantage of the free ride on The Tide light rail to get in some much-needed reading time.

“It’s a lot more relaxing because I don’t have to fight traffic to and from class,” Ms. Jardin says. “Another perk is I can use those extra 20 minutes to do some last-minute studying.”

And Ms. Jardin isn’t alone. EVMS employees, residents and students alike are taking advantage

of the HRT pilot-program that provides free access with an EVMS badge on nearly all HRT vehicles. EVMS paid a lump fee to enter the program that runs through June 30, 2012.

Twenty-six-year EVMS veteran employee Pete C. Kessel couldn’t be happier. A maintenance engineer, Mr. Kessel catches The Tide at Newtown Road, less than a mile from his home.

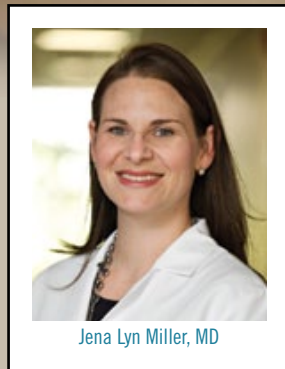
“I sure do appreciate it because for me it’s a savings plan on gas and wear and tear on my truck,” Mr. Kessel says. □



Photo by David Sullivan

# EXPLORING FETAL SURGERY

Jena Lyn Miller, MD, is an assistant professor in the division of maternal-fetal medicine. Her primary interest is in complicated twin pregnancy and fetal intervention. She recently spent time in Paris at Necker Enfants Malades, one of the busiest centers for fetal intervention, to learn additional techniques and to observe their approach to complicated fetal cases.



## What is fetal surgery?

Fetal surgery involves intervention for a fetal condition prior to birth. The goal of therapy is to treat a condition primarily or prevent the secondary damage that can occur if the fetus is left untreated. Diagnosis is made prenatally by ultrasound. In certain situations, additional use of other imaging modalities, such as MRI, can help clarify the condition.

Procedures are performed in one of three ways: 1) with a needle or instrument using ultrasound guidance, 2) by fetoscopy, which combines the use of ultrasound with minimally-invasive techniques using specially designed equipment or 3) directly through an incision on the maternal abdomen and uterus.

## What conditions warrant fetal surgery?

The most common condition treated is twin-twin

transfusion syndrome (TTTS). It occurs in approximately 15 percent of monochorionic (identical) twins that share a single placenta. In these twins, their circulations are connected by vascular communications in the placenta. When the balance between the circulations of the twins becomes skewed, TTTS develops. In many cases without treatment, it progresses, leading to the loss of one or both twins.

Other conditions where fetal intervention can be undertaken are for cases of anemia, certain complications of multiple gestations, lower urinary tract obstruction, spina bifida and congenital diaphragmatic hernia, as well as some tumors and cardiac conditions. Several procedures are still considered experimental and require additional research to best define patient-selection criteria and refine techniques.

## Is fetal surgery safe?

The primary goal is limiting risk for the mother while improving the potential survival or decreasing morbidity for the fetus. Any intervention during pregnancy involves the risk of preterm labor and

delivery, ruptured membranes and infection. Fetal risks may also include direct damage, bleeding or death. A minimally-invasive approach significantly decreases maternal risks compared to an open procedure.

## Can any surgeon do this?

Fetal interventions are performed mostly by maternal-fetal medicine specialists or pediatric surgeons. Maternal-fetal medicine specialists focus primarily on minimally-invasive procedures. Many of the basic skills are acquired during specialty training. Advanced training is mostly accomplished through collaboration with experts and pioneers in the field of fetal intervention; however, a few dedicated programs now exist. A team of devoted obstetric and pediatric specialists is required to provide care to these complex patients both before and after birth.

## Why not just wait until the baby is born?

Most fetal conditions are treated after birth. Only the most severe cases where the baby would be expected to die or have severe complications are candidates for in-utero intervention. Proper selection criteria and new techniques are active areas of research investigation. Multi-center collaboration between fetal-medicine centers is critical for continued advancement in this field. □



**new spaces  
on campus mark**

# Educational Transformation



The day before classes began this fall, Vice President for Administration and Finance Mark R. Babashanian had just finished a walk-through of Eastern Virginia Medical School's new Education and Research Building when he noticed several curious students peering through a locked door.

Mr. Babashanian let the group of second-year medical students in for an impromptu tour. They saw the large classrooms with stadium seating and innovations, such as smart white boards and advanced audio-visual equipment, the flexible multidisciplinary teaching laboratories and the expanded spaces for simulation and virtual reality.

"They were blown away," Mr. Babashanian says.

The four-story, 100,000-square-foot building is the cornerstone of EVMS' commitment to raise enrollment and help offset a national shortage of health-care professionals. However, it's just one piece of a transformed campus. Inside an extensively renovated Lewis Hall, formerly dark, cramped hallways and rooms are now spacious and filled with light. Students who once settled for vending machine snacks and a shabby lounge now have a café selling sandwiches, salads and coffee in a new bookstore, along with plenty of comfortable seating. To relax or work off energy, they have game tables in an "active lounge" and a grassy area just outside. Both Lewis Hall and Brickell Library also have expanded study centers.

All in all, the \$80 million expansion and renovation of the EVMS campus have greatly enhanced the school's mission: educating

capable and compassionate medical and health professionals, improving the health of the surrounding community and conducting life-saving research.

"Finally, after 38 years, we have an educational space that is as good as anybody's and better than most," President Harry T. Lester says. "For a fairly small school, this is transformational. We now have an attractive, contemporary, wired, first-class space for education, making a huge difference in the way we teach students. It's really a whole new world for our students, faculty and researchers."

With its new resources, EVMS has begun the process of growing its medical school classes by 30 percent, its physician assistant classes by more than 60 percent and programs for other health professions by 30 to 50 percent. The 2011 entering class of medical students numbered 141, compared to between 110 and 120 in past years; that will expand to the new class size of 145 this fall.

The extra space, funded in part by a \$59 million higher-education bond package from the state of Virginia, has opened doors for a long list of new teaching tools. In lecture rooms, for instance, professors can write on smart boards — they might circle diseased cells in a sample slide — and project that information onto multiple screens.

"The renovations have really made our lives easier as students," says Beth C. Morris, a second-year medical student. "The classrooms are much more student-friendly, with better visibility, excellent acoustics and ample desk space."



Peter Vanderwarker, photography; Ellenzweig, Design Architect; Hanbury Evans Wright Viattas, Architect-of-Record

Many of the “wow” factors allow faculty to provide students with the most realistic training possible. In the Center for Simulation and Immersive Learning — part of a second-floor devoted to modeling, simulation and clinical skills — students can practice working on individual patients in an office or hospital setting. “Hybrid simulation” technology combines standardized patients with simulation devices that create “symptoms,” such as a mock wound that students must suture.

“For all intents and purposes, it’s like stitching up a real patient,” says Thomas W. Hubbard, MD, JD, professor of clinical pediatrics, who oversees EVMS’ modeling and simulation program. “It really does increase the realism of it and then also adds the human factor. All of that is invaluable for a doctor in training.”

Simulation rooms also help students and faculty train for high-risk crisis situations, such as a power outage in an operating room, both on their own and in groups. “That way if the same thing happened in reality, they’d be much better equipped to handle it,” says Dr. Hubbard, a member of the

EVMS Class of 1976. EVMS also plans to train students to use the latest ultrasound technology for diagnostics and surgical procedures, he adds.

The fourth floor of the new building is dedicated to research space, particularly studies related to cancer, with modern, open labs to encourage faculty collaboration and an interdisciplinary approach. Researchers in the Leroy T. Canoles Jr. Cancer Research Center will tackle diseases that most affect the local community, such as breast, kidney, pancreatic and prostate cancers. One current focus is pinpointing protein markers that may determine the best course of treatment for prostate cancer.

“We want to be recognized as the most community-oriented medical school in the country,” Mr. Lester says. “This is just one of many ways we are striving to improve the health of our local population.”

As for student health, the school has added plenty of perks. Students can buy fresh, healthier snacks and socialize at restaurant-style booths and tables. Sunlight streams through floor-to-ceiling windows in lecture halls. The bookstore has expanded weekday and Saturday hours. Some study rooms



are equipped with projectors, screens and a camera system that allow students to capture and download information.

Students call the more welcoming atmosphere a big plus. “Perhaps the most appealing aspect of the new spaces, for me at least, is the de-institutionalized nature of the architecture,” says Andrew K. Bolton, a student in the master of public health program. “Complementing that is the grassy quad-like area, which will be a great place to take a break, toss a disc or maybe even read a little bit.”

Renovations to access roads, parking areas and sidewalks add more green space and visual appeal to the campus, Mr. Babashanian notes. “Students are our primary mission,” he says. “Anything we can do to make their environment a better environment for learning will advance our mission.” □



Geoff T. Miller, director of modeling and simulation, demonstrates a computerized manikin to President Harry T. Lester; Gayle A. Gliva, director of the professional skills center; Kay Kemper, President of Kemper Consulting; and Speaker of the House William J. Howell.

**“For all intents and purposes, it’s like stitching up a real patient.”**

**Thomas W. Hubbard, MD, JD, Director, Center for Simulation and Immersive Learning**



The Immersive Learning Laboratory is a high-tech virtual training environment established through a collaborative effort with EVMS, Old Dominion University and corporate partners.



Visitors examine brain specimen in the third-floor multi-disciplinary labs.

# Keeping up with the Jones

*Lance, Eva, Dache  
& Lydia Carmine*



# es Institute

Dache during  
a day out with  
his parents.



Rigorous science and caring support are a productive combination for families

*One quiet morning at the Eastern Virginia Medical School Jones Institute for Reproductive Medicine, Lance and Eva Carmine spotted a man passing through the lobby. When they realized who he was — Howard W. Jones, MD, co-founder of the Jones Institute and a pioneer of in-vitro fertilization (IVF) — they had just two words they wanted to say: thank you.*

Baby  
goes to  
the beach.



His wife, then pregnant with their second child, was just as emotional. “Dr. Jones and his wife had a lot of opposition when they first started this work, but they had the courage and conviction to keep going,” she says. “They have made a lot of people’s dreams of having a family come true.

In the Carmine’s case, the dream came true twice. Their son, Dache, born Sept. 2, 2008, and daughter, Lydia, who arrived Feb. 4, 2011, both were conceived through IVF. The Suffolk couple came to the Jones Institute in February 2006 after trying to get pregnant for two years. They turned to IVF after multiple failed attempts at intrauterine insemination — placement of sperm directly into the uterus. “Now we have two healthy, vibrant, amazing children,” Eva says. “We are so lucky.”

Dache and Lydia are among more than 3,800 children born via in-vitro fertilization at the Jones Institute since America’s first IVF baby, Elizabeth Carr Comeau, arrived on Dec. 28, 1981. Founded in 1978 by Drs. Howard and his late wife Georgeanna Jones, the fertility center has repeatedly introduced new techniques and championed research to meet its basic goals: increasing pregnancy rates and healthy births while lowering the incidence of multiple births.

Advances in egg freezing, ultrasound technology, embryo selection, laboratory equipment, hormone therapy and male-factor infertility treatments have contributed to increasing success rates. Overall, 38 percent of IVF cycles at EVMS now result in pregnancy, a remarkable figure given that the center handles many of the region’s most complex infertility cases and has an average patient age of 37 years.

Success rates at the Jones Institute can climb as high as 50 percent for women below 35 years and 60 percent or more for some couples receiving donor eggs. The latter are selected through a vigorous screening process of healthy donors between the ages of 21 and 30 when a woman’s eggs are at their most robust pregnancy potential.

Jones Institute doctors also have reduced the number of embryos implanted per cycle to two in most women, with no more than three at any time, and in selected situations, perform a single embryo transfer. This policy significantly reduced the odds of twins, and the institute is committed to the elimination of high-order multiple pregnancies that can endanger the health of mothers and children.



*Sergio Oehinger, MD, director of the Jones Institute, talks with seven-year-old Diana Croft and Diana’s mother, Marites Croft, at the Jones Institute. Diana was born through the assistance of the Jones Institute.*

“Our goal is to get to a point where most patients can have just a single embryo transferred and have a successful pregnancy,” says Sergio C. Oehninger, MD, PhD, director of the Jones Institute, an EVMS Health Services practice. “Twenty years ago, transferring four or five embryos was state-of-the-art. Unfortunately, that still happens in many places. Here, we have the experience, quality control and ethical commitment to avoid those riskier scenarios.”

Once considered experimental, IVF now accounts for about 1 percent of babies born in the United States each year, about 37,000 children annually, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. As results continue to improve, doctors expect the rate to keep growing.



number one - Elizabeth Carr.



## Improving embryo quality

Producing and selecting embryos healthy enough to implant and develop normally is the key to successful single-child pregnancies. Despite improvements in prenatal care, carrying multiple fetuses still puts women at higher risk for preterm labor and health issues, such as high blood pressure and gestational diabetes. The risks increase with every additional fetus.

At the Jones Institute today, more than 95 percent of births are single babies. In most patients, Jones Institute physicians transfer just two embryos. The results are the same as they would be with three or four embryos except for a significant reduction in multiple gestations.

The reason: a staff of four embryologists, each with more than 10 years of experience, who culture and choose embryos most likely to thrive based on their development for three to five days in the lab. To enhance embryo viability, the Jones Institute has a state-of-the-art laboratory facility with high-tech air filters and sealed, self-cleaning incubators that keep precise electronic records of temperature, acidity and interior gases.

Meanwhile, three-dimensional ultrasound and hysteroscopic equipment allow doctors to diagnose and repair uterine abnormalities, such as scar tissue, polyps or fibroids — non-cancerous tumors in the uterus —



"I knew that I was in good hands because this is the country's oldest and most experienced IVF center."

Shannon Leonard



**It's a girl!**

The Birth of  
Elizabeth Carr  
Dec. 28, 1981

"I never  
imagined  
it would be  
so rewarding."  
Shannon Leonard

that can interfere with conception. Laurel A. Stadtmayer, MD, PhD, associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology, is an expert in the use of robotically-assisted laparoscopic surgery to treat fibroids. The technique is less invasive than traditional surgery and hastens recovery time.

Such resources have changed the lives of couples frustrated by years of infertility. Ron and Shannon Leonard of Virginia Beach tried to conceive on their own for nearly three years and went through one failed IVF cycle at another treatment center, where doctors told Shannon she was extremely unlikely to get pregnant without using donor eggs due to her low egg production.

Jones Institute doctors, who use hormone therapy tailored to each patient to stimulate the ovaries, weren't willing to give up. "I knew that I was in good hands because this is the country's oldest and most experienced IVF center," says Shannon, now 43. "The doctors seemed to have all the newest information. They were very straightforward and honest. You can tell they're not in it to make money, but to help you."

After a month of hormone injections, Shannon had embryos implanted in August 2008. "I didn't have any expectations," she says. "Then Dr. Oehninger called and asked, 'So, you want some good news?' I couldn't believe it. I was just so happy."

The Leonard's daughter, Bella, was born May 6, 2009. The little girl loves watching Sesame Street, reading, riding her bike, going to the beach and chasing her family's Great Dane. "People say she looks like me, and it's so interesting to just stare at her," Shannon says. "I never imagined it would be so rewarding."



## Treating male factor infertility

Another important advance in infertility medicine is intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI), which helps couples with male-factor infertility. That's the case for about 45 percent of couples who come to the Jones Institute. ICSI also can help couples who have gone through IVF unsuccessfully.

The technique uses precise maneuvers to inject a single live sperm directly into the center of an egg. That means the shape or mobility of sperm no longer matters; doctors can even remove sperm directly from the testicles in men who have blockages in tubes that run to the penis. The center now uses ICSI in more than half of its IVF cases with success rates similar to those for men with normal semen.

The technique allowed Brandon and Ellen Ramsey of Virginia Beach to conceive their daughter Mary, born Dec. 22, 2010. Ellen, 28, credits Dr. Oehninger's knowledge of the field — along with warm encouragement from nurses — for walking the couple through an emotional journey that included one failed IVF cycle and weekly ultrasounds to monitor bleeding at the beginning of her pregnancy with Mary. Their daughter, a sweet, quiet baby with big blue eyes, entered the world perfectly healthy.

"Becoming a mother was a lifelong dream of mine ever since I was a little child," Ellen says. "This is the best thing that could ever have happened. She's such a miracle."

Donna Dowling-Lacey works in the micromanipulation laboratory at the Jones Institute, where embryologists work with delicate eggs and sperm.



Dache is a loving big brother and Lydia wants to be wherever he is.



## Advances in egg freezing

Three years ago, the Jones Institute expanded a slow-cooling technique with the introduction of “vitrification,” super-cooling of eggs and embryos in a special freezing medium. With the older method, between 50 and 60 percent of eggs died after ice crystals formed inside them. Egg survival rates now have climbed to 85 to 90 percent.

While still considered experimental, vitrification has expanded the types of patients able to take advantage of egg freezing or cryopreservation, says Silvina M. Bocca, MD, PhD, associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology and, like Drs. Oehninger and Stadtmauer, an infertility specialist at the Jones Institute. That includes women diagnosed with cancer and facing chemotherapy and radiation that could trigger early menopause. Those young women now can freeze their eggs for later fertilization.

“They don’t have to give up on having children because of their illness, which is a wonderful thing,” Dr. Bocca says. Doctors also can remove and freeze segments of ovarian tissue and transplant them back once cancer treatments are over, she adds.

The new freezing method, along with better lab equipment, has helped produce more pregnancies from cryopreserved embryos, as well. The success rate using frozen-thawed embryos now is among the best in the world and roughly the same as for fresh embryos; it once was about 10 percent lower, Dr. Bocca says. Last year, a healthy baby boy was born from an embryo frozen at the Jones Institute for 20 years before being donated to a 42-year-old woman who had struggled with infertility for 10 years.

Lance and Eva Carmine had multiple embryos frozen while going through IVF to conceive Dache. They went through one unsuccessful IVF attempt before conceiving Lydia. Lance, 45, and Eva, 38, plan to use all

Bundle  
of Joy



Kathryn Newsom, right, and her twin daughters, Taylor and Claire, visit with Silvina Bocca, MD, PhD.

of their five remaining frozen embryos. “We feel connected to them,” Eva says. “Those eight cells you see on a big video screen during implantation — that’s your baby.”

## Advances in preimplantation genetic screening and diagnosis

Some patients are carriers of severe and/or lethal diseases. The combination of IVF, followed by a biopsy of the early embryo, extracting one cell, allows for genetic analysis and the transfer of only healthy embryos. Couples with diseases, such as cystic fibrosis, Tay-Sachs, muscular dystrophy, certain anemia conditions and many others, can now reproduce without the risk of transmitting genetic disease. Similarly, a complete chromosomal analysis can be done before embryo transfer to prevent severe chromosomal anomalies in the offspring.

## Into the future

Jones Institute physicians are constantly testing potential advances in infertility medicine. One focus is new preparation and formulation of hormones that stimulate egg production. An injection currently under review, for example, would allow women to have weekly rather than daily shots.

Researchers are also developing non-invasive, biochemical methods to identify embryos most likely to survive a transfer. That delicate work, performed on tiny samples measured in micro-liters, includes measuring proteins and other substances an embryo secretes or absorbs as it develops in the lab and searching for patterns in those that implant well. The eventual goal is to be able to transfer just one embryo per cycle in all patients while maintaining high overall pregnancy rates.

As the field keeps advancing, the Jones Institute strives to make treatments affordable for as many families as possible. Virginia doesn’t mandate insurance coverage for fertility treatment, and a round of IVF starts at about \$9,000. To help, the center offers a variety of financial plans.

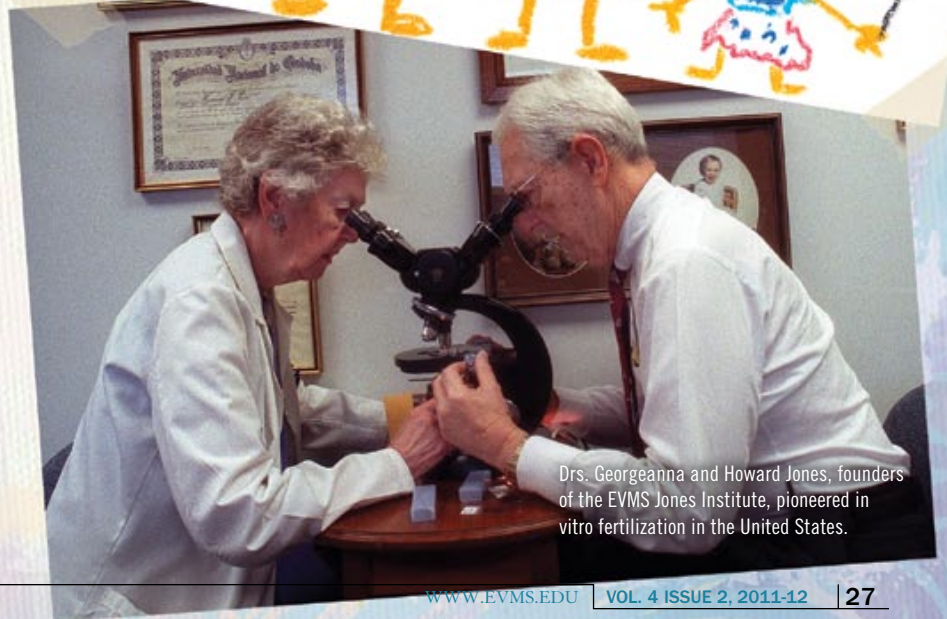
The Jones Institute has a reputation for taking care of all patients, regardless of age or cause of infertility. Jones Institute staff perform all diagnostic tests in-house within one month of consultation, according to Dr. Oehninger, and begin treatments almost immediately, whether hormonal, surgical or through assisted reproductive technologies.

Patients say the Jones Institute is a perfect mix of rigorous science and caring support from a multidisciplinary staff. And like all parents, they love to talk about their kids — how Dache Carmine, an energetic and dramatic boy who loves fire trucks and art, rolled over at six weeks old and has known his ABCs for more than a year. His baby sister, Lydia, so far is more patient and laid back.

“The greatest thing in the world is to look at those kids,” Lance Carmine says. “It isn’t an easy process to go through, but it is very worth it.” □



“The greatest thing in the world is to look at those kids,”  
Lance Carmine



Drs. Georgeanna and Howard Jones, founders of the EVMS Jones Institute, pioneered in vitro fertilization in the United States.



**Education:** 🍌

Undergraduate degree  
+ Masters degree +  
PhD + 3 to 6 years of  
post-doctoral study

**Work hours:** 🍌

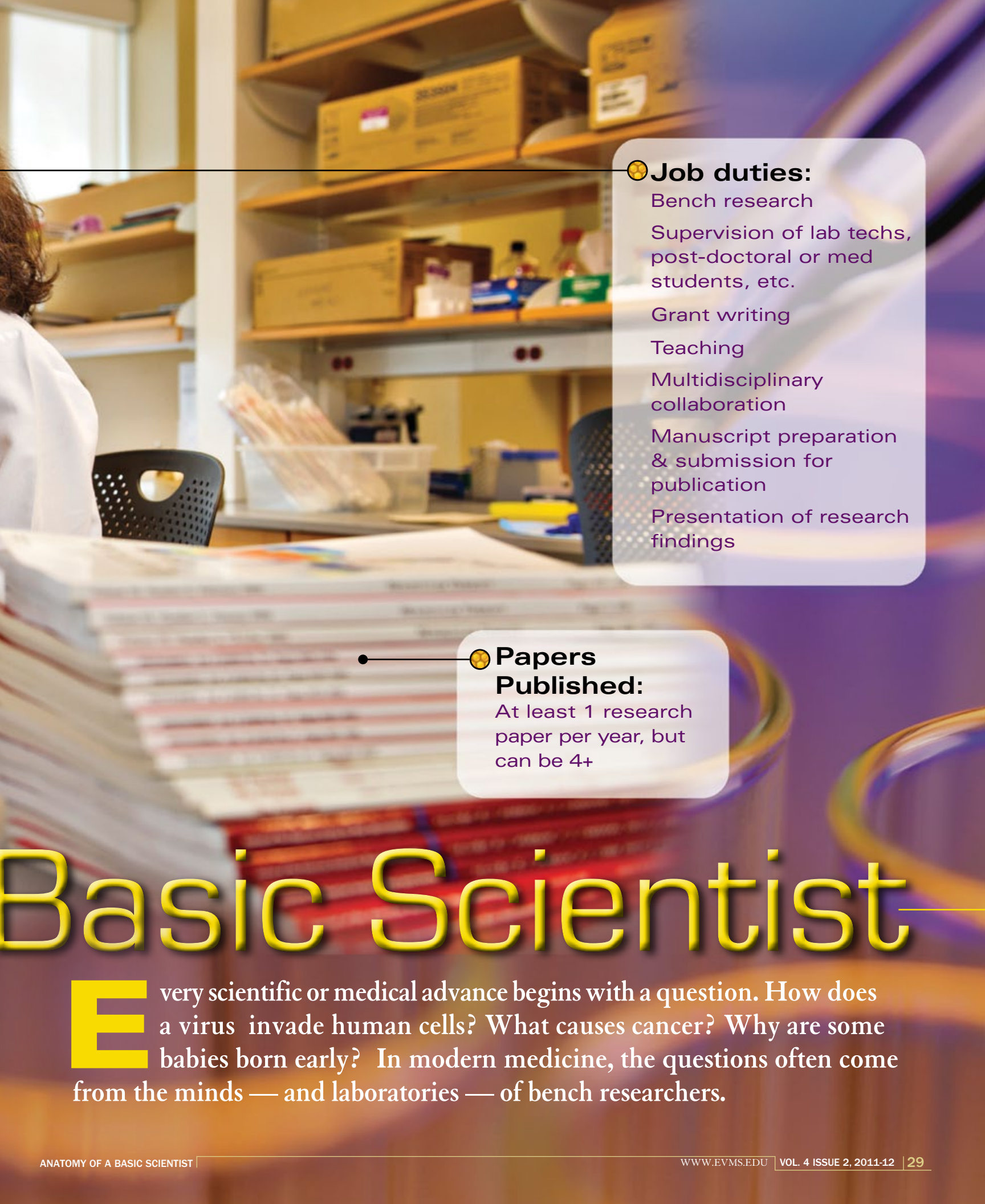
Sporadic, 60+ hours  
week not unusual,  
especially in early  
career

**Prerequisites:** 🍌

Curiosity and love of  
learning

# Anatomy of a

SCIENTIFIC BREAKTHROUGHS  
Begin at the bench



● **Job duties:**

Bench research

Supervision of lab techs, post-doctoral or med students, etc.

Grant writing

Teaching

Multidisciplinary collaboration

Manuscript preparation & submission for publication


Presentation of research findings

● **Papers Published:**

At least 1 research paper per year, but can be 4+

# Basic Scientist

**E**very scientific or medical advance begins with a question. How does a virus invade human cells? What causes cancer? Why are some babies born early? In modern medicine, the questions often come from the minds — and laboratories — of bench researchers.



☺ “I specifically wanted to go into biomedical research because I had the idea that if a discovery of mine eventually led to a drug or a new approach to cure a disease, it would impact a large number of people versus medicine where you typically just treat one patient at a time.”

Julie A. Kerry, PhD  
Interim Chair of Microbiology and Molecular Cell Biology



These researchers, also referred to as basic scientists, may spend their entire careers looking for solutions to specific problems and searching for new pieces of fundamental knowledge. Each new discovery, says Chair of Physiological Sciences Gerald J. Pepe, PhD, adds a critical piece to the puzzle of human understanding.

“If it doesn’t first happen in the lab, it never gets to the patient,” says Dr. Pepe, who has been an EVMS faculty member and biomedical researcher for more than 30 years. “Every piece of information used in clinical medicine stems from scientific inquiry. You have to know the letters of the alphabet before you can read, and basic science gives us the letters, the building blocks, upon which clinical studies can be based.”

### A Life of Questions

The field of basic scientific research is not for the faint of heart. From an educational standpoint, the training is arduous, requiring not only a PhD after graduate school but also an additional three to six years of post-doctoral training — the equivalent of a medical residency — in the scientist’s chosen area of inquiry. In the early days of training, 60- to 70-hour work weeks are not unusual.

But despite its rigors, the profession also tends to inspire passion. As a reproductive endocrinologist, Dr. Pepe has devoted his research life to fetal development and the role of estrogen in pregnancy. Even when he served as

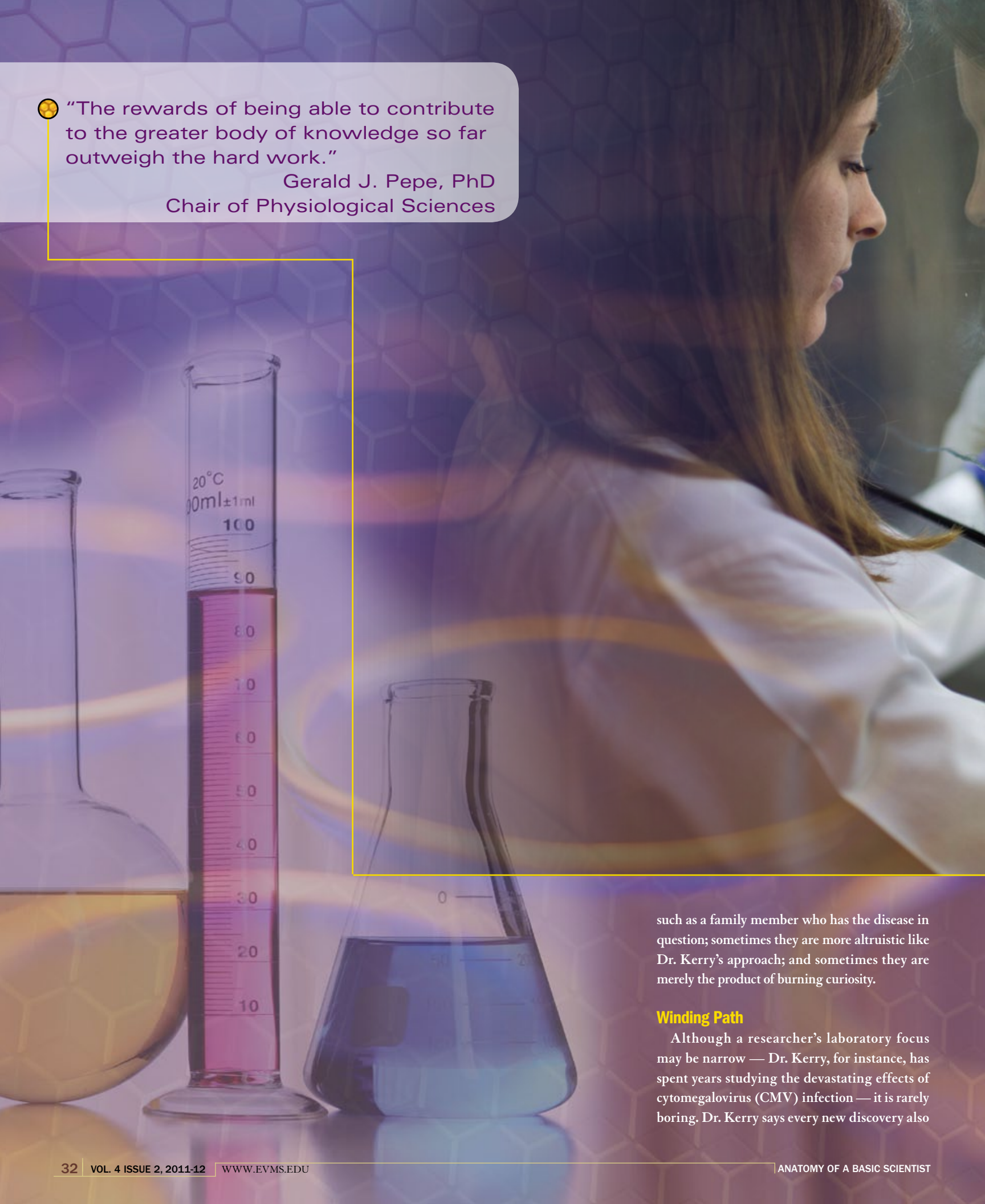
EVMS’ Provost and Dean, Dr. Pepe devoted significant time every week to bench research. He says the key to success in the field is an innate love of learning.

“It is a wonderful thing to have a job where you can ask questions and then design a study to get some answers,” says Dr. Pepe, whose work with baboons has been extensively published. “I wanted to know ‘Why does delivery happen when it does? Why is it nine months? And when it isn’t nine months, what has gone wrong?’ What usually happens when we set out to answer these kinds of questions is that the answer we get is not the one we were expecting. And that may lead us down a whole new path.”

EVMS Interim Chair of Microbiology and Molecular Cell Biology Julie A. Kerry, PhD, who chose to follow the research path at the age of 12, says the word “calling” is an apt description of her job. Not only was she fascinated by biological systems, but she was also attracted by the prospect of changing lives for the better.

“I specifically wanted to go into biomedical research because I had the idea that if a discovery of mine eventually led to a drug or a new approach to cure a disease, it would impact a large number of people versus medicine where you typically just treat one patient at a time,” she says.

“In a medical setting, most basic scientists are focused on the mechanisms that contribute to the onset of a specific disease process,” says Associate Dean for Research William J. Wasilenko, PhD. Sometimes those reasons are personal,



“The rewards of being able to contribute to the greater body of knowledge so far outweigh the hard work.”

Gerald J. Pepe, PhD  
Chair of Physiological Sciences

such as a family member who has the disease in question; sometimes they are more altruistic like Dr. Kerry’s approach; and sometimes they are merely the product of burning curiosity.

### **Winding Path**

Although a researcher’s laboratory focus may be narrow — Dr. Kerry, for instance, has spent years studying the devastating effects of cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection — it is rarely boring. Dr. Kerry says every new discovery also





## Critical Collaborations

However personal his or her individual motivations may be, a basic scientist does not work in a vacuum. Each laboratory breakthrough opens the door for translational medicine, the shifting of answers from the research bench to the patient's bedside — a process for which collaboration is critical. Working closely with colleagues in clinical medicine and other disciplines, EVMS basic scientists have made significant strides in diagnoses and treatments of diabetes, cancer, virology and reproductive medicine, among others.

“The old image of a mad scientist confined in the lab alone is not the way biomedical research is conducted anymore,” Dr. Wasilenko says. Instead, today's scientists work in multidisciplinary teams made up not only of students and other basic scientists, but also researchers at other universities and in other disciplines including medicine, engineering, physics and computer science.

When answers are found, it is also the job of a biomedical researcher to let the medical community know about them through publication and presentation. “That is why they call us professors, after all,” Dr. Pepe says. “Part of our job is to profess what we have learned.”

Depending on their area of study and their level of funding, a basic scientist may produce as few as one or as many as three or four papers a year. While the publication of one's findings in a respected professional journal involves intense peer scrutiny — Dr. Pepe says every one of his more than 150 published papers has been improved by the process — it is an important validation that can influence the ability to garner future research funding.

Those research dollars may, in turn, lead to new discoveries, new collaborations and new publications. And then the process begins again, spurring the local economy with the need for raw materials and the creation of new lab tech jobs and enhancing the reputation of the medical school. But the ultimate beneficiaries of bench research are patients, whose lives are impacted daily by answers to questions first asked by a basic scientist.

“The rewards of being able to contribute to the greater body of knowledge so far outweigh the hard work,” Dr. Pepe says. “You ask questions and meet people and put your heads together, and then suddenly you have a new drug, and you have contributed to that. ‘Re-search,’ after all, means to search again. The information is out there. We are just trying to uncover it.” □

sparks new ideas, triggers new questions and broadens the possibilities for further study.

“My colleagues and I are always learning something new about the virus we are studying, and our results are constantly pushing us in different directions, using different tools and techniques,” she says. “It is one of the coolest parts of my job.”

The job can vary outside the lab, too. Like Dr. Kerry, Dr. Wasilenko and Dr. Pepe, many basic scientists are also passionate teachers,

splitting their research time with time spent training a new generation of basic scientists and medical students interested in biomedical research. Because individual research projects are often funded by grant money, either from entities like the National Institutes of Health or private companies, a scientist may also need to be a wordsmith, able to make a compelling case for the value of his or her work on grant applications and in research papers submitted for publication.

## CHILDHOOD HOSPITALIZATION *was formative experience for scholarship recipient*



Lexie E. Pitts

Second-year medical student Lexie E. Pitts has trouble pinpointing one thing that put her on the path toward a career in medicine, but it might have been the chickenpox that did it. The infection that settled in her hip when she was 3 forced Ms. Pitts to undergo two surgeries and kept her in the hospital for 10 days.

While her memories of that time are dim, the infection, which left her hip malformed and later caused her pain during high school lacrosse, exposed her to many great doctors. That exposure cultivated her love of science and medicine. “I really can’t see myself doing anything else,” she says.

Ms. Pitts was the most recent recipient of the EVMS MD Alumni Scholarship, a merit-based award of \$5,000. The scholarship is awarded to a second-year medical student who demonstrates academic strength and community service, says Dan Neumann, MD, president of the MD Alumni Association.

“Understanding the rapidly rising cost of today’s medical education, the creation of an alumni driven scholarship has been a major focus of the MD Alumni Association,” Dr. Neumann says. “This scholarship provides an extraordinary opportunity for our alumni to directly support future generations of EVMS students while

strengthening future alumni relationships.”

The first in her family to attend medical school, Ms. Pitts attended Norfolk Academy before earning her undergraduate degree in biology and psychology at the University of Georgia. Already active in her high school alumni association and an ardent supporter of her college, Ms. Pitts says, “I like to be involved.”

Strong community connections made EVMS a clear choice for Ms. Pitts, who also was drawn to the area because of her family. Raising exposure of EVMS alumni in the community is important to her. In addition to her studies, Ms. Pitts stays busy outside of the classroom. She volunteers at the HOPES Clinic, a free local clinic established and operated by EVMS students. She also serves as the chair of medical education for the UP Center. In this role, she promotes healthy living in the community. Aside from helping coach lacrosse at her high school alma mater, Ms. Pitts works as a liaison for the Norfolk Academy Medical Externship, which coordinates opportunities for high school students to shadow local doctors.

A member of the Cardiology Club and president of the Surgery Club, Ms. Pitts is excited by both fields but is still uncertain where her career path will take her. □

## ALUMNI REUNION



At the MD Alumni banquet, members of the inaugural MD Class of 1976 check out the plaid chair in McCombs Auditorium, decorated in honor of Robert M. McCombs, PhD, retired dean of students. From left are Marcus L. Martin, MD; George C. Sakakini, MD; Dr. McCombs; Thomas W. Hubbard, MD; and Dennis L. Napier, MD.



The EVMS Health Professions Alumni Association welcomed new board members and officers during the association’s reunion Oct. 28. From left to right are: Paulette Brown, MPA ‘04; Kelly Walls Brown, MPH ‘06; Paul Snow, MPA ‘09; Kerry Kruk, MS Art Therapy and Counseling ‘04, association president-elect; Aaron Lambert, MPH ‘07, association past-president; Rita Fickenscher, MPA ‘01, association president; Trudy Kim, MS Art Therapy and Counseling ‘02; Brad Boyette, MPA ‘02; Demetra Tate, MPA ‘06; and Arnice Johnson, MPA ‘03.



## ART THERAPY ALUMNA MARIELLE MARIANO '99 *Gives Back to Community*

The desire to help others — that's what led Marielle M. Mariano, MAT, Class of 1999, to EVMS. It's also what led her to take on a volunteer role as the East Coast coordinator for CHALK4PEACE Inc., a global sidewalk-art project founded in 2003 and held each fall. About 400,000 students across the nation participate in the project annually at schools, churches, restaurants, community centers and festivals.

Ms. Mariano, an art therapist and Fairfax County Public Schools art teacher, coordinates dozens of CHALK4PEACE events on the East Coast each year, encouraging students to use chalk art to express their vision of peace.

"You naturally give back because of the work that you do," Ms. Mariano says of those who work in the helping professions. "It's a philosophy that people in these kinds of profession have."

She hopes to bring CHALK4PEACE to EVMS and is working to spread the program into schools across Hampton Roads.

"It's a perfect way to start the school year," says Ms. Mariano, who carries the theme of working peacefully together across her curriculum yearlong using the TEACH PEACE multi-disciplinary lesson plan she developed.

"I try to use the language often and refer back to it with my students. It gets kids to think about their responsibility to be part of a peaceful community," Ms. Mariano says.

"The whole idea of using art as a way to empower people to express what they want peace to look like — I think that's

such a great tool to give children. Kids don't necessarily have the vocabulary to express what something like peace is."

The Pennsylvania native has a bachelor's degree in biology from Georgetown University and a master's in art therapy from EVMS. As an undergraduate student, Ms. Mariano worked in the transplant lab at Georgetown University Hospital.

As a professional artist, she has had several exhibits in Virginia, Washington D.C., Maryland, Georgia, Florida, New York and Asia. In 2004, she painted murals in two treatment rooms at Philadelphia's Frankford Hospital. □



CHALK4PEACE Inc. is a global sidewalk-art project held each fall across the nation.

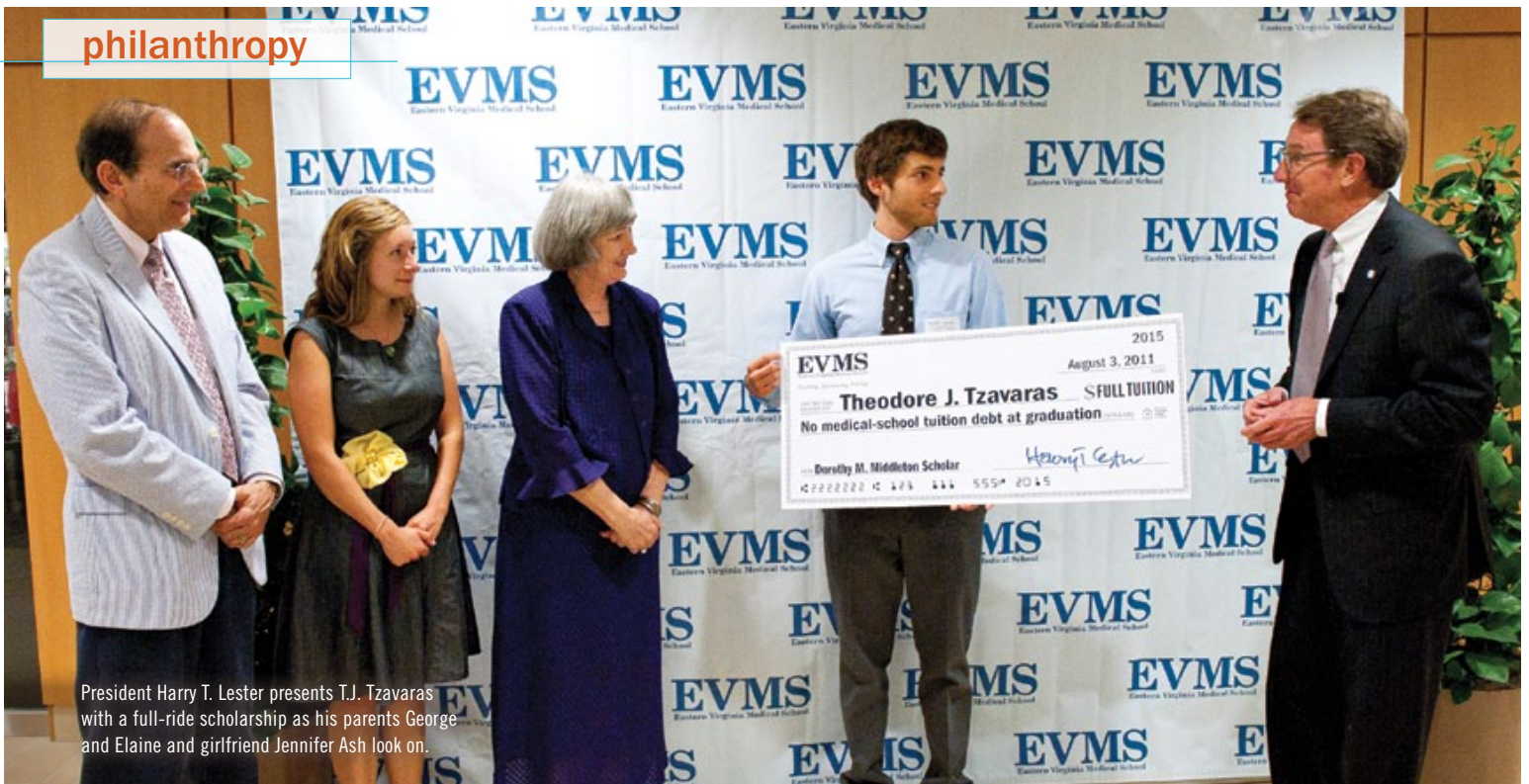


The EVMS Art Therapy and Counseling Program enjoyed its first-ever formal alumni gathering last summer. On hand for the event, held in Washington to coincide with the annual conference of the American Art Therapy Association, were, from left, Sarah Deaver, AT '82, and colleagues from the Class of '96: Lisa Syed, Lauren Lambie, Wendy Smeltzer and Mary Ellen Ruff.

## CLASS NOTES

- **Micah McDonald, MPA**, (Class of 2011), now practices with the Heart Center at the Mason City (Iowa) Clinic. At the 2011 commencement, he was recognized as the 5,000th EVMS graduate.
- **Patricia Middleton, MD**, (Class of 1981) has joined the OB/GYN medical staff at Scotland Health Care System in Laurinburg, NC. She has practiced in the area for 25 years.
- **Jimmy Swan, MD**, (a graduate of the EVMS residency program in Internal Medicine) has joined Providence Cardiology Associates in the South Puget Sound area of Washington State.

Send your class notes and news to [Alumni@evms.edu](mailto:Alumni@evms.edu)



President Harry T. Lester presents T.J. Tzavaras with a full-ride scholarship as his parents George and Elaine and girlfriend Jennifer Ash look on.

## New scholarships serve both students and community

In keeping with its goal of attracting the best and brightest medical students to live and learn in Hampton Roads, EVMS recently launched several new scholarship opportunities.

The Middleton Scholarship, funded by a \$3.5 million endowment bequeathed by the late Dorothy M. Middleton of Norfolk, represents the first time the school has offered full tuition for four years of medical-school tuition. First-year medical student T.J. Tzavaras, who trained as a mechanical engineer at Virginia Tech, is the first Middleton Scholar.

“I knew what medical school was going to cost and exactly how much I was going to have to borrow,” Mr. Tzavaras says. “Even though I very much wanted to go to medical school, it was still a very hard pill to swallow.” By lowering his debt load, Mr. Tzavaras says the Middleton Scholarship will give him the freedom to choose a residency based more on his interests than his financial needs. Depending on stock market trends, EVMS expects to offer two Middleton Scholarships in 2012 and three in 2013.

“The Association of American Medical Colleges estimates the average debt for new medical school graduates at \$160,000, and at EVMS it was \$169,000

last year,” says Major Gifts Officer Serena A. Amerson. Mrs. Amerson says the relative newness of the school, whose first MD class graduated in 1976, translates to fewer endowed scholarships as compared to other schools.

In addition to the new Middleton Scholarship, this year also marks the first time EVMS has offered a scholarship to a student seeking a graduate certificate in the specialized area of surgical assisting. Given by colleagues in honor of the late Eugene O. Smith, a Phoenix native and past president of the National Surgical Assistant Association, the merit-based scholarship provides \$1,000 to an outstanding second-year student. Mrs. Amerson says such gifts can make the difference between a student choosing a career in medicine or going in a different direction.

“The cost of a medical education is a major obstacle to overcome and deters some people from careers in this field,” Mrs. Amerson says. “But in the current environment where we are facing a shortage of health-care professionals, we really want to be encouraging capable people to go into medicine.”

The Medical Alumni Association established the

third new scholarship. It provides \$5,000 to a rising second-year medical student with a proven record of academic excellence, leadership and service. The MD Alumni Board plans to raise \$125,000 to fund the new scholarship in perpetuity.

This January, EVMS hosts its second annual scholarship dinner to honor both recipients and the donors whose generosity make these scholarships possible. Last year’s reception brought together an estimated 200 donors and student recipients. This year, Mr. Tzavaras will be among them. In addition to helping students afford their education, scholarships also serve the EVMS mission to strengthen community health care by giving graduates the chance to serve in the best way possible, he says.

“This kind of financial support not only allows students like me to be able to follow their dreams, but it also then gives those graduates the financial freedom to choose paths that will give back to the community,” says Mr. Tzavaras. “It means their career decisions do not have to be motivated so much by financial considerations.” □

For more information about scholarships, visit [www.evms.edu/magazine](http://www.evms.edu/magazine).

## RECOGNIZES LEADING DONORS

**T**wenty-one years after she graduated, Miriam Yvette Jones Atkins, MD, is returning a favor to the institution that supported and encouraged her on the path to becoming a physician.

Dr. Atkins, MD Class of 1990, is the first official donor to the 1973 Society at EVMS.

Alumni who commit to giving \$2,500 per year for five years to the EVMS fund of their choice can now be part of the exclusive 1973 Society. Alumni who have graduated within the past 10 years can join the Society with a minimum \$1,000-per-year commitment for five years.

Dr. Atkins, a medical oncologist in Augusta, Georgia, who gives annually to EVMS, says she has two reasons for donating.

“First,” she says, “I think it is important to give back to your alma mater. Second, when I wanted

to drop out, they would not let me. I am grateful for that every day.”

Although medical school proved to be a greater challenge than she had anticipated, Dr. Atkins says EVMS staff helped connect her with the tutors and support she needed to succeed and graduate.

As a 1973 Society member, Dr. Atkins will be listed in the alumni section of the EVMS Annual Report as well as on a recently unveiled honor-roll wall display of annual donors located in the lobby outside McCombs Auditorium in the recently renovated Lewis Hall. Members also receive invitations to exclusive EVMS events.

“We wanted a way to highlight our annual donors in combination with renovations that are happening at the school,” says Ashley C. Gentry, director of



Miriam Atkins, MD Class of 1990, returned for her 20th class reunion to personally thank the people who made her medical career possible, including Gerald J. Pepe, PhD, left, and Robert McCombs, PhD.

donor relations. Listing alumni contributions separately on the annual honor-roll board makes it possible for readers to easily see giving levels by class. 1973 Society members who designate at least \$1,000 of their gift to the EVMS Annual Fund also will be a part of the Dean's Club. □

To learn more about the 1973 Society, go to [www.evms.edu/magazine](http://www.evms.edu/magazine).



TowneBank Chairman and CEO Bob Aston and Capital Campaign Co-Chair Wayne Wilbanks at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for EVMS' Education and Research Building.

## TowneBank 'leadership gift' gives momentum to Capital Campaign

The EVMS 20 Twenty Capital Campaign received a major boost from one of its most loyal supporters in the Hampton Roads business community. TowneBank Foundation, which has contributed leadership gifts regularly to the EVMS Annual Fund, contributed \$1 million to the campaign.

“Simply put, our Towne family views Eastern Virginia Medical School as a treasured community asset,” says TowneBank Chairman and CEO Bob Aston, who also serves as President and Chairman of the EVMS Foundation. “The superior quality of health care available today to the citizens of Hampton Roads stands as a tribute to the

extraordinary faculty at EVMS and the training they have provided in developing the skills of some of the finest physicians in America.”

“Not only does a donation of this magnitude place TowneBank at the forefront of our league of supporters,” says Wayne Wilbanks, co-chair of the EVMS Capital Campaign, “but it is also gives critical momentum to the ongoing efforts of the capital campaign.”

Mr. Wilbanks praised Mr. Aston for his ability to energize the entire TowneBank team, raising awareness for EVMS' mission of providing outstanding education, research and patient care to the entire community. But, just as importantly, Mr. Wilbanks says TowneBank's gift sets a precedent that may inspire other area donors and businesses to step up their own support.

“People in the community look to Bob Aston and to TowneBank and will respond accordingly when they see a significant donation like this,” says Mr. Wilbanks. “This gift, as generous as it is, has the ability to multiply itself many times over through the message it sends to the community about the value of Eastern Virginia Medical School.”

TowneBank was founded in 1999 in Hampton Roads and has evolved into a 26-branch network that spreads from Williamsburg to northeastern North Carolina. □

**IN FOCUS**

*Photos from the new building ribbon cutting, MD White Coat Ceremony, Physician Assistant Day and Haunted Hallway.*



### Association of American Physicians of Indian Origin of Hampton Roads Gala – February 11, 2012

The Association of American Physicians of Indian Origin of Hampton Roads is hosting their third annual gala event, “For the Love of Giving,” at the Half Moone Cruise and Celebration Center in Norfolk, Va. The event benefits scholarships at EVMS. For more information, visit [www.aapihr.org](http://www.aapihr.org).

### Installation of New Provost and Dean – February 23, 2012

The school will install Richard V. Homan, MD, as provost and dean. He follows Gerald J. Pepe, PhD, who had served in the role since 2004. The installation ceremony begins at 5:30 p.m. in McCombs Auditorium. For more information, call 757.446.6070.

### Enhancing Diversity in Medicine: Campus Visitation Day – March 24, 2012

The annual Visitation Day program is designed for current university undergraduates interested in pursuing a career in medicine. Participants will have an opportunity to tour campus facilities, participate in mock admission interviews and speak to panels of current medical students and residents. The deadline for registration is March 16. For more information, visit [www.evms.edu/minority](http://www.evms.edu/minority).

### Mike Cavish Golf Tournament — April 23, 2012

In memory of community leader and local restaurateur Mike Cavish, the 14th annual Mike Cavish Golf Tournament will take place April 23 at Elizabeth Manor Golf & Country Club at 12 p.m. All proceeds from the tournament will benefit the EVMS Strelitz Diabetes Center. To reserve your spot or receive more information, call 757.446.6070 or visit [www.evms.edu/cavishgolf](http://www.evms.edu/cavishgolf).

### EVMS Commencement – May 19, 2012

EVMS will hold its commencement ceremony for graduating medical and health professions students beginning at 10 a.m. in the Scope Arena in downtown Norfolk. Commencement concludes a week of graduation-related activities. For more information, go to [www.evms.edu/commencement](http://www.evms.edu/commencement).



1. Lisa H. Cazares, PhD, a post-doctoral fellow, leads members of the Canoles family on a tour of EVMS' new Leroy T. Canoles Jr. Cancer Research Center, named in honor of the family's patriarch, during the ribbon-cutting celebration for the school's new building. 2. Local officials, including state Del. Algie T. Howell and Norfolk Mayor Paul D. Fraim, helped EVMS celebrate the opening of its new Education and Research Building Sept. 22. 3. Alan, right, and Debbie Witt stand with Rector Maurice A. Jones at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. Mr. Witt is managing partner of Witt Mares, PLC, and the Witts' son, Hunter, is a member of EVMS' biomedical master's Class of 2012. 4. Physician assistant James F. Cawley, MPH, (left) one of the leading figures in the PA profession, came to EVMS Oct. 6 to deliver the annual Eugene A. Stead, MD, Memorial Lecture, part of EVMS' celebration of National PA Week. 5. In addition to ghouls and a few sweets, Haunted Hallway also featured activities such as crafts and face painting. Bus loads of children enjoyed the festivities. 6. Constance C. Foreman blows a kiss to her family during the annual White Coat Ceremony for incoming medical students. 7. EVMS students turned part of Lewis Hall and the new Hampton Roads Community Foundation Student Lounge into a spooktacular place for Norfolk children to enjoy a fun, safe Halloween. 8. Edward C. Oldfield, MD, professor of internal medicine, left, looks on his son, Edward C. Oldfield IV, gets his coat adjusted after officially joining the MD Class of 2015.

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