

**Dear Einstein Community:**

On Monday we awoke to news of the devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria. As of the most recent report, the death toll is now over 11,000. There are tens of thousands more injured, countless others missing or trapped beneath rubble, and millions more displaced.

Thousands of crews are still working frantically to find survivors who have been able to withstand the frigid winter weather. Among the thousands of buildings that have toppled are at least 15 hospitals, making treatment of survivors even more challenging. Further compounding the tragedy, more than 4 million people were already relying on humanitarian assistance in northwest Syria, which was among the locations hardest hit.

As is frequently the case at Einstein, members of our community are eager to assist those in need. I have learned that two of our student groups—Muslim Students' Association (MSA) and Middle Eastern North African Students' Association (MENA)—are spearheading a fundraising campaign to offer help in the tragically hit regions of Turkey and Syria. In this instance, funds raised will support the [International Rescue Committee](#) (IRC), which the student groups selected for its ability to equally allocate resources toward affected areas of Turkey and Syria.

Later today, February 8, and tomorrow, February 9, members of MSA and MENA will offer baked goods for sale toward raising funds to send to IRC. Check the [intranet homepage](#) for further details.

Additionally, Yaron Tomer, M.D., chair of medicine at Einstein and Montefiore, noted several other appropriate charities in his weekly newsletter and Alev Celikgil, M.D., a faculty member from Turkey, shared organizations actively involved in search and rescue activities. The agencies they recommend supporting include: [AHBAP \(local Turkish voluntary network; means a reliable friend\)](#), [Turkish](#)

[Red Crescent](#), [AKUT \(Search & Rescue Association\)](#), [AFAD \(Turkish disaster agency, equivalent of FEMA\)](#), [Syrian American Medical Society](#), [The White Helmets](#), [UNICEF](#), and [Doctors Without Borders](#).

For those of you who have family or friends directly impacted by this disaster, we extend our heartfelt support and remind you of the services that Einstein makes available for everyone in our community—from our [student mental health center](#) and [office of academic support and counseling](#) (for students and postdocs) to our employee assistance program, [Carebridge](#). Students and postdocs who may be having difficulty with coursework or otherwise, please contact your program leadership for any additional support you may need.

Whatever your connection to the region, I encourage you to identify ways to help your colleagues and those overseas in need of our care and assistance.

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

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