

# Mount Sinai inside



Joceline De Los Santos, left, and Lizbeth Irizarry

## Kidney Transplantations Foster Bright Hopes

Last August, Michael J. Goldstein, MD, Director of Kidney and Pancreas Transplantation, and Associate Professor of Surgery, performed life-saving transplants on two 13-year-old girls who each received a kidney from the same donor on the same day at The Mount Sinai Hospital.

Today, the girls, Lizbeth Irizarry and Joceline De Los Santos—eighth graders who enjoy math and dancing to pop songs by Lady Gaga and Rihanna—share their hopes for the future as well.

Prior to receiving her kidney, “Lizbeth was on dialysis for 18 months,” says her mother, Claudia Irizarry. “It felt as though our lives had stopped. Now we are going back to normal. I feel like I have my baby back.”

Organ donation from a living relative is the best way for children to receive timely kidney transplants, according to Dr. Goldstein. But that was not possible for Joceline or Lizbeth, who waited for kidneys from deceased donors through the United Network for Organ Sharing.

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## Samin K. Sharma, MD, Receives Promotions

Samin K. Sharma, MD, an internationally recognized cardiac interventionalist, has been promoted to President of the Mount Sinai Heart Network, Director of Clinical Cardiology, and Dean of International Clinical Affiliations at The Mount Sinai Medical Center.

Under Dr. Sharma’s leadership as Director of Mount Sinai’s Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory—a position he held prior to his appointments—Mount Sinai performed the most percutaneous coronary interventions in New York State, and achieved the highest safety rating, according to the New York State Department of Health. Individually, Dr. Sharma achieved the highest safety rating for both emergency and non-emergency cases of any physician in the state.



Samin K. Sharma, MD

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# Flu Vaccination Program Is a Success

Nearly 100 percent of The Mount Sinai Medical Center's attending medical staff received the influenza vaccine by the December 1, 2011, deadline, about twice the rate of compliance in previous years. In a move designed to minimize public health risks, Mount Sinai's Medical Board decided last summer to require all attending physicians to receive flu vaccinations.

"We believe that it is important for health care workers to get flu vaccines," says Ira Nash, MD, Chief Medical Officer and Senior Vice President for Medical Affairs at The Mount Sinai Medical Center. "Flu vaccination is a public health measure like washing your hands. It protects our patients and us."

The success of the program, he says, was due to teamwork from the Medical

Board, institutional leadership, the Medical Staff Services office, Employee Health Services, and department chairs and their administrators who all worked together to



**Thelma Clarke, RN, BSN, CRRN, Marketing and Outreach Admissions Coordinator, receives a flu vaccine through Employee Health Services.**

find convenient times and places in which to vaccinate the medical staff, and to remind them of the importance of doing so.

Mount Sinai strongly encourages all personnel to receive flu shots. "I hope this success sets a positive example for every member of the Mount Sinai staff—especially those with direct patient contact—to get a flu shot and stop the spread of flu to patients who are vulnerable," says Dr. Nash.

The flu season can extend into early May. Free vaccinations are available to all personnel at Employee Health Services, located on the second floor at 17 East 102nd Street, from 8 am through 4 pm, Monday through Friday.

## Samin K. Sharma, MD, Receives Promotions (continued from page 1)



**Samin K. Sharma, MD, and Valentin Fuster, MD, PhD, at the New York City Heart Ball**

As President of the Mount Sinai Heart Network, Dr. Sharma will create an extensive network of affiliated cardiologists throughout the New York metropolitan area. Mount Sinai specialists in diabetes, electrophysiology, and vascular medicine will travel to affiliates once a week and see their patients. If the patients require additional treatment they will be referred to specialists at the Mount Sinai campus.

"There has been a lot of enthusiasm from cardiologists in and around New York to join Mount Sinai," says Dr. Sharma. "Our services increase the level of care they provide their patients. We will provide these basic cardiovascular services at the affiliates' location but if the patient needs more, he or she comes here to the Mount Sinai campus."

During the past two months, Dr. Sharma says 12 new cardiologists have joined the Mount Sinai Heart Network. He would like to enroll 50 cardiologists within the next year or two. "Our goal," he says, "is to increase our network and increase Mount Sinai's presence in their communities."

The Mount Sinai Heart Network will serve as a business model for other disciplines, including endocrinology and pediatrics, according to Dr. Sharma, who says these, too, could lead to referrals for bariatric surgery, or advanced pediatric care that would be provided on campus.

In his new position as Dean of International Clinical Affiliations, Dr. Sharma will build the Mount Sinai Heart Network globally by affiliating with large medical centers in countries such as India and China. Mount Sinai will help them to improve their care and will treat their patients who require advanced care.

As Director of Clinical Cardiology, Dr. Sharma will be responsible for daily operations, reporting to Valentin Fuster, MD, PhD, Physician-in-Chief of The Mount Sinai Medical Center, and 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. Sharma is a nationally recognized cardiac interventionalist with a compelling vision of how to propel Mount Sinai forward in continuing to deliver the highest quality of care for our patients," says Dr. Fuster. "He is perfectly suited to help Mount Sinai grow locally and internationally as a world-class institution for treating cardiovascular disease."

### Three Organizations Honor Samin K. Sharma, MD

Three national organizations recently honored Samin K. Sharma, MD, for his outstanding professional contributions: the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations Foundation, Inc., (NECO), for which he received an Ellis Island Medal of Honor; the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association's Achievement in Cardiovascular Science and Medicine award; and the Physician-of-the-Year award that was presented by the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI).

At its twenty-fifth anniversary celebration held in the Great Hall at Ellis Island—through which more than 12 million immigrants passed upon entering the United States—NECO honored Dr. Sharma for exemplifying "outstanding qualities" in his personal and professional life. Dr. Sharma's name, and those of his fellow recipients, were read into the Congressional Record.

Dr. Sharma was honored at the 96th annual New York City Heart Ball at the Grand Hyatt New York, the premier event that raises funds for the American Heart Association's research, education, and community-based initiatives.

The AAPI, which represents more than 50,000 physicians and 15,000 medical students, residents, and fellows of Indian heritage in the United States, honored Dr. Sharma as its Most Distinguished Physician of the Year, for his innovativeness, and his commitment to improving the health of his patients. Dr. Sharma is in the process of building a heart hospital in his native, Jaipur, India.

## Kidney Transplantations Foster Bright Hopes (continued from page 1)

“Children and adolescents under 18 years of age receive priority on the deceased-donor waiting list,” says Dr. Goldstein. “This provides our children with healthier kidneys and with shorter waiting times so they can live productive, healthy lives and avoid the morbidity associated with renal failure.”

Jeffrey M. Saland, MD, MS, Chief of the Division of Pediatric Nephrology and Hypertension at the Kravis Children’s Hospital at Mount Sinai, and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, says there are many steps involved in getting a child ready for a transplant. In some cases, a disease can return if the transplant takes place too early, so it is prudent to wait for the disease to become less active. That was the case with Lizbeth.



**FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Michael J. Goldstein, MD; Jeffrey Stock, MD, Clinical Associate Professor of Urology, and Pediatrics; Corinne Benchimol, DO; Jeffrey M. Saland, MD, MS; Hilary Hotchkiss, MD; and Adrienne Villa, RN, BSN**

Corinne Benchimol, DO, Clinical Director of Pediatric Nephrology, and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, had diagnosed Joceline’s kidney disease when she was very young, carefully monitoring her health over the years, and developing a close relationship with her family.

“Quality of life with a successful kidney transplant is an amazing improvement over life on dialysis. There’s really no comparison,” says Hilary Hotchkiss, MD, Dialysis Director in the Division of Nephrology, and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics.

A great deal of management goes on before, during, and after the transplant. Dr. Saland says, “The size of the team and the amount of support that a family requires is much greater than with an adult patient.” Team members include physicians, surgeons, nurses, a transplant coordinator, a nutritionist, a financial counselor, social workers, child-life specialists, and administrators.

Transplant Coordinator Adrienne Villa, RN, BSN, was on call the night Lizbeth and Joceline received their kidney offers. “I knew the girls well from the evaluation and listing process, so I was especially excited to give the families the news that a transplant was on the way,” says Ms. Villa. “To see the girls now dialysis-free, energetic, and leading ‘normal’ lives is so rewarding.”

Dr. Saland says it is critical for children with transplants to take their medication exactly as directed, and for teenagers to be disciplined in managing their health so they can continue to live without kidney failure when they are no longer dependent upon their parents. Joceline and Lizbeth are learning those skills now.

Joceline says her doctors in the Division of Nephrology and Hypertension—including Dr. Saland, Dr. Benchimol, Dr. Hotchkiss, and Jessica Reid-Adam, MD, Instructor—helped her through the transplant process. “My doctors told me the surgery would be scary but that all I had to do was believe in myself,” says Joceline. “And I did. Right now, I feel great. I could never have wished for anything else because it made my life easier.”

## A Day at the Circus

A sold-out crowd of 1,400 recently attended the Mount Sinai Children’s Center Foundation’s (CCF) twenty-fifth anniversary Big Apple Circus benefit to support a variety of initiatives in the Department of Pediatrics and the Kravis Children’s Hospital at Mount Sinai. This year’s event raised a record-breaking \$1,012,850, which will help fund projects big and small, such as the current renovation of the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU), as well as groundbreaking therapies in the Child Life and Creative Arts Therapy Department.

Funding from the CCF throughout the years has also supported the Department of Pediatrics’ research efforts in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of childhood diseases, including food allergies, kidney and liver diseases, and congenital heart defects, and enabled Kravis Children’s Hospital to offer child-friendly live television programming, abundant creative arts therapy workshops, and social gatherings with fellow patients.

“The Big Apple Circus benefit and the philanthropy that flows from it allow us to do

the little things that make a big difference in the lives of our patients and their families,” says Ian Holzman, MD, Chief of Newborn Medicine. “We can help defray the cost of transportation for some of our less well-off families, for example, host a biannual reunion where families get to see the nurses and doctors who cared for their babies, and help

families who have lost an infant. Some needs are small, but when added up they are bigger than the biggest ‘Big Top.’”

**For more information on the Mount Sinai Children’s Center Foundation, visit [www.msccf.org](http://www.msccf.org) or contact Bridget O’Brien at 212-241-1234.**



**FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: John Levene, 2011 Honorary Co-Chair of the Mount Sinai Children’s Center Foundation Big Apple Circus benefit; Nicholas Levene; Jacalyn Shafer, MD, Clinical Instructor, Department of Pediatrics, and Honorary Co-Chair; AJ Levene; Dylan Levene; Charley Levene; and Nancy Levene, Honorary Co-Chair**

## Events

### Mount Sinai Medically Supervised Weight Management Program

This weight management program—geared to help individuals who need to lose more than 30 pounds—is hosting a weekly orientation session. Led by physicians and dietitians, patients in the program lose weight rapidly, while learning healthy lifestyle skills. To reserve a seat for an orientation session, call 212-241-4991.

Orientations: Mondays at 5 pm  
Atrium Building  
Fourth Floor, AB4-11

#### Grand Rounds Diabetes

Lori Sussel, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Genetics and Development, Columbia University, presents "Regulation and Maintenance of Pancreatic Islet Cell Fates." This lecture is part of the Metabolism Institute lecture series.

Thursday, December 22  
8:30 – 9:30 am  
Atrium Building  
Room AB4-11

#### Grand Rounds Otolaryngology

Karen Zur, MD, Assistant Professor and Director, Pediatric Voice Program, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, presents "Pediatric Voice Disorders."

Wednesday, December 28  
7:15 – 8:15 am  
Annenberg 10-30

#### Grand Rounds Anesthesiology

David L. Reich, MD, Professor and Chair, Department of Anesthesiology, presents "Pulmonary Hypertension."

Wednesday, December 21  
6:30 – 8:10 am  
Annenberg 13-01

#### Grand Rounds Pediatrics

Michael J. Bell, MD, Director, Pediatric Neurotrauma Center and Pediatric Neurocritical Care, University of Pittsburgh, presents "Understanding Traumatic Brain Injury Fundamentals and Applications of Evidence-Based Guidelines."

Thursday, December 29  
8 – 9 am  
Hatch Auditorium

## Education

### 2011 HIPAA Refresher

As the year comes to a close, please remember that you must complete the 2011 HIPAA training module and quiz. Access it at: <http://intranet1.mountsinai.org/hipaa/online>.

Also, beginning in January 2012, the HIPAA Compliance Department will continue to build on this training by sending monthly broadcast emails titled, "Social Media: Slippery Slope Scenarios." The emails will include scenarios based on real events, which will address issues regarding the use of social media that we all face in our jobs or daily lives. Those individuals who do not receive broadcast emails can call the HIPAA Compliance office at 212-241-3816 for copies.

## Affordable Housing

### Apartments For Rent

In 2012, The Mount Sinai Medical Center will open a residential, smoke-free building on East 102nd Street, which includes 46 affordable-housing apartments.

Applications are available at [www.related.com/affordable](http://www.related.com/affordable), and must be filed no later than Saturday, December 31, 2011. A 50 percent preference will be extended to residents of Community Board 11. There are no brokers or application fees.

## Doe Fund Toy Drive



A holiday toy drive to benefit the Doe Fund, which helps men whose lives have been devastated by homelessness, incarceration, and substance abuse, will be held through Friday, December 23. New unwrapped gifts for children up to 14 years of age can be placed in designated gift boxes stationed in front of the Plaza Café.

The drive is jointly sponsored by The Mount Sinai Hospital, 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, and the New York State Nurses Association. The toys will help the men celebrate the holidays with their children.

## Rising Professionals Networking Group

The Mount Sinai Rising Professionals was created last spring as a personal and professional networking group that brings employees together for events focused on career advice, social gatherings, and recreational activities. The group recently coordinated a Graduate School Forum, which invited representatives from eight New York City schools to showcase their MBA, MPA, MPH, EMPA, PhD, and dual-degree programs, as well as management certificates. The group also holds an Expert Talk Series with Mount Sinai leadership to discuss professional advice and career tips.

A casual lunch series held on and off campus from noon – 1 pm on the first Friday of the month enables members to take a lunch break with their colleagues. This year's holiday party, held on Tuesday, December 6, encouraged attendees to wear their "antlers" and "bad" holiday sweaters. In warmer weather, members of the Mount Sinai kickball team play Tuesday evenings at the East River Park under the Williamsburg Bridge.

The group is open to all employees—both new and established. For additional information, contact [risingprofessionals@gmail.com](mailto:risingprofessionals@gmail.com), or go to Facebook, at [www.facebook.com/risingprofessionals](http://www.facebook.com/risingprofessionals).



### Inside Mount Sinai

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