



UCLA UROLOGY

UPDATE



Above left: UCLA Urology's Dr. H. Albin Gritsch transplanted the kidney of Evan Beier's mother Alison into her then-2½-year-old son Evan (shown with his father) in 2012. Above right: Evan, now 8, pictured with his family, was chosen as an honorary captain at a UCLA basketball game in recognition of his positive attitude and perseverance.

Young Patient Overcomes the Odds, Inspires Others

Eight-year-old Evan Beier tells his UCLA Urology physicians that he will one day be elected president of the United States. Based on his positive attitude, can-do spirit and ability to overcome the odds that have been against him since birth, no one is about to disagree.

Alison Beier and Daniel Benner went to their 21-week ultrasound appointment with no hint that anything could be wrong. “We were joking that we needed to make sure the baby has 10 fingers and 10 toes,” Ms. Beier recalls. The news they received came as a shock. Their son had kidney failure and the absence of a bladder. They were told his low amniotic fluid levels would preclude him from developing lungs, and that he would not survive to leave the

hospital. Nonetheless, the couple decided to go through with the pregnancy.

Evan was 3 pounds, 10 ounces when he was born at 32 weeks gestation. In addition to kidney failure and a non-functioning urinary tract, he had skeletal and limb abnormalities. He spent the first 168 days of his life in the hospital, during which he endured 10 surgeries

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Evan Beier says he intends to one day be elected president of the United States. Those who know him aren't about to suggest he won't.

continued from cover

and multiple complications. Too small initially for a kidney transplant, he was placed on dialysis, which was initially unsuccessful. Ultimately, the family went to UCLA, where a host of specialists, including urologists, vascular surgeons, radiologists and nephrologists, helped Evan through an initial phase of dialysis leading to a kidney transplant and urinary reconstruction.

Dr. Jennifer Singer, UCLA Urology clinical professor, first met Evan when he was a year old and his mother brought him in for a second-opinion evaluation; Dr. Singer has provided Evan's pediatric urology care ever since. "Alison made an immediate impression on me as a mother who had done her homework," Dr. Singer recalls. "She was bright, well informed, strong and motivated to do whatever was necessary for Evan to live a normal life. The path wouldn't be easy, but she took on each new challenge with grace and amazing strength."

In March 2012, the UCLA kidney transplant team, under the leadership of UCLA Urology's

Dr. H. Albin Gritsch, transplanted one of Alison Beier's kidneys into her then-2½-year-old son. Six months later, Dr. Singer and her pediatric urology colleagues surgically created a urinary system into which they connected Evan's transplanted kidney. While his first kidney initially worked well, it failed a year later, so in December 2013 Evan underwent a second transplant, this time receiving a kidney from his mother's cousin.

Even after the successful second transplant, Evan continues to face significant medical and physical challenges. He has undergone more than 40 surgeries at UCLA, along with numerous non-surgical procedures — displaying a perseverance through it all that resulted in his being recognized as an honorary captain at a UCLA basketball game in a halftime ceremony last year. "This is a family that would not give up, and our pediatric urology and kidney transplant teams, as well as other services at UCLA, have been privileged to be able to help them through a very challenging congenital abnormality," Dr. Gritsch says. "Evan is a miraculous kid, with a tremendous amount of will, good nature and ambition."

"Most infants would not have survived Evan's congenital anomalies," Dr. Singer says. "But Evan is a survivor who has never demonstrated anything other than an exuberance for life. He is extremely bright and personable. He is always the life of the party in my clinic waiting room, entertaining other children and all of the staff. He is an inspiration to anyone lucky enough to know him."

"Evan is a survivor who has never demonstrated anything other than an exuberance for life."

Alison Beier says she and her husband never treated their son or his condition as if they were a burden. "I've never cried when he was in the room — even when we weren't sure he was going to make it, I always waited until I went outside the room before falling apart," she says. "And so he doesn't see his life as that different from anybody else's. He knows he's medically fragile, but this is a boy who is full of joy. When he experiences limitations in one area, he finds a way to succeed elsewhere."

Letter from the Chair



For many of us, the holiday season is a time of reflection as we pause, take time away from our daily tasks, and consider what's most important in our lives. It's a time for appreciating what we have, and for reaching out to assist those who are less fortunate as we seek to make the world a better place.

*Donors bring untold
benefits to patients
and families they will
never meet.*

If you think about it, though, in the field of medicine the concepts of giving and appreciation are front and center throughout the year. At UCLA Urology, we devote ourselves on a daily basis to providing compassionate care for our patients. We offer our knowledge about disease to diagnose those who are sick, and apply what we know about evidence-based, state-of-the-art treatments to bring healing, in some cases without compensation when it's for individuals who couldn't otherwise afford it. As a leading research institution, we seek to benefit current and future patients at UCLA and beyond through discoveries that can lead to better therapies and cures for urologic diseases. And equally important, we devote time to teaching the next generation of physicians and researchers in our training programs.

But giving in medicine is by no means a one-way street. Although our patients hope to benefit from the care they receive at UCLA Urology, they are also contributing to advances in the care provided to future patients — whether it's through their participation in clinical trials for cutting-edge therapies, providing evidence for the most effective applications of established treatments, or allowing for the education of trainees who learn under the guidance of renowned faculty. And many appreciative patients and family members who have the means take giving a step further, making generous donations to UCLA Urology to ensure that this cycle continues.

In an era of diminished public funding, UCLA Urology is more dependent than ever on the generosity of private philanthropists. By providing funding that advances our research, training and clinical efforts, donors to our department bring untold benefits to current and future patients and families they will never meet. As I reflect this holiday season on what's important, I want to express my gratitude for the altruistic acts of giving by our UCLA Urology supporters.

❖ **Mark S. Litwin, MD, MPH**
Professor and Chair, UCLA Urology

Laser Treatment for Vaginal Symptoms

Urologic conditions affect people across the life spectrum. In each issue of the UCLA Urology Update we discuss a urologic condition and how it can be addressed.

As many as half of the nearly 64 million post-menopausal women in the U.S. will suffer from bothersome changes in their vaginal health, often as a result of decreasing natural estrogen levels and the thinning of vaginal wall tissue. For these women, along with many breast cancer survivors and women who undergo a hysterectomy, symptoms can include vaginal dryness, sensitivity, burning, irritation and itching, as well as pain during intercourse and urinary problems — any of which can have a significant quality of life impact.

The MonaLisa Touch is a simple, non-invasive FDA-approved treatment that can reduce these symptoms. The treatment delivers gentle laser energy to the vaginal wall tissue to promote a healing response through the generation of new collagen, elastin and youthful blood supply. Through an approach similar to what has been used for years by plastic surgeons and dermatologists to revitalize skin in the face and neck, the MonaLisa Touch regenerates and restores vaginal function. The procedure is painless and done in the doctor's office without any need for anesthesia, lasting approximately 5-10 minutes. A typical treatment course for optimal results

is three sessions, six weeks apart — though many women begin to experience improvement after the first treatment.

The MonaLisa Touch treatment is appropriate for any woman who is experiencing the above-mentioned vaginal symptoms. Women may first try vaginal estrogen cream, and then move on to the laser treatment if that is not successful; however, the MonaLisa Touch can also be used as a first-line treatment for these symptoms. In addition, some women — particularly those who have been treated for breast cancer — are unable to use estrogen cream because of the associated breast cancer risk. For these women, the MonaLisa Touch offers a non-hormonal solution for their vaginal symptoms. The laser treatment is also being studied for potential use in reducing recurrent urinary tract infections after menopause.

Z. Chad Baxter, MD, UCLA Urology assistant professor and a specialist in female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgery, offers the MonaLisa Touch treatment at UCLA Urology Santa

Monica, and can consult with patients on the best treatment plan for them. Thanks to a generous donor family that provided the device, the treatment is available at a lower cost than it would otherwise require.

For more information, visit www.uclaurology.com. To make an appointment, call (310) 794-7700.



Kudos

Richard Ehrlich, MD, UCLA Urology professor emeritus, presented “A Family Story of Autism” at the UCLA Conference on Art, Neuroscience, and Psychiatry.

Isla Garraway, MD, PhD, UCLA Urology associate professor, led a team that was one of eight groups chosen by the Prostate Cancer Foundation to receive a \$1 million 2017 Challenge Award. The Challenge Awards support teams of scientists worldwide conducting groundbreaking research that supports potential breakthrough treatments for prostate cancer patients. Dr. Garraway's research focuses on characterizing the cells of origin in prostate cancer, mechanisms of metastatic progression, and multiplatform prostate cancer profiling.

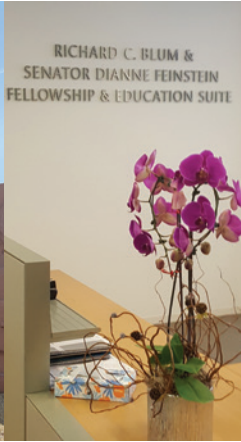
Kathy Huen, MD, UCLA Urology resident, won first place in the American Urological Association Western Section's history essay contest for her essay entitled “The First Filmed Prostatectomy, 1917: 100 Years of Movies in Urological Education.” She also had a manuscript of the same name published in the journal *Urology*.

Ja-Hong Kim, MD, associate professor in UCLA Urology's Division of Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery, was selected to participate in the 2018 UC Women's Initiative for Professional Development. Dr. Kim will be joining a select group of mid-career women made up of staff and faculty/academic personnel from across the University of California system. The program, sponsored by the UC President's Office and the Systemwide Advisory Committee on the Status of Women, is designed to elevate women in leadership at the university.

Nishant D. Patel, MD, UCLA Urology assistant professor, published “Computerized Tomography Based Diagnosis of Visceral Obesity and Hepatic Steatosis Is Associated with Low Urine pH,” which was highlighted on the cover of the November 2017 issue of the journal *Urology*.



Philanthropy Helps Department Fulfill its Mission



As the following examples attest, philanthropic supporters of UCLA Urology are making a huge impact on the department's research and programs — and in doing so, touching the lives of countless patients and their families. Following are examples taken from a long list of generous gifts and pledges made for the 2017 season.

Dr. Ray and Mrs. Ghada Irani (Dr. Irani pictured above left) have made a generous contribution in support of the UCLA Department of Urology. Their gift will be shared with the UCLA Division of Nephrology to support the UCLA Kidney Transplant Program, under the discretion of **Drs. H. Albin Gritsch** and **Gabriel Danovitch**. Funds will be used to develop a cutting-edge program designed to improve living kidney donors' experiences within the healthcare system and enhance access to follow-up care.

Jeff Milewsky (above, second from left), a motorcycling enthusiast, turned his love of riding into an opportunity for philanthropy. Mr. Milewsky rode his motorcycle more than 16,000 miles in four-and-a-half months, raising awareness and money for cancer research. After finishing his cross-country ride, he donated the money he had raised to the UCLA Department of Urology. UCLA Urology continues to be a global leader in research, diagnosis, and treatment for urological diseases. The department consistently ranks highly in *U.S. News & World Report's* annual survey. The UCLA

Urological Fund focuses on the department's educational programs. Improved education and training for residents and fellows provides an opportunity for advanced clinical and basic research, ultimately leading to improved patient care and outcomes.

William and Pamela Wicker recently supported **Dr. Shlomo Raz** in the UCLA Urology Division of Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery through a generous gift. To date, Dr. Raz and his team have performed approximately 1,500 mesh removals, making UCLA the No. 1 center in the United States for this procedure. Thanks to the thoughtful philanthropy of Mr. and Mrs. Wicker, Dr. Raz and his team are able to advance their studies into mesh complications using leading-edge research techniques that include confocal microscopy, staining of the bacteria in the mesh, and DNA analysis. Through a series of studies on the effects of mesh contamination, Dr. Raz and his team concluded that surgical mesh excision accompanied by implanting a strip of the patient's own tissue to rebuild the damaged pelvic organ can be accomplished safely, with a low rate of major complications.

The UCLA Institute of Urologic Oncology (IUO) has received a generous contribution from **Richard C. Blum and Senator Dianne Feinstein** (above center). The IUO, under the leadership of **Arie Beldegrun, MD**, brings together a multidisciplinary team of scientists and physicians to develop leading-edge therapies for the treatment

of prostate, kidney, bladder, and testicular cancers. Disciplines include urologic oncology, medical oncology, diagnostic and interventional radiology, pathology, nursing, basic sciences, and clinical trials.

The Harry and Florence Sloan Foundation (Sloans pictured above, second from right) made a \$3 million contribution to support the UCLA Institute of Urologic Oncology (IUO). The foundation's vital support enhances the IUO's four pillars of success: personalization, integration, innovation, and expertise. Under the leadership of **Arie Beldegrun, MD, Stuart Holden, MD, and Mark S. Litwin, MD, MPH**, the IUO is poised to make a significant impact in the detection, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of urologic cancers. In honor of the foundation's generosity, a research suite in the IUO is now named the Harry and Florence Sloan Innovation and Clinical Trials Suite. This suite will provide physicians and physician-scientists in the IUO with the necessary research tools to transcend traditional boundaries and guide the world's understanding of urologic cancer.

Dr. Ronald and Beth Dozoretz (above right) are supporting the UCLA Institute of Urologic Oncology (IUO) with a \$1 million pledge to assist the efforts of **Arie Beldegrun, MD**, IUO director. Since its inception in 2008, the IUO has been a renowned multidisciplinary cancer center. With the meaningful support of Dr. and Mrs. Dozoretz, the IUO will continue to thrive as a world leader in translational and biotechnological research in urologic cancers.

John Corman, MD



Dr. John Corman wears multiple hats as a urologist at Virginia Mason Medical Center and clinical professor of urology at the University of Washington School of Medicine — clinician, teacher, administrator and researcher. And in every facet of his work, Dr. Corman draws inspiration from the years he spent as a UCLA Urology resident, from 1992 to 1998.

Dr. Corman spends approximately half of his time seeing primarily bladder and prostate cancer patients as a urologic oncologist, during which he also teaches residents and fellows through Virginia Mason's and the University of Washington's training programs. He also serves as medical director for the hospital's operating and procedure rooms, and conducts clinical research. "I enjoy the diversity of responsibilities," Dr. Corman says. "I love taking care of patients; I find the operational challenges of managing the operating rooms fulfilling; and I really enjoy the combination of teaching and research activities."

The foundation for much of Dr. Corman's work was established at UCLA, he says. During Dr. Corman's research year as a UCLA Urology resident, he studied under the late Dr. Eli Sercarz, a renowned immunologist who sparked Dr. Corman's interest in immunotherapy, which continues to be a focus of his research. As an administrator — previously as director of the Virginia Mason Medical Center Cancer Institute, and now as medical director of the hospital's operating rooms — Dr. Corman also applies lessons learned from UCLA Urology mentors. "They showed me how to find the right balance between building programs and seeking solutions: providing excellent care for patients while also finding better ways to do our work," he says. And in helping to grow a residency and fellowship program at his institution, Dr. Corman says, "I look back and ask, 'How can we make it like UCLA's?' I take a lot of pleasure in carrying forth that tradition for the next generation."

Dr. Corman says that in addition to being taught how to operate and take care of complicated cases as a UCLA Urology resident, he learned how to think scientifically and to strive to remain a step ahead of the current standard of care, always seeking to innovate and improve upon the state of the art.

The time spent as a UCLA Urology resident also left him with relationships that remain vital. "Some of my closest friends are the people I first met when I was at UCLA," Dr. Corman says. "I was privileged to make lifelong friendships with people whom I call regularly to review complicated cases. By the time you conclude your urology training at UCLA, you are close colleagues with a huge number of national experts. Having a network like that is invaluable."

"John and I have remained the closest of friends since we first met at UCLA as trainees 25 years ago," says Steven E. Lerman, MD, UCLA Urology pediatric urologist. "He stands alone as the most balanced surgeon I have known to date — technically gifted, clinically astute, and a dedicated family man. UCLA is fortunate to be able to call Dr. Corman 'one of ours.'"



Peter and Cam Starrett

When Peter Starrett received a phone call from UCLA Urology chair Dr. Mark S. Litwin about a novel funding opportunity, he was more than willing to listen.

Mr. Starrett and his extended family have had a series of outstanding experiences with the UCLA Health system. A little more than five years ago, Mr. Starrett's sister-in-law learned she had stage 4 melanoma, a diagnosis with a low survival rate. She enrolled in a UCLA clinical trial of a new immunotherapy drug and today is cancer-free. Not long after that, Mr. Starrett's grandnephew was born with a potentially fatal malabsorption syndrome known as short gut. Again, thanks to UCLA's expertise in caring for this rare condition, he was treated successfully and more than three years later is a thriving child.

When he was diagnosed with prostate cancer four years ago, Mr. Starrett went to UCLA Urology. After exploring the options, he ultimately opted for surgery, which proved successful. "I've been so impressed with the patient-friendly approach at UCLA, both for me and my family, and of course we couldn't be more pleased with these results," he says.

After the surgery, Mr. Starrett and his wife, Cam, decided to show their appreciation through generous donations, supporting both the research of Dr. Robert E. Reiter, UCLA Urology professor and director of UCLA's Prostate Cancer Program; and, at the request of Dr. Litwin, the UCLA Urology Residency Program.

Approximately two years later, Dr. Litwin called Mr. Starrett about a new type of endowed chair he hoped to establish within UCLA Urology in support of a faculty member particularly interested in education within the department and across the medical school. "Mark made a very compelling case on the need for funding to support the education of the next generation of doctors and researchers," Mr. Starrett says. "I talked to Cam about it, and we decided it was an easy decision, given our gratitude and how strongly we believe in the department's work."

The holder of the inaugural Peter Starrett Chair in Medical Education, Dr. Jennifer Singer, says the support from the endowment enables her to dedicate protected time to focus on the educational activities she and her colleagues provide for fellows, residents, and medical students. "In this role, I am committed to furthering our educational programs in support of our young trainees," Dr. Singer says. "Educational approaches to teaching are evolving rapidly, driven by the burgeoning fields of information and education technology, and we have to keep up in order to be effective. With the charitableness of donors like Peter and Cam, we now have the time to develop and implement novel educational programs for the next generation of urological providers."

Endowed Chairs Provide Stable Funding, Flexibility, Prestige



UCLA Urology endowed chair holders include (l. to r.) Drs. Leonard S. Marks, Arie Beldegrun, Robert Reiter and Jennifer Singer.

Among the best ways to ensure a lasting legacy as a UCLA Urology supporter is through the establishment of an endowed chair. An endowment is a gift in which the fund's principal remains intact, while income and growth from the principal are used for a stated purpose — typically to support research or teaching. This allows the fund to be used in perpetuity. It also provides tremendous flexibility to the faculty member who holds the position. UCLA Urology currently has nine endowed chairs, three of which were established recently (see accompanying list).

At a time when public funding is less stable than ever before, endowments serve as powerful tools to attract scholars and teachers of distinction and retain gifted faculty members, as well as ensure that they can pursue innovative endeavors in research and education by giving them protected time to focus on academic priorities. With the continuity of funding ensured, for example, a distinguished faculty member has the flexibility to plan long-term research and the freedom to explore promising new areas, often allowing the faculty member to provide the proof of concept needed to secure funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

“Having an endowed chair — especially in the name of Jean deKernion, my friend, inspiration, and mentor — has provided me a platform from which to launch major programs at UCLA,” says Leonard S. Marks, MD, the Jean B. deKernion, MD, Chair in Urology. “The new programs, targeted prostate biopsy and active surveillance of certain prostate cancers, have saved lives for some and preserved quality of life for many. A total of \$5.6 million in research funding

from the NIH has been devoted to these programs since inception.”

Beyond the financial support, an endowed chair serves to validate the importance of the chair holder's work, bringing a significant measure of prestige both inside and outside the institution. “This is one of the greatest honors one can achieve in a career in academic medicine,” says Jennifer Singer, MD, the Peter Starrett Chair in Medical Education (see Donor Spotlight on page 6). “I cannot express how fortunate and honored I feel to be the inaugural holder of this chair.”

UCLA Urology Endowed Chairs

- ❖ Bing Chair in Urologic Research
- ❖ Jean B. deKernion, MD Chair in Urology
- ❖ Carol & Roy Doumani Chair in Urologic Oncology
- ❖ Carrie L. & Henry Alvin Meinhardt Chair for Kidney Cancer Research
- ❖ Henry E. Singleton Chair in Urology
- ❖ Spielberg Family Chair in Urologic Oncology
- ❖ Fran & Ray Stark Foundation Chair in Urology
- ❖ Peter Starrett Chair in Medical Education
- ❖ Judith & Robert Winston Chair in Pediatric Urology



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U.S. News & World Report's
UCLA Health hospitals in
Westwood and Santa Monica placed
No. 1 in Los Angeles,
No. 2 in California and
No. 7 in the nation in the 2017–18
U.S. News and World Report rankings.



UCLA Urology: #4 in the Nation
Highest Ranked in Los Angeles



The Men's Clinic at UCLA

DID YOU KNOW?

Worldwide, average sperm counts of men are declining significantly. While researchers don't know the precise cause, it is believed that environmental factors, increasing obesity rates and stress are all contributing to this decline. Exercising regularly, sleeping more than seven hours a night, consuming a diet low in sugar and high in fresh vegetables and fruits, and reducing stress can all improve sperm counts. For couples trying to conceive, a semen analysis, offered at the Men's Clinic at UCLA, is a simple procedure that can provide important information.

The Men's Clinic at UCLA is a comprehensive, multidisciplinary health and wellness center located in Santa Monica. For more information or to make an appointment, call (310) 794-7700.



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