



Montefiore

From the OFFICE OF THE DEAN



Dear Einstein Community:

As we get set to enjoy an extended weekend for the Independence Day holiday, I want to thank each of you for helping make our campus community so vibrant, while also keeping all of us healthy and safe. I am about to celebrate my third anniversary as Einstein's dean and I am constantly reminded of how special our community is and why the College of Medicine is such a wonderful place to teach, learn, and do amazing research.

Good News and Accolades

It has been my pleasure to occasionally offer news of honors and recognition earned by members of our Einstein community. Following are some of the latest examples:

- With the Olympics beginning later in July, it seems fitting to note that Joanne Siegel, co-director of our Kennedy Center's University Center for Excellence in Developmental, Service, Training and Research, was invited to join Drs. Tim Shriver and Alicia Bazzano at the Special Olympics Inclusive Health Summit earlier this month. Her team's work to carry out the National Curriculum Initiative in Developmental Medicine project was recognized during the event, where she received a certificate of recognition and gave a presentation about our work on the curriculum initiative. Her invitation to the event noted, "The commitment that Albert Einstein College of Medicine has made to changing medical school curriculum is enormously powerful as an example to other schools."
- Earlier this week, our [BETTR program](#), which is one of 21 Institutional Research and Academic Career Development Awards (IRACDA) programs for research and education nationwide, served as co-host with Rutgers and Stonybrook of the annual national conference. More than 400 people

tuned into this virtual event, including 170 IRACDA scholars. Presentations included a keynote by Dr. Marie Bernard, chief officer for scientific diversity at the NIH. Scholars in the program are committed to increasing the diversity of academic science.

- In recent weeks, Dr. Edward Chu, director of our [Albert Einstein Cancer Center](#), shared some exciting new appointments for leadership within the center, including [Dr. Julio Aguirre-Ghiso](#), who will lead our new Cancer Dormancy and Microenvironment Institute, and [Lauren Hackett](#), who will supervise operations of our NCI-designated cancer center.
- [Dr. Matthew Akiyama](#) received one of only two \$2.5 million HIV/AIDS Research Avenir Awards from the National Institute on Drug Abuse. The honor is part of the new NIH Director's Pioneer Awards program, aimed at helping to curb HIV infection among individuals who inject drugs.
- Our department of ophthalmology and visual sciences held its 27th annual [Paul Henkind Day](#), which featured a research symposium and awards celebration. The event highlighted honors earned by **Dr. Wei Liu**, who won a grant from the National Eye Institute's 3-D Retina Organoid Challenge, and **Dr. Jamie Rosenberg**, who was named Medical Student Educator of the Year by the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology. Dr. Rosenberg also was among faculty who received a [teaching award](#) at our 2021 commencement.

Einstein Appreciation

I also want to remind everyone that human resources has organized monthly Appreciation Days—to celebrate all of you—and our next one, on **Friday, July 9**, will be the most celebratory yet. I invite you to stop by our central courtyard—between Forchheimer, Ullmann, Block, and the Gruss Magnetic Resonance Research Center—to enjoy BBQ, music, and the chance to win prizes. While we won't offer the usual seating, since we still need to keep crowd sizes down, you'll be able to get great food, listen to music, and enjoy the festivities. I hope to see you there next Friday, between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Join Our VaccINATION

On a more serious note, I can't stress enough the importance of getting vaccinated, which is more important than ever with the new Delta variant of the COVID virus spreading across our country.

The science behind the vaccines available supports the safety and efficacy of those approved by the FDA for emergency use (Moderna, Pfizer, and Johnson & Johnson). And, the protection that being vaccinated offers can be lifesaving as virtually the only people who are being hospitalized for COVID-19 today are those who have not been vaccinated.

While over 80% of our campus population has been vaccinated, we're aiming for 100%, with the exception of those receiving medical or religious exemptions. Recent e-blasts have detailed [our latest policies and deadlines](#) for being vaccinated. I thank those who have done so already and ask that those of you not yet vaccinated take advantage of the [information and resources](#) on our COVID-19 site so that you can be vaccinated, too. Reaching herd immunity will give us greater freedom from the virus and new variants we continue to learn about.

In closing, I wish you and your families a relaxing and joyous Independence Day weekend. It is well deserved—by each and every one of you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Tomaselli', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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