



Montefiore

From the OFFICE OF THE DEAN



Dear Einstein Community:

As our city and nation emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, it's hard to miss the parallels to another catastrophe that sparked a public health crisis in our city almost 20 years ago: the events of 9/11—which is the subject of our cover story in the latest issue of [Einstein magazine](#) that was published this week.

That event—like the current pandemic—truly changed the course of history. And it is a testament to Einstein and Montefiore that our institutions played a critical role in addressing the persistent health consequences shouldered by the first responders who were at the World Trade Center site that day and worked “the pile” in the weeks and months that followed.

Our [9/11 cover story](#) looks back to the morning of the attacks and how it impacted the health of first responders over the past two decades. Dr. David Prezant, a member of our faculty and the chief medical officer for the New York City Fire Department, leads the ongoing research program for 9/11 first responders. Working with a range of Einstein-Montefiore colleagues, he has earned the trust of his patients, assiduously tracking and detailing how their heroic acts at the Twin Tower site has affected their health, and tirelessly advocated for federal support for their healthcare.

Most important—as is the case with the current pandemic—it is a story of hope, that has emerged from despair, and how science can make a major, positive contribution when the world seems to be falling apart. I encourage you to learn more about Dr. Prezant, his ongoing research program, and [profiles of three first responders](#).

Showcasing our Research and Educational Excellence

As usual, this issue of Einstein magazine covers a variety of topics and highlights a wide range of our research and educational programs. There is a [major article on the microbiome](#) and its role in human health. The sheer number of scientists working in this area—including Drs. Lawrence Brandt, Robert Kaplan, Robbie Burk, Carmen Isasi, Paul Frenette, Deepa Manwani, Libusha Kelly, and Betsy Herold—may not be a surprise, but it is an impressive roster of basic, translational, and clinical researchers who are leading investigations in this still emerging and promising field.

In addition, there are stories on:

- Our [15-year global health program in Kisoro, Uganda](#), led by Dr. Gerry Paccione
- Our [new blood cancer institute](#), directed by Drs. Uli Steidl and Amit Verma
- Profiles on our chair of urology, [Dr. Mark Schoenberg](#), and cancer researcher [Dr. Britta Will](#)
- And perhaps most timely, [A Look Back item on the Ullmann building](#): 60 years ago today, Dr. Hans Albert Einstein, a son of our school's namesake, represented his father at the groundbreaking for the Ullmann Research Center for Health Science.

In Memoriam

When I look back on Einstein's early days, I am always impressed by the caliber of faculty the College of Medicine has attracted since its founding. As we celebrate our early years and honor our founders, it is with sadness that I share that two of our longtime faculty members recently passed away: Drs. Jack Peisach and Irving Listowsky. Please [read the article](#) we have in the intranet on Dr. Peisach and leave a remembrance if you'd like. A similar article on Dr. Listowsky will be published soon.

Awards and Honors

Additionally, I'd like to toast two current members of our faculty who have been honored for their research and academic excellence:

- Dr. Libusha Kelly has been selected for [a fellowship by the Harvard Radcliffe Institute](#). Dr. Kelly is one of only 52 individuals selected from nearly 1,400 scientists, artists, scholars, and practitioners who applied.
- Dr. Komal Bajaj at Jacobi was named one of [10 inaugural scholars in diagnostic excellence](#) by the National Academy of Medicine. Its purpose is to advance the scholar's diagnostic skills, reduce diagnostic errors, and accelerate their career development.

Please join me in congratulating our colleagues on their achievements.

In Closing

This Sunday is Mother's Day and I hope that you are able to safely celebrate with your friends and family. Regardless of your circumstances, this holiday is another welcome reminder of spring and the renewal and resurgence that it brings.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Tomaselli', with a stylized, flowing script.

Gordon F. Tomaselli, M.D.
The Marilyn and Stanley M. Katz Dean
Albert Einstein College of Medicine
Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer
Montefiore Medicine