

# Mount Sinai inside



Dennis S. Charney, MD, (left) and Brian Kelly, Editor of *U.S. News & World Report*, co-hosted a summit on medical school rankings that was attended by academic leaders from the nation's top medical schools.

## Mount Sinai and *U.S. News* Host Extraordinary Summit

The public is fascinated by rankings, which assign a value to everything from colleges and medical schools to a host of popular consumer items. But how are those rankings arrived at, and are they a fair reflection of what they are measuring?

Those questions were the subject of a summit sponsored by Mount Sinai School of Medicine and *U.S. News & World Report*, titled, "The Impact and Future of Medical School Rankings." The symposium, held Thursday, October 27, in Hatch Auditorium, featured a lively debate among the executives who publish the annual *U.S. News & World Report* Best Medical School rankings and academic leaders from eight top medical schools, including Dennis S. Charney, MD, the Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz Dean of Mount Sinai School of Medicine, and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs of The Mount Sinai Medical Center.

Dr. Charney opened the four-hour symposium by explaining how the event came about. "The rankings impact those of us who run medical schools," he said. "They drive the behavior of students and medical schools. We knew it would be interesting to invite leaders from the top medical schools to discuss the impact of the rankings and how their schools respond to the rankings. And *U.S. News* graciously embraced

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## Look inside

Valentin Fuster, MD, PhD, Named Physician-in-Chief

The Nineteenth Annual Celebration of Life Gala

National Palliative Care and Hospice Month

"Breakfast of Legends"

## How Medical School Rankings Influence Students' Decisions

The decision about which medical school to attend often comes down to two choices. When that is the case, where the school stands in the annual *U.S. News & World Report* Best Medical Schools rankings can tip the scales in favor of one over the other.

Nancy C. Andrews, MD, PhD, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Duke University School of Medicine, was one of nine deans who participated in the symposium sponsored by Mount Sinai School of Medicine and *U.S. News & World Report*. She said the rankings seemed to influence students' decisions. Duke recently ranked as No. 5.

"This year, we were very fortunate. We took only one student from our waiting list when we were doing admissions," said Dr. Andrews.



Mount Sinai medical student Stephen McCullough

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## How Rankings Influence Students' Decisions (continued from page 1)



Mount Sinai medical student  
Nathaniel Villanueva

"And when I looked at the students we had accepted but who had decided not to accept us and where they went, it followed the *U.S. News* rankings for those schools above us almost perfectly. Those who got into the No. 1 school went there, No. 2 went there, No. 3 went there."

Several students at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, who belong to the school's Admissions

Committee and participate in Mount Sinai's interviewing process, said they attended the symposium to gain a better perspective on the rankings. "We wanted to see how robust the foundation was for making the rankings, and whether they should influence student

opinions," said Lauren Steele. She and the others agreed that the rankings should include additional information.

"It would be helpful to know the number of students who produced abstracts and the number of publications in which they published," said student Stephen McCullough.

"It's important for students to know that the institution will assist them in acquiring research funding," added student Aron Legler. "This is an important indicator and it is not necessarily reflected in the rankings."

Student Nathaniel Villanueva, said, "People use a lot of sources for information on medical schools. You can tell a lot more about a school after the interview. But, at the end of the day, rankings do count for something. When we got into Mount Sinai in 2008, it was ranked 23. Now it's ranked 18. That's almost like a pat on the back, and it makes you feel more comfortable that you'll look better when applying to residency programs."

---

## Mount Sinai and *U.S. News* Host Extraordinary Summit (continued from page 1)

that idea." Mount Sinai School of Medicine currently ranks 18th among the nation's top medical schools.

Brian Kelly, Editor of *U.S. News & World Report*, oversees the rankings. "American society being what it is wants to know what is No. 1 and what is No. 2," he said. "We are in the business of helping people gather information to make informed decisions." Mr. Kelly said the symposium presented a "rare opportunity" to discuss industry standards with a group of experts. He said his team appreciated the feedback.

The medical school rankings are based on reputational surveys completed by deans and program directors, grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), student-to-faculty ratios, MCAT scores, acceptance rates, and grade point averages.

Several deans questioned the value of the reputational index, which accounts for 35 percent of a school's overall score. "I have

little or no information about the schools on that form," said Nancy C. Andrews, MD, PhD, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Duke University School of Medicine.

Robert J. Alpern, MD, the Ensign Professor of Medicine and Dean of Yale University School of Medicine, said reputations could be based on impressions that are more than 20 years old.

Lee Goldman, MD, MPH, Dean of the Faculties of Health Sciences and Medicine at Columbia University School of Medicine, said, "Two things that fail are your reputational scores from program directors due to low survey response rates, and the faculty-student ratios. Most of us have more than one faculty per student. I would say that is meaningless."

Dr. Charney said the value of measuring NIH grants was limited. "An NIH portfolio

is a good measure of the amount of research, but it is not measuring the student experience," he said. "Most of the scientists that have substantive funding are not teaching our medical students. They're doing research in the lab. I think it should be part of the survey but it's not capturing a lot of what we're after in the rankings."

He commended the *U.S. News* team for agreeing to co-host the symposium. "I think it took a little courage to hear our comments," he said. "But I suggest you take a hard look at your methodology and think through how you are going to change it, and I encourage you to make changes. Start rethinking what your survey asks. Focus on outcomes. How many students are engaged in research? How many get published? On the clinical side, measure where students are continuing their training, and what fields they are going into," he added. "You need a better measure of how we educate our students."

TOP ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Summit participants Dennis S. Charney, MD; Robert J. Alpern, MD; Nancy C. Andrews, MD, PhD; Joseph P. Grande, MD, PhD, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at Mayo Clinic College of Medicine; Allen M. Spiegel, MD, Dean of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University; BOTTOM ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Brian Kelly; Robert N. Golden, MD, Dean, School of Medicine and Public Health, and Vice Chancellor for Medical Affairs at the University of Wisconsin; R. Michael Tanner, PhD, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities; Jules L. Dienstag, MD, Dean for Medical Education at Harvard Medical School; and Lee Goldman, MD, MPH



# Valentin Fuster, MD, PhD, Named Physician-in-Chief

Valentin Fuster, MD, PhD, has been named Physician-in-Chief of The Mount Sinai Medical Center, a new position that was created to expand Mount Sinai's visibility as a leader in patient care and satisfaction. Dr. Fuster also was reappointed Director of Mount Sinai Heart, The Zena and Michael A. Wiener Cardiovascular Institute, and the Marie-Josée and Henry R. Kravis Center for Cardiovascular Health.

"Dr. Fuster is a champion of cardiovascular health, and is recognized globally as an outstanding researcher, educator, and physician," said Kenneth L. Davis, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer of The Mount Sinai Medical Center. "As Physician-in-Chief, he is ideally positioned to foster an environment of excellence in clinical care." Dr. Fuster will work closely with the Medical Center's senior leaders to develop policies and procedures that will ensure patient care and satisfaction and meet high standards across specialties.

"These appointments are a tremendous honor. I look forward to working with the Chief Executive Officer of the Medical Center, the Dean of the School of Medicine, and the President of the Hospital to contribute to the excellence of clinical research and ongoing care of our patients," said Dr. Fuster.

*Dr. Fuster is a champion of cardiovascular health, and is recognized globally as an outstanding researcher, educator, and physician.*

— KENNETH L. DAVIS, MD

Said Dennis S. Charney, MD, the Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz Dean of Mount Sinai School of Medicine, and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs of The Mount Sinai Medical Center: "Dr. Fuster has demonstrated extraordinary dedication to interdisciplinary translational research in biomedicine, and has made groundbreaking contributions in the field that have resulted in improved clinical solutions for patients. In his new position, I am confident he will replicate that success throughout the institution."

Dr. Fuster is the only cardiologist to have received the two highest Gold Medal awards, and all four major research awards, from the world's four major cardiovascular organizations. To date, he has published more than 870 articles on coronary artery disease, atherosclerosis, and thrombosis.

"Mount Sinai Heart has become an international destination for research and clinical care under Dr. Fuster's leadership," said Wayne Keathley, President and Chief Operating Officer of The Mount Sinai Hospital.

The VF Society, an alumni association of former Mount Sinai cardiology fellows, recently honored their mentor, Valentin Fuster, MD, PhD, at the Twelfth Annual VF Society Dinner. FIRST ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Paul C-K Lee, MD, Clinical Instructor, Cardiology, Mount Sinai School of Medicine (MSSM); Ram Gordon, MD; and Robert Pyo, MD, Assistant Professor, Cardiology, and Radiology, MSSM; SECOND ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Sammy Elmariah, MD, Fellow, Structural Heart Disease and Interventional Cardiology, Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School; Anthony Shih, MD, Clinical Instructor, Cardiology, and Radiology, MSSM; Dmitry Nemirovsky, MD, Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine, Englewood Hospital and Medical Center; Valentin Fuster, MD, PhD; Ira Galin, MD; Brett Sealove, MD, Assistant Clinical Professor, Cardiology, MSSM; Eric Adler, MD, Associate Clinical Professor, University of California, San Diego; and Gerin Stevens, MD, Adjunct Instructor, Cardiology, MSSM



# The Nineteenth Annual Celebration of Life Gala

Two Mount Sinai School of Medicine professors, Laurie Margolies, MD, and Georgia Witkin, PhD, were honored recently for their commitment to helping patients with breast cancer at the Mount Sinai Breast Health Resource Program's Nineteenth Annual Celebration of Life Gala. More than 350 guests attended the event held at The Pierre to recognize the contributions of Laurie Margolies, MD, Associate Professor of Radiology, and Chief, Breast Imaging, Dubin Breast Center of The Tisch Cancer Institute; and Georgia Witkin, PhD, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, and Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Science, and Director of Psychological Services, Reproductive Medicine Associates.

The Breast Health Resource Program provides patients and families with free counseling and educational support as they face breast cancer.



Georgia Witkin, PhD, (left) and Laurie Margolies, MD

The program is growing: It recently added a variety of initiatives, and now reaches out to patients being treated at the Dubin Breast Center, which opened earlier this year.

"We do all of this with care, skill, and compassion," Andrea Geduld, LCSW, Social Work Coordinator for the Breast Health Resource Program, told the audience. "Our goal is to enable these women to realize their own strengths so they may cope with their breast cancer experience."

Dr. Margolies thanked the staff and supporters of the Breast Health Resource Program and spoke about Mount Sinai's commitment to provide patient-focused care. "Addressing the patient experience is paramount and it takes an amazingly large team to offer high-quality, patient-centered care. We work on it daily in so many ways," said Dr. Margolies.

Dr. Witkin recalled that her mother was a breast cancer survivor. "In the spirit of my mother, a 50-year survivor, I salute everyone touched by cancer who celebrates life," she said.

## Events

### National Palliative Care and Hospice Month

Meet Mount Sinai's renowned Palliative Care team, and learn how palliative care can make the experience of serious and complex illness easier for patients and families. Staff will offer resources on palliative care, caregiving, and bereavement, and massage and meditation demonstrations. Sponsored by the Hertzberg Palliative Care Institute, the Center to Advance Palliative Care, and Balm Foundation.

Wednesday, November 16  
11:30 am - 2:30 pm  
Outside the Plaza Café

#### Grand Rounds Pediatrics

H. William Schnaper, MD, Professor and Vice Chair of Pediatrics, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, presents "Childhood Nephrotic Syndrome in 1861 and 2011: Years of Progress?"

Thursday, November 17  
8 - 9 am  
Hatch Auditorium

#### Twelfth Annual Aufses-Whitman Lecture

Mark Chassin, MD, MPP, MPH, President, The Joint Commission, presents the Twelfth Annual Aufses-Whitman Lecture, "What Is High Reliability, and Why Does Health Care Need It?" Approved for 1.0 CME Credit.

Tuesday, November 22  
4 - 5 pm  
Hatch Auditorium

#### Grand Rounds Otolaryngology

Thomas Naidich, MD, Professor, Radiology, Anatomy and Functional Morphology, and Neurosurgery, presents "Radiology of the Cranial Nerves and Skull Base."

Wednesday, November 16  
7:15 - 8:15 am  
Annenberg 10-30

#### Grand Rounds Obstetrics, Gynecology And Reproductive Science

Michael Brodman, MD, Chairman, Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Science, presents "Your Quality Performance Metrics as Monitored by Mount Sinai and the State and Federal Government."

Wednesday, November 30  
8 - 9 am  
Goldwurm Auditorium

## "Breakfast of Legends"

The Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center (MSAHC) will celebrate its annual "Breakfast of Legends" honoring individuals for their commitment to the youth of New York City on Tuesday, November 15. Joy Bauer, MS, RD, CDN, the Nutrition/Health expert for the "Today" show and *New York Times* bestselling author of *Joy Bauer's Food Cures*, will be the keynote speaker. Honorees include Todd Builione, Advisory Board member of the MSAHC and President and Chief Operating Officer of Highbridge Capital Management; Carla A. Harris, Managing Director at Morgan Stanley and a member of the Boards of Trustees of The Mount Sinai Medical Center; Rochelle Hirschhorn, MD, Research Professor and Professor Emeritus of Medicine and Cell Biology and Pediatrics, NYU School of Medicine; Kurt Hirschhorn, MD, Professor Emeritus of Pediatrics, Genetics and Genomic Sciences, and Medicine, Chairman Emeritus of Pediatrics, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, and a member of the center's Advisory Board; Andrea Marks, MD, pioneering doctor and leader in the field of Adolescent-Young Adult Medicine, and faculty member of Mount Sinai School of Medicine; and Michael Nembhard, LCSW, manager of mental health services at the MSAHC.



We Understand • We Care  
We're Here for You

For more information, including ticket information, contact Sharon Kleinhandler, Development Manager, at [sharon.kleinhandler@mountsinai.org](mailto:sharon.kleinhandler@mountsinai.org); or to purchase tickets online visit <http://philanthropy.mountsinai.org/breakfastoflegends>

Tuesday, November 15  
7:30 - 9 am  
Mandarin Oriental  
80 Columbus Circle

## Education

### The Page and William Black Post Graduate School for Continuing Education

The Office of Continuing Medical Education (CME) offers seminars, conferences, grand rounds, and live webcasts for physicians and other health professionals to extend their knowledge and remain current in their specific fields. For more information on courses, visit <http://www.mssm.edu/education/continuing-medical-education/courses> or call the Office of CME at 212-731-7950.

### Fourteenth Annual Mount Sinai Winter Symposium "Advances in Medical and Surgical Dermatology"

Registration is open to dermatologists, cosmetic surgeons, PAs, NPs, residents, fellows, and other allied health professionals. Approved for AAD and AMA Credits; earn 22 credits. Registration is required. To register, or to learn more, go to <http://www.mssm.edu/cme/courses/dermatology>

Friday, December 9 -  
Sunday, December 11  
7:15 am - 5 pm  
Stern Auditorium

### Second Annual Faculty Development Conference

An opportunity for junior faculty to learn about steps to take for successful careers, and for senior faculty to develop ways to support rising stars. Sponsored by the Office of Academic Enhancement and Mentoring, the Center for Multicultural Affairs, the Institute for Medical Education, and the Office for Women's Careers.

Thursday, November 17  
1 - 3:30 pm  
Stern Auditorium

### Inside Mount Sinai

2011 Marketing & Communications  
Carrie Gottlieb, Editor  
Marilyn Balamaci, Editor

### Submissions

Box 1475  
[inside@mssm.edu](mailto:inside@mssm.edu)

### Visit Inside on the Web

[www.mountsinai.org/inside](http://www.mountsinai.org/inside)

 Follow Mount Sinai on Twitter  
[@MountSinaiNYC](https://twitter.com/MountSinaiNYC)

 Visit us on Facebook  
[facebook.com/mountsinainyc](https://facebook.com/mountsinainyc)