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Cleveland Clinic Florida’s *Excellence in Medical Education and Research* is an annual publication of Cleveland Clinic Florida’s Development Office. This publication is a summary of Cleveland Clinic Florida’s Graduate Medical Education and Research program during the 2010-2011 Academic Year.
A Message from Dr. Fernandez

One of the four cornerstones of the mission of Cleveland Clinic is to continue to develop new and better methods of diagnosis and management of disease. This 90-year old mission continues today at Cleveland Clinic, where physicians and scientists have the unique ability to consistently develop and apply knowledge to a myriad of new innovations. At Cleveland Clinic Florida, patient care, clinical research and medical education are intertwined and interdependent. This commitment to improvements in patient care, enhancements in medical education and breakthroughs in clinical research have made Cleveland Clinic Florida one of the finest medical institutions in the United States.

We devote time, talent and resources to the advancement of education. In the late 1990s, the federal government passed the Omnibus Reconciliation Act, which severely limited the funding of postgraduate medical education. Even so, our medical education program is an expense we are willing to incur because of the positive impact the program has on the care and services we provide. Through the generous philanthropic support of our patients, we are able to augment a portion of the program’s expenses. In the future, we hope that increased philanthropic support will enable us to expand the number of student physicians we accept and the number of accredited areas of study.

I feel honored to be a part of this extraordinary group of committed individuals and invite you to read about our work over the past year in the pages that follow.

Bernardo B. Fernandez Jr., MD
Chief Executive Officer
Cleveland Clinic Florida

“Graduate medical education has been an integral component of Cleveland Clinic’s mission “to provide better care of the sick, investigation into their problems and further education of those who serve” since the hospital’s founding in 1921. Cleveland Clinic Florida recognizes the importance and value of graduate medical education programs, which provide the skills physicians need to administer to their patients.”

— Bernardo B. Fernandez Jr., MD
Chief Executive Officer
An interview with Steven D. Wexner, MD, FACS, FRCS, FRCS(Ed), FASCRS, FACG, Chief Academic Officer

How do the staff physicians at Cleveland Clinic Florida view the Graduate Medical Education program?

We are very proud of our tradition of teaching the doctors who will become the world’s leading educators and research innovators. Given the catalyst of our superlative faculty, it is no surprise that these bright young individuals blossom into pacesetters in medicine and surgery. Cleveland Clinic physicians are proud to be a part of this success, advancing medical knowledge and teaching future generations of healthcare professionals.

What is the role of research at Cleveland Clinic Florida?

The several hundred research studies that have been successfully undertaken in Florida have had a direct beneficial impact on the lives of countless patients around the world. Numerous advances have led to significant improvements in both outcomes and quality of life. The Division of Research and Education maintains a high degree of international acclaim for the number and quality of research protocols.

Clinical research is essential to Cleveland Clinic Florida physicians. Since 1988, they have conducted more than 300 clinical trials comparing the effectiveness of various treatment methods on patients. These trials are often the final steps of research projects that began years earlier in the laboratory. Publication of research findings is one way by which physicians share their knowledge with their colleagues and enable the global advancement of patient care.

Are there any plans to expand the program?

Cleveland Clinic Florida is proud to announce that the Residency Review Committee in Surgery has approved the accreditation of a new General Surgery Residency Program beginning July 1, 2012. This residency is a five-year program with six residents in each of the first two years and three residents in each of the subsequent three years for a total of 21 residents. The new program enables us to offer a comprehensive medical education program where we will train young surgeons to achieve a high level of clinical competence and provide innovative knowledge of surgical science.
Mark K. Grove, MD

Board of Directors, Cleveland Clinic Alumni Association

The Cleveland Clinic has a long tradition of graduate medical education. Within a year of opening its doors in 1921, the fledgling Cleveland Clinic Foundation already had four doctors pursuing postgraduate training. In the ensuing 90 years, thousands of physicians, surgeons and scientists have completed their training at the Cleveland Clinic.

Cleveland Clinic Florida, with a clearly-defined objective of replicating the successes of the Cleveland Clinic model of medicine here in Florida, has also embraced the tenet of “education of those who serve” from its inception. A fellowship in Colorectal Surgery was approved within a few months of Cleveland Clinic Florida’s opening. Currently, twenty Departments within the institution have supported residency or fellowship training programs. Looking forward, in 2012, Cleveland Clinic Florida will welcome residents into the first training program in General Surgery in Broward County.

In the last two decades, nearly 700 physicians have completed clinical and research training in the various graduate medical education programs at Cleveland Clinic Florida. Graduates of these programs will continue to provide expert clinical care, further our knowledge of disease processes and strive to advance treatments for patients not only here in Florida but across the United States and, indeed, throughout the world. Developing the next generation of physicians and surgeons will remain an integral part of Cleveland Clinic Florida’s mission.
Research in the biomedical field is commonly defined as the diligent inquiry or examination of data, reports and observations in a search for facts or principles.

The late Hungarian-born biochemist Albert Szent-Györgyi (1893-1986), who emigrated to the U.S. in 1947, described the field of biomedical science research in a much more poetic way: “Research is to see what everybody else has seen and to think what nobody else has thought.”

Research in healthcare occurs in a variety of areas, including professional practice, environmental issues affecting health, vitality, treatments, theory development, healthcare economics, investigation of pathophysiology of disease and many others. The advances made in each of these areas have led to a myriad of benefits in terms of improvements in longevity, quality of life, and detection and diagnosis of disease, as well as significant strides forward in treatment and intervention.

Since Cleveland Clinic’s founding in 1921, research has always been one of its core pillars. Numerous discoveries that have revolutionized the diagnosis and treatment of a variety of medical conditions have originated at Cleveland Clinic. One of the best examples is the design and performance of the first coronary bypass surgery in 1967.

Cleveland Clinic Florida has followed in the tradition of the main campus in Ohio, with the first research fellow entering the colorectal program in 1989. Since that time, hundreds of doctors from all over the world have come to Cleveland Clinic Florida seeking to get involved in top research projects in both the clinical and the basic fields. The number of research fellows varies between 20 to 30 at any given time. Their research projects encompass a wide variety of topics that range from the evaluation of new drugs and devices to investigation of the basic mechanisms of carcinogenesis responsible for the development of human cancer. At the present time, there are approximately 200 active studies that have been approved by our Institutional Review Committee. Significant advances in diagnosis and treatment made exclusively or in part at Cleveland Clinic Florida have been in the areas of bariatric surgery, fecal incontinence, rectal cancer, inflammatory bowel disease, pulmonary hypertension, diabetes, infectious diseases and many others. After completion of research projects at Cleveland Clinic Florida, our alumni have ascended to leadership positions in academic medicine throughout the world.
Research fellows are expected to present their work at national and international meetings as well as submit manuscripts for publication to major medical journals. They have very capably maintained and exceeded this expectation similar to prior fellows, whose research projects have been published in leading journals and presented at some of the most prestigious scientific forums throughout the world.

Once a year Cleveland Clinic Florida hosts “research week,” which is an excellent forum for our fellows to present their work. During this event, abstracts are entered into a competition and the best ones are presented either as posters or oral presentations.

Although some of our research fellows have external funding, many of them lack a source of financial support which precludes successful completion of their intended research projects at Cleveland Clinic Florida. In most cases, research projects require significant infrastructure, including chemical reagents, laboratory equipment and technical support. This material foundation for research also requires funding, which has become progressively more difficult to procure through industry, foundation and governmental sources. Accordingly, we have become significantly more reliant upon philanthropic gifts from patients and friends who share our vision of continuing to make significant improvements in our evaluation and management of healthcare issues.

Without charitable donations, continued advances will be precluded. Through philanthropic support at Cleveland Clinic, many of the thoughts and ideas now merely germinal in the minds of our young researchers may come to fruition, revolutionizing the field of medicine as they morph into reality.

“Research is to see what everybody else has seen and to think what nobody else has thought.”
— Albert Szent-Gyorgyi

“In the hands of the discoverer, medicine becomes a heroic art.”
— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Some of the current research projects being undertaken by our fellows include:

1. IRB 8995 Echocardiographic Comparison of Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy (HCM). Features in Hispanic and Non-Hispanic (Chart review)
2. IRB 9217 Postpartum Weight Gain following Bariatric Surgery
3. IRB 8529 Genomic Imprinting and Colorectal Cancer (Sponsor: National Institutes of Health)
4. RB 9206 Colorectal Cancer Stem Cells as a Predictor for Lymphatic Metastasis in Locally Advanced Rectal Cancer (Chart review)
5. IRB 9198 Patient expectations and resources in irritable bowel syndrome
6. IRB 8951 Focus Cognitive Ancillary Study (Sponsor: National Institutes of Health)
7. IRB 9124 A Multi-center study to validate a condition-specific measure of sexual health in women with pelvic floor disorders
Current Active Research Projects
as of December 2010

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<td>Vascular Medicine</td>
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“Cleveland Clinic Florida has the finest doctors I have ever met. The quality of the work they do both clinically and surgically is above anything I have ever experienced. My wife Fay and I attend graduations, financially support the programs and will continue because they are the doctors and surgeons of today and the future.”

— Richard Kline who, along with his wife Fay, are Leadership Board members and benefactors
MEDICINE TRAINING AT CLEVELAND CLINIC FLORIDA

Internal Medicine Residency Program

José Muniz, MD, Director

Cleveland Clinic Florida’s Internal Medicine Residency Program was established in 1996 and there are currently 30 residents participating in the program. Academically, the Internal Medical residents are very successful and have the highest passing rate for the American Board of Internal Medicine in Florida. In fact, two residents had perfect scores on the ABIM examinations this year.

In August, 2011 the Internal Medicine team received the final result from the ACGME site visit where the program was commended. It is a high achievement and very few programs are able to receive that kind of recommendation. I am very proud of our team and the success is the result of a combined effort from both residents and faculty.

Internal Medicine residents are very involved in research to advance medical knowledge, and every year, residents present multiple publications and presentations at local and national meetings. In spite of being a five-year, fully accredited program by the ACGME, the internal medicine program lacks funding because of the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid denial. The expense of the program is undertaken by Cleveland Clinic Florida and the philanthropic support of donors. We are very grateful to all who allow us to continue to provide world-class health care and education.

Number of Residents
30

Number of years to complete program
3

Number of 2011 Graduates
12

“We are a family. Dr. Muniz is a father figure for all of us. Education is the priority here. Dr. Muniz is always there for reading club at 7 a.m. without fail. He and all other attending physicians have an immense wealth of knowledge.”— Chief Resident Vishal Mundra, MD

“We each of us will accept as our reward...the comfort, and usefulness and prolongation of human life.”

— George Crile, Sr., M.D. 
One of the Four Founders of Cleveland Clinic
Internal Medicine Residency Program

Darby Sider, MD, Associate Director

“A Typical Day”

Internal Medicine residents at Cleveland Clinic Florida work hard on a daily basis to learn, to improve their diagnostic skills and to develop their critical thinking. A typical day begins with first-year residents (interns) seeing patients in preparation for teaching rounds with the attending physician, the senior resident and our medical and pharmacy students. Throughout the morning, all patients are seen by the group; their diagnostic tests and plan of care are discussed and teaching points are reviewed. After teaching rounds are complete, as time permits, particular topics are presented by the students and house staff to each other and to the attending.

If a resident is on an elective rotation, their morning begins at 7 a.m. with Dr. Muniz reviewing the Internal Medicine Knowledge series. They then spend most of the day with the medicine specialists consulting on hospitalized patients as well as evaluating patients in the Clinic.

At noon each day, an hour-long didactic teaching session is given by one of our faculty followed by a one-hour interactive conference during which interesting patients or simulation cases are presented and discussed among the group. For the remainder of the afternoon, the residents visit the hospitalized patients, review tests results, consult with the specialists and contact referring physicians. When residents are “on-call” every sixth day, they admit up to 10 patients to the hospital under the supervision of the attending physician. They obtain a comprehensive history, perform a complete physical exam and formulate a plan of care for each patient. Residents spend up to 30 hours in the hospital caring for patients before going home to rest, only to return the following morning for daily rounds.

“In illness, the physician is a parent; in convalescence, a friend; when health is restored, a guardian.”

— Brahmanic Saying
Internal Medicine/Geriatrics Fellowship Program
Jerry O. Ciocon, MD, Director
Chairman, the Krupa Department of Geriatrics

Now located in the beautiful Krupa Center, the Geriatric Department supports one fellow each year for clinical research on relevant and challenging issues, and trains doctors to provide the best and optimal care for our aging population. Led by Dr. Jerry O. Ciocon, the 2010-2011 year Fellow Renato Samala, MD has done several research projects, including outcomes of hip and knee replacement surgery, and optimal drug use for nursing home patients. The Systematic Medication and Assessment Review and Tracking (SMART), may become a landmark study for use of medications in nursing home settings. Dr. Samala also had two presentations at the national meeting of the American Geriatrics Society in Maryland. Upon completion of his Geriatric fellowship in June, he will start a Palliative and Hospice care fellowship at Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, Ohio. Dr. Samala is not the first of the department Fellows to continue with Cleveland Clinic. Dr. Erwin Loquias completed his fellowship in 2009 and was then offered a position in the department. In July 2011, Dr. Shelly Sabillo will also join us as the newest Geriatric Medicine fellow.

“My training has been very rewarding. I’ve rotated in a wide variety of relevant subspecialties, been taught by truly world-class doctors, taken care of older adults in diverse settings, had four manuscripts accepted for publication, and I am set to present two posters in a national conference. To top it all off, Dr. Ciocon has been more than a program director. He has been a great teacher, a basketball teammate, a role model, an inspiration and a brother.”
— Renato V. Samala, MD, Geriatrics Fellow

“Cleveland Clinic Florida is conducting important research in the area of geriatric conditions, Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s. My late husband John and I believed in the importance of supporting the research and fellowship programs in these areas because the advances they make improve patients’ lives, and the knowledge is shared around the world. Philanthropy is critical in advancing medical knowledge, and I can think of no better place where this is happening than at Cleveland Clinic Florida. Their physicians and staff are truly remarkable.”
— Margaret Krupa, Leadership Board Member and Benefactor
An interview with Vishal Mundra, MD, Internal Medicine Chief Resident

“Why did you choose to attend this program at Cleveland Clinic Florida?”

This was my number one choice because the education is excellent; it is like a family and people know you. Every specialist knows each resident by name. This is not the case in bigger programs.

“Can you tell a story about an experience you had with a patient that was surprising or inspiring to you?”

Three months into my internship, I had a patient who was really sick and there was no chance of recovery. For me as an intern, hospice and comfort care were new concepts. There was no family of the patient, just a friend. I called this friend on the weekend from my home and explained that the patient’s prognosis was not good and that we would take comfort measures. A month later, she wrote a two-page letter to my program director, Dr. Muniz, where she explained how impressed she was that I had called her on the weekend when I was “off duty” to let her know about her friend. She greatly appreciated the personal follow-through and compassion.

“After spending three years here, what have you noticed about Cleveland Clinic Florida and its residency program that sets it apart?”

There is a perfect balance of autonomy and supervision here which makes excellent residents. I am going to miss Cleveland Clinic Florida, not just the institution, but I’ll miss the people. The Internal Medicine residency program is not just work for me; it is one of the best programs in the country, and I am proud to have been a part of it.
Cardiology Fellowship Program

Craig Asher, MD, Director

The Robert and Suzanne Tomsich Department of Cardiac Surgery and Cardiology at Cleveland Clinic Florida has many achievements in the area of research. Cardiology Fellow Dr. Rodrigo Lago led the way with a first authored review article on “Diabetes and Coronary Artery Disease” that was accepted for publication in the journal Circulation, the premier cardiology journal, as well as an article coauthored on the same topic, also in Circulation. Fellows gave two presentations at the recent American College of Cardiology annual meeting in New Orleans in April 2011. Dr. Ivan Mendoza presented data on “Chagas Disease and Atrial Arrhythmias.” This study received much attention and was reported by various media outlets. Dr. Yordanka Reyna presented her research on “The Association Between Barlow’s Disease (mitral valve prolapse) and High HDL Levels.” Her work was mentored by Dr. Gian Novaro in the Department of Cardiology and the chairpersons at her presentation were two of the world experts in valvular heart disease. Dr. Cesar Bonilla coauthored what will be a highly referenced book chapter on “Cardiac Physical Examination” with Program Director Craig Asher, MD and it will be published later this year in the Cleveland Clinic Board Review Text.

The 2010-2011 academic year was another successful and productive year for the Cleveland Clinic Cardiology Fellowship Program. Six Fellows worked hand in hand with Cleveland Clinic Florida’s cardiology team to advance outcomes and quality of life for patients. The two cardiology senior Fellows received numerous interviews for advanced fellowship positions and both found an ideal match. Dr. Bosede Afolabi will pursue Electrophysiology at the University of Florida in Jacksonville. Dr. Rodrigo Lago will return to Boston for a two-year Interventional Cardiology fellowship focusing on structural heart disease at Massachusetts General Hospital. This is one of the most coveted advanced training programs in the country.

Number of Fellows
6

Number of years to complete program
3

Number of 2011 Graduates
2

Ivan Mendoza, MD, Cardiology Fellow; photo by Nancy Ellison
The Gastroenterology Department and fellowship program have continued their growth and productivity over the past year. Along with the department’s surgical colleagues, the Gastroenterology Department at Cleveland Clinic Florida was ranked 17th in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report* 2010-2011 based on reputation and outcomes. Clinical research productivity continued with studies aimed at improving quality of colonoscopy and other procedures. Second year fellow Einar Lurix recently presented Cleveland Clinic Florida’s experience with double balloon enteroscopy at the American Gastroenterology Association’s annual meeting. Double balloon is an advanced endoscopy procedure that allows visualization of the small bowel. In addition, there were five studies published during the past year, including one focusing on improving the quality and patient satisfaction of colonoscopy and another addressing expectations of colonoscopy among the Hispanic population.

This summer, the faculty increased in numbers while providing additional areas of expertise. Dr. Luis Lara joined the practice, providing expertise in pancreas and islet cell transplantation and Dr. Tolga Erim also joined after concluding an additional year of training in advanced endoscopy at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston. Dr. Erim is a 2010 graduate of Cleveland Clinic Florida’s Gastroenterology Fellowship Program, and we are delighted to produce gastroenterologists of such high quality who return to the institution. The program has graduated five gastroenterologists, throughout its history, who have each passed their board exam on their first attempt.

**Number of Fellows**
4

**Number of years to complete program**
3

**Number of 2011 Graduates**
0

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*Victor and Rita Bertrand have been supporting Cleveland Clinic Florida’s Medical Education program for over 10 years. They understand that the best healthcare occurs in teaching hospitals with innovative academic staff committed to the success of the medical education program. Through the generosity of the Bertrands, they single-handedly support three Gastroenterology physician fellows per year.*

*Rita and Victor Bertrand, Leadership Board members and benefactors*
An interview with Einar Lurix, MD, Gastroenterology Fellow

Why did you choose to attend this program at Cleveland Clinic Florida?

Cleveland Clinic has the highest reputation of any program in the United States. When you walk in the doors, you realize that this is a clean, beautifully maintained facility where patients are well taken care of by their physicians and nurses. The program is very well run. It is such a tight-knit community, the type of place that if you want to consult another specialty, you can go up to their office any time of day to get information or your question answered. Physicians don’t feel bothered; they actually feel honored and privileged to discuss the case.

Can you tell a story about an experience you had with a patient that was surprising or inspiring to you?

There was a case where a young man came in with difficulty breathing at 10 p.m. in the evening. A CT scan of his chest showed a large mass, and the physician knew that something needed to be diagnosed quickly. He called interventional radiology, and the patient was biopsied within half an hour. The pathologist was away on vacation in Hawaii but answered her phone. She said to contact a colleague in pathology at Cleveland Clinic in Ohio, who would be expecting the call. So they called that pathologist and shipped the biopsy sample overnight, and it was read by 6 a.m. the next morning. The patient was in surgery that afternoon. It was a miracle. The speed with which Cleveland Clinic operates and its cohesiveness is what saved this young man’s life.

After spending seven years here, what have you noticed about Cleveland Clinic Florida and/or its residency program that sets it apart?

The Internal Medicine residency program has become something of a legend, an ideal within the internal medicine field. Physicians from all over the country want to train at Cleveland Clinic Florida. Program applications have grown in the last couple of years from under 1,000 applicants to over 2,000, with only 10 spots to fill. In 2010, Cleveland Clinic Florida’s internal medicine program test scores were ranked first out of 485 programs in the nation. That speaks for itself.

“In 2010, Cleveland Clinic Florida’s internal medicine program test scores were No. 1 out of 485 programs in the nation. That speaks for itself.”
— Einar Lurix, MD
Pulmonary Medicine Fellowship Program
Laurence A. Smolley, MD, Director

Cleveland Clinic Florida’s Pulmonary Medical Fellowship Program completed its first year of a two-year program with one Fellow in training.

In spite of a very busy and diversified clinical program, including didactic lectures, clinical conferences and journal clubs, and state-of-the-art training in interventional bronchoscopy, pulmonary hypertension, interstitial lung disease and sleep disorders, this Fellow performed an oral presentation and displayed two posters at the annual meeting of the Society of Thoracic Radiology in St. Louis, Mo., in March.

In July, 2011, two more physicians will join the program and start their two-year pulmonary medicine training fellowship. One will be joining us after finishing the critical care medicine training program at the University of Pittsburgh, while the other has completed the neuro-critical care training program at University of Miami.

The Pulmonary faculty will expand from six to eight attending physicians in September 2011.
The Nephrology Fellowship Program is a two-year ACGME accredited program that began in July of 2004 with capacity to train one Nephrology Fellow accepted per year. The program is focused on clinical training and close interaction with the attending nephrologists within Cleveland Clinic Florida.

During the first year, the fellow rotates through Consulting Nephrology Services, Inpatient and Outpatient Dialysis Services, and Ambulatory Nephrology Clinics. They are also exposed to Renal Pathology, Community Nephrology (private practice experience) and Interventional Radiology, with training in central line placements and renal biopsies (native and transplanted kidneys). During their second year, the fellow rotates in the Transplant Services at the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio, and has six months of Nephrology Research experience.

Nephrology Fellowship Program Snapshot

- 200 applicants per year
- 1 fellowship position per year
- 5 past graduates
- 4 research studies presented in 2011
- 100% passing rate on the Nephrology Board Certification Exam
Neurology Residency Program
Efrain D. Salgado, MD, Director

Cleveland Clinic Florida’s Neurology Residency Program continues to excel in mentoring individuals who are destined to become the outstanding clinical neurologists prepared to deal with the challenges of the next generation.

Approximately 80 percent of the neurology residency graduates pursue postgraduate fellowship training and 100 percent of them secured fellowship positions of their choice in the program of their choice. The two graduates from 2010 secured fellowship positions at world-renowned institutions: one in multiple sclerosis at Harvard’s Brigham and Women’s Program, and the other in electrodiagnostic medicine at the Lahey Clinic in Boston. This year’s graduates will include Cleveland Clinic Florida’s first resident to become a part of the budding neuro-hospitalist movement. The other will pursue fellowship training in EMG at Cleveland Clinic Florida under the tutelage of the nationally regarded authority Virgilio Salanga, MD. Additionally, one of the second-year neurology residents has already secured a neuromuscular fellowship position at his first choice program, Cleveland Clinic in Ohio, under the tutelage of another nationally recognized authority in the field, Kerry Levin, MD.

The program is particularly proud to have awakened and fueled diverse passions in our graduates resulting in postgraduate fellowships in such subspecialty areas as electrodiagnostic medicine, neuro-ophthalmology, movement disorders, neuro-oncology, sleep disorders, epilepsy, pain management, cerebrovascular disease, and multiple sclerosis.

The present group of residents has been exceptionally prolific in research output. Many have already presented their work in either platform presentation form (including one of the first year neurology residents) or poster presentation form at regional and national meetings such as the Florida Society of Neurology and the American Academy of Neurology. Several have already been accepted for publication or have already published their work in electronic or print versions in such highly regarded journals as Neurology and the Annals of Neurology.

These successes have served as an impetus for us to try to expand our program by hiring top-notch clinician/researchers to nurture the ambitions of our trainees, to acquire the technology and resources necessary to meet the demands of the future, and to add more residents to our program to ensure that many people benefit from the services of the best clinical neurologists.

Short Coats Among Us
The Medical Student Program has grown tremendously throughout the years. Students from FIU began rotating with us in April 2011 and are now doing Core Neurology rotations. Neurosurgery and Gastroenterology Research are newly added departments that will be accepting students. In addition, there are over 350 students who recently began their rotation for the current year on August 1, 2011.

Virgilio Salanga, MD; Nestor Galvez, MD; and Neurology Residents
Movement Disorders Fellowship Program

Nestor Galvez, MD, MSC, MHSA, FACP, FAHA, FACA, Director
Chairman, Department of Neurology

Cleveland Clinic Florida has the only residency-training program in Neurology in Broward County and is only one of two such programs south of Tampa. Its Neurology residents consistently rank in the 90 percentile among all residents in the country on the standardized in-service neurology training program test. The purpose of this examination is to provide feedback on how well the residents are educated and to not only highlight the strengths of the program, but weaknesses as well. Our residents obtained their first choice for fellowship training programs, highlighting their desirability in specialized training at other elite institutions. One of the recent neurology graduates, Dr. Alexandra Soriano, will pursue a second fellowship in neuromuscular diseases and electrodiagnostic medicine at Cleveland Clinic Florida and then a second year of neuromuscular diseases at the Hershey Medical Center/Pennsylvania State University. Another graduate, Dr. Roland Ania, is joining the faculty of the newly formed department of Neurology at the Florida International University (FIU) Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine.

continued on next page
Residents and Fellows continue to excel in academics. This year, Dr. John Morren presented two papers, one at the American Academy of Neurology and another at the Movement Disorders Society World Congress in Toronto. The second paper won the best abstract during the Cleveland Clinic Research week and was very well received in Toronto. Similarly, Dr. Raghav Govindarajam presented five different papers during the year at the American Neurological Society, American Association of Neuromuscular Medicine and Electrodiagnosis, American Medical Association, American Headache Society, and the Florida Society of Neurology. Dr. Govindarajam received the 2011 best abstract award at the American Association of Neuromuscular Diseases and Electrodiagnosis (AANEM) and is the recipient of the AANEM Foundation for Research and Education Junior Member Recognition Award. Dr. Camilo Garcia presented a paper at the Diamond Headache Clinic Headache Symposium, which was held in Southern California. Dr. Govindarajam partnered with a senior member of Cleveland Clinic Florida's faculty to create a Movement Disorders section for the upcoming Netter Atlas of Neurology. This is the first time a section of Movement Disorders will be made available using Dr. Netter’s drawings, a classic atlas in medical education with worldwide distribution.

The department continues to provide the best care possible for those persons afflicted with Parkinson's disease and other disorders of motor control, and there is a long-standing fellowship program for those interested in learning and furthering their careers in this field. Many graduating fellows remain with the Florida team, including Ramon Lugo, MD, a recently graduated fellow who is joining the Movement Disorders program at Cleveland Clinic Florida.

The book Uncommon Causes of Movement Disorders, edited by Nestor Galvez-Jimenez, was published by Cambridge University Press in June 2011 and was highlighted during the Movement Disorders Congress. The experience of our center is highlighted in chapters written by members of our program, including fellows and residents and other national and international experts. The team is working on a new book on therapeutics on Parkinson's disease, which will highlight some of the experience accrued in our program.

“A great medical center is more than buildings, people and technology. It is a repository of wisdom, a powerful engine of hope.”

— Two Views, a book of photographs taken at Cleveland Clinic
Electrodiagnostic Medicine Fellowship Program

Virgilio D. Salanga, MD, MS, FAAN, Director
Chairholder, The John & Margaret A. Krupa Chair in Neurology

The endowment fund establishing the John and Margaret Krupa Chair in Neurology was started in November 2001 to “support such activities as the clinical care of patients, clinical research and teaching of residents and fellows at Cleveland Clinic Florida.” Virgilio D. Salanga, MD has been the Chairholder since its inception.

During the past year, proceeds from the endowment fund have been used in the following manner:

1. Fully funded the training of an Electrodiagnostic Medicine Fellow for one year.

2. Partially funded the Chairholder’s activities for one year.
   Dr. Salanga was able to continue his non-clinical work as Department Chairman, Residency Program Director and Electrodiagnostic Medicine Fellowship Program Director through the support of the Endowed Chair. Dr. Salanga is a principal investigator and co-investigator in a number of ongoing clinical trials of various treatments of neurological illnesses, including stroke, Parkinson’s disease and neuropathies.

3. Fully funded the training of a neurodiagnostic technologist for one year.

4. Presently funding on a yearly basis one Preliminary Internal Medicine residency slot, which is a prerequisite to starting a neurology residency.

“Our team is training specialists of the future, the ones who will ultimately have to take care of us and our loved ones and so we strive to be as good as we can in this effort.”
— Virgilio D. Salanga, MD
Colorectal Surgery Research and Education Fellowship Programs

Steven D. Wexner, MD, FACS, FRCS, FRCS(Ed), FASCRS, FACP, Chief Academic Officer

The Department of Colorectal Surgery has maintained fellowships since 1988. During that time, more than 400 surgeons from around the world have spent from six months to five years performing research projects at Cleveland Clinic Florida and subsequently presenting the results of their studies at major national and international forums. In addition, these important findings have been published in over 500 peer-review articles in prestigious journals, book chapters and textbooks. The teachings of the research fellows are widely quoted on a daily basis throughout the world. Many of these individuals now occupy positions as professors of surgery, chairpersons or section heads of colorectal surgery, and residency program directors in both general and colorectal surgery in North America, South and Central America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.

The topics explored and developed by these energetic, intelligent young individuals include inflammatory bowel disease (mucosal ulcerative colitis and Crohn’s), rectal carcinoma, constipation, fecal incontinence, fistulas, adhesions, rectal prolapse and numerous other conditions. Research has been so widespread that virtually every new, innovative technology has been developed to some degree at Cleveland Clinic Florida. These advances include sacral nerve stimulation, artificial bowel sphincter, and stimulated graciloplasty for fecal incontinence, anal and rectal ultrasound respectively, adhesion preventions, laparoscopy for colorectal diseases, methods of resolving postoperative ileus, and techniques of preventing parastomal hernias.

Unfortunately, the current economic climate has made it very difficult for top researchers to spend time with us in Florida performing these investigations. These positions are supported exclusively by philanthropic gifts from our patients and friends. Needless to say, without such advances, the field of colorectal surgery would stagnate. There would be a void in not only our knowledge base, but in our ability to care for our patients if these researchers could no longer study with us. Support of these young investigators as they continue to strive to find better methods of diagnosis and treatment of virtually every colorectal condition is deeply appreciated.
Colorectal Surgery Residency Program

*Eric G. Weiss, MD, FACS, FASCRS, FACG, Director, Designated Institution Official (DIO) & Chairman of Graduate Medical Education*

The Colorectal Surgery Residency Program at Cleveland Clinic Florida continues to be one of the most sought-after residency programs in colorectal surgery in the U.S. Cleveland Clinic Florida is the largest of the 54 residency programs that exist. In addition, it is one of very few programs offering a two-year track that combines clinical research followed by the clinical year.

This year’s graduating class will be going to a number of prestigious institutions and practices, including two in academic practice and two in private practice positions. One graduate will stay on at Cleveland Clinic Florida for further advanced colorectal surgery training.

Additionally, along with providing top care in colorectal surgery, our faculty and residents are highly committed and involved in research and publications. At any one time, our five clinical residents are joined by 10 to 15 research residents who spend between six months and two years in the department. The department’s faculty and residents are present at virtually every national or international meeting, and a vast number of publications continue to be authored on an annual basis.

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<th>Number of Residents</th>
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<td>Number of years to complete program</td>
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<td>Number of 2011 Graduates</td>
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Steven D. Wexner, MD, Chief Academic Officer; Mark B. Rosenberg, PhD, Pres. Of Florida International University, Graduation Key Note Speaker; Eric G. Weiss, MD, DIO and Chairman of Graduate Medical Education
An interview with Marylise Boutros, MD, Colorectal Surgery Fellow

Why did you choose to attend this program at Cleveland Clinic Florida?

Upon completion of General Surgery residency, I was familiar with the basic essentials of colorectal surgery; however, I searched for a program that would set me apart as an academic colorectal specialist. I sought fellowship training that would teach advanced colorectal principles, refine technical skills and provide a solid advanced laparoscopic skill set, and provide the opportunity to do relevant, interesting clinical research. The Department of Colorectal Surgery at Cleveland Clinic Florida has a reputation for being on the forefront of laparoscopy and innovations in colorectal surgery and conducting high-volume, enriching clinical research.

What is one thing that you will take from this program and/or the Cleveland Clinic culture that will set you apart wherever you go next?

Patients come from around the world for care at Cleveland Clinic Florida because the colorectal surgeons work closely with the patient in a methodical manner to find creative solutions to difficult medical problems that may have remained uncorrected elsewhere. The Cleveland Clinic Florida Colorectal Surgery Department continues to improve patient care by consistently assessing and publishing its results and reviewing those of other institutions.

After spending one year here, what have you noticed about Cleveland Clinic Florida and its residency program that sets it apart?

Our colorectal residency program is a well-structured, diversified program developed on a mentorship model. Each fellow spends a total of 10 weeks with each attending surgeon – learning how to manage patients, address clinical problems and perform endoscopic and surgical procedures the same as the attending surgeon. This structure allows for extensive one-on-one learning and discussion. We are very fortunate that our attending surgeons are excellent teachers both in the clinic and the operating room, making this a very rewarding educational model. Accordingly, our attendings, who are national leaders in colorectal surgery, mentor us in our individual career pursuits.
Minimally Invasive Surgery Fellowship Program
Raul J. Rosenthal, MD, FACS, FASMBS, Director, Professor of Surgery and Chairman, Section of Minimally Invasive Surgery, Bariatric and Metabolic Institute

The Bariatric and Metabolic Institute and the Section of Minimally Invasive Surgery are celebrating their 10th anniversary. During the past decade, the Institute has achieved national and international recognition with more than 250 surgeons attending from around the globe. The Institute hosts one of the largest postgraduate courses in Surgery of the Foregut and an annual Resident Course and Allied Healthcare Symposium.

The Institute performs close to 900 minimally invasive surgical procedures on a yearly basis that include, among others, innovative surgeries of the biliary tract, esophagus, stomach and duodenum. These numbers include over 12 FDA trials as well as more than 20 IRB investigational protocols. The Bariatric and Metabolic Institute is the largest in Florida with close to 5,000 bariatric procedures performed since 2000, and it is one of the largest programs in the country. As such, the Bariatric Institute is the only one recognized in the state of Florida as a Center of Excellence in Bariatric and Metabolic Surgery by both accreditation committees, the ACS and ASMB.

The Institute has one of the largest fellowship training programs in Minimally Invasive Surgery in the U.S. and has been representing Cleveland Clinic Florida at major national and international meetings, contributed over 300 peer reviewed manuscripts and more than 100 educational videos and 42 book chapters.

Number of Fellows
4

Number of years to complete program
1

Number of 2011 Graduates
4

Aleksander Bernshteyn, MD, Clinical Fellow; Sergey Terushkin, MD, Clinical Fellow; Raul J. Rosenthal, MD, Bariatric and Minimally Invasive Surgery
Samuel Szomstein, MD, Bariatric and Minimally Invasive Surgery; Flavia Soto, MD, Minimally Invasive Surgery Clinical Fellow
The Orthopaedic Surgery Department had two fellows during the past year, one in Adult Reconstruction and Sports Medicine Clinical, and one in Orthopaedic Research. The clinical fellow, Dr. Joshua Owens, successfully completed the one-year program and served with Drs. Leo and Westerdahl in caring for the student athletes of Florida Atlantic University. He also worked with Drs. Leo, Suarez and Gilot, assisting in countless joint replacements and sports medicine procedures while participating in the rigorous, specialized academic curriculum.

Dr. Amar Mutnal, the research fellow, participated in numerous research projects and is ending his academic year with a number of peer-reviewed publications and podium presentations at annual orthopaedic meetings.
Urology Post-Graduate Fellowship Programs

Lawrence S. Hakim, Director and Chairman

Cleveland Clinic Florida remains the premier academic program in Florida for post-graduate fellowship training in the field of urology. As an integral component of the Glickman Urological & Kidney Institute, distinct fellowship programs are offered in the areas of female urology, pelvic floor reconstruction and neurourology, urologic oncology and robotics, and andrology and men's health. Fellows have gone on to academic urology positions of leadership throughout the United States and internationally, and trainees are prepared for careers in academic urology, as well as private practice. Clinical and outcomes research completed by our fellows and faculty has led to multiple publications in peer-reviewed literature.

The Department of Urology continues to provide leading-edge care for patients with urologic cancer. The fellowship program in urologic oncology and robotics, under the directorship of Nicholas Muruve, MD, trains post-graduate urologic surgeons who are interested in honing their knowledge and skills in cancer care. Internationally recognized faculty offer the fellows outstanding clinical experience in managing prostate, bladder and kidney cancer, as well as other urologic cancers. Cleveland Clinic is the world leader in the area of complex and partial nephrectomy surgery, and our fellows and staff have presented their experience and results nationally and internationally.

The urologic robotics center, under the direction of Alok Shrivastava, MD, and Barbara Ercole, MD, is the largest clinical training program in the region. In addition to its successful robotic prostatectomy program, Cleveland Clinic Florida continues to set the standard as the first program in the state to perform difficult and innovative urologic robotic surgery. This includes robotic cystoprostatectomy with in situ reconstruction, as well as robotic partial nephrectomy surgery for large renal and hilar lesions. Fellows also are involved in our multidisciplinary medical urologic oncology program, under the direction of Richard Macchia, MD, and in collaboration with the Cleveland Clinic Florida oncology team. The program includes regular interdisciplinary conferences and journal clubs.

Now in its 10th year, the fellowship program in female urology and pelvic floor reconstruction is under the leadership of our newest faculty member, Sneha Vaish, MD. The program continues to thrive and attract the top residents from across the United States. Fellows are directly involved in evaluating and managing patients with a variety of issues. In addition to their clinical experience, fellows are involved in numerous independent and clinical research trials and present their award-winning data and findings annually at local, national and international meetings, demonstrating our commitment to improving the care of women with voiding dysfunction.
Urology Post-Graduate Fellowship Programs

Continued

The female urology program participates in the Annual Cleveland Clinic Florida Pelvic Floor Disorders Symposium in Fort Lauderdale, attended by clinicians and surgeons from throughout the world. Cleveland Clinic Florida is dedicated to the continuing medical education (CME) of our colleagues. Most recently, the program, along with the Cleveland Clinic Florida urogynecology program, was recognized as a “Center of Excellence” in the care of female pelvic floor disorders by the National Association for Continence (NAFC). Only two other centers in the United States have received this designation. In addition, the Cleveland Clinic Florida female urology and pelvic floor reconstruction program hosts numerous international observers and research fellows from around the world.

The Cleveland Clinic Florida Fellowship Program in Andrology and Men's Health, established in 2001, is an integral part of our Urologic Center of Excellence in the community. Under the direction of Dr. Hakim, our post-graduate fellows, visiting residents and medical students are introduced to the areas of male and female sexual medicine and surgery. Fellows develop expertise in the anatomy,
Urology Post-Graduate Fellowship Programs

Continued

physiology, pathophysiology and diagnostic evaluation of sexual dysfunction (SD), as well as therapeutic management. A major area of concentration is the emerging field of female sexual dysfunction (FSD). Cleveland Clinic Florida houses the only academic program in the region allowing fellows to develop expertise in diagnosing and treating FSD.

Fellows receive extensive experience in surgical management of SD in conjunction with our colleagues in gynecology and plastic surgery. Fellows are actively involved in the penile rehabilitation and restoration program, the largest of its kind in Florida, which focuses on improving our patient's quality of life after treatment for urologic cancer and gain considerable experience in the diagnostic evaluation and treatment of male voiding problems using the latest minimally invasive therapies, such as laser surgery, urethral sling surgery and advanced artificial urinary sphincter prosthetic devices. Another important area of concentration during the fellowship is male factor infertility (MFI) and reproductive medicine and surgery. Fellows develop expertise in evaluating MFI as well as extensive clinical experience in managing it medically and surgically, with a special emphasis on microsurgery. The program participates in Independent and clinical trials and outcomes research studies, which provide fellows an opportunity to publish in peer-reviewed literature and present their research at national and international meetings.

The clinical and research experience that our fellows receive is comprehensive and represents the latest body of knowledge in urology. Virtually every new, innovative technology in urology is used, and, in some cases, is pioneered at Cleveland Clinic Florida. These advances include 3D robotic oncologic surgery, new surgical procedures for incontinence, laser surgery, and the most current male prosthetic devices. For example, Cleveland Clinic Florida recently was the first site in the United States to surgically implant a revolutionary prosthetic reservoir for penile prosthesis to restore quality of life for men following prostate cancer surgery.

For each of our urology post-graduate fellowship programs at Cleveland Clinic Florida, the mission is the same. Upon completing a fellowship, the surgeon has developed the advanced training and experience needed to become a respected academic expert in his/her chosen field. Many of these post-graduate positions are supported by philanthropic gifts from our patients and friends. The continuing support of these young surgeons and investigators as they strive to find better methods of diagnosing and treating urologic disease is deeply appreciated.

Virtually every new, innovative technology in urology is used, and, in some cases, is pioneered at Cleveland Clinic Florida.
Entering its eighth year in 2010, the Urogynecology and Pelvic Reconstructive Surgery fellowship program has made significant advancements in the field of Female Pelvic Floor Medicine. Various key clinical studies were concluded and provided valuable data for presentation at professional meetings. These included randomized, controlled trials that represent the ultimate form of clinical research and demonstrate the commitment of this program to the acquisition of data for the improvement of the care of women with urogynecologic problems. Numerous publications resulted from the research completed by our program.

The program’s 2010 graduating Fellow, Dr. Roger Lefevre, joined the Harvard University faculty as co-director of Urogynecology services at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston. In 2011, Dr. Debby Karp will complete her training and has been recruited by Emory University in Atlanta to formalize an academic Urogynecology program at that institution.

The 11th Annual Pelvic Floor Disorders Symposium was held in Fort Lauderdale in April 2011 with a large attendance of clinicians and surgeons. This included a live-surgery demonstration by Cleveland Clinic Florida’s faculty surgeons: Drs. Aguilar, Ghoniem and Davila. This annual symposium represents our program’s contribution to Continuing Medical Education (CME) of GYN and urologic clinicians.

The program has been recognized with a distinguishing designation as a “Center of Excellence” in the care of Pelvic Floor Disorders. This designation has been received by only two other centers in the U.S. to date and it is a truly unique designation.

The urogynecology program year was also highlighted by numerous international visiting observers and research fellows from multiple countries including India, Korea, Venezuela, Iran, Lebanon, Pakistan, Brazil and Colombia.
Plastic Surgery Residency Program
Michel C. Samson, MD, Director

Plastic surgery’s name is derived from the Greek word plastikos, which means to mold, shape, or form things. The modern specialty was born out of the need to reconstruct war injuries after World War I, including all types of major facial and hand trauma and burns. However, plastic surgery has been practiced and recorded for reconstructions since at least 3000 B.C. in some parts of India, in Sushruta Samhita. Over the years, the specialty has expanded and the basic techniques and principles have been applied to numerous medical needs such as cleft lip and palate surgery for children, repair of congenital anomalies, microsurgery reconstruction, burn surgery, cancer reconstruction, hand surgery, facial reconstruction, wound healing and cosmetic surgery.

The plastic surgery residency training program was accredited by the ACGME for full training in plastic surgery beginning in 2004. Two new residents are accepted for training each year. This year sees the graduation of the ninth and 10th plastic surgery residents. All prior graduates have gone on to practice in both private and academic settings, all over the United States. After receiving provisional accreditation as a new program in 2004, and continued accreditation in 2006, the most recent site visit and accreditation review in December 2009 resulted in a full five-year accreditation. In 2011, the program will move into a new three-year training format, which is a uniform requirement for all plastic surgery residencies in the United States. This extra training year will allow for the incorporation of a more advanced set of rotations, more research and even better trained surgical subspecialists for the future.

This year, successful graduates include Dr. Louis Brunworth and Dr. Enrique Hanabergh. Both doctors completed full general surgery training prior to beginning their plastic surgery residency. Dr. Hanabergh plans to enter private practice in South Florida and contribute to the plastic surgical care of his hometown community. Dr. Brunworth is beginning a one-year hand fellowship at the University of Miami and he will train as a subspecialist expert in surgery of the hand.

“Going to India, serving in a third world country on children with no resources and congenital cleft lips is an experience I will never forget.”
— Louis Brunworth, MD, Plastics Resident

Number of Residents
4

Number of years to complete program
3

Number of 2011 Graduates
2

Louis Brunworth, MD, Plastic Surgery Resident
Residents continue to be active in surgical research. Dr. Megan Jack’s research over the past year in biomaterials used for breast reconstruction, under the direction of Drs. Newman and Samson, has been presented at the Florida Society of Plastic Surgeons where it won first prize overall for research presentations for 2010. She also published a new technique in lower limb reconstruction under the direction of faculty member Dr. Yoav Barnavon. Dr. Enrique Hanabergh published a review of the “red breast” syndrome, a new condition affecting some types of breast cancer reconstruction, in the *Journal of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.* He also published a review of new biomaterials in breast reconstruction, which was presented at the South Florida Chapter of the American College of Surgeons meeting this spring. Dr. Jeremy White presented a research paper at the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery meeting in Boston on the use of strattice dermal matrix for breast augmentation revision, and was guided by Dr. Jason Pozner. Dr. Louis Brunworth designed and conducted a study on the aesthetic subunits of the breast, with Drs. Newman and Samson, which was accepted and presented in Boston this spring and is currently in process for publication. Dr. Brunworth also presented a paper on the use of propranolol to treat infantile hemangiomas at the South Eastern Society of Plastic Surgery this spring under the direction of Dr. Eric Stelnicki. All residents continue to be actively engaged in new research to advance the science and art of plastic surgery and to ultimately help our patients, while maintaining their regular coursework and skills training and practice.

Residents continued to participate in a plethora of clinical activities. Over the past year, one resident participated in the annual mission to Honduras with Cleveland Clinic Florida’s craniofacial surgeons to perform cleft lip and palate surgery on disadvantaged children. The missions are performed in association with the University of Florida. Another of the residents traveled with a faculty member to India with Operation Smile International for a similar charitable surgical mission to help children and educate local surgeons. Multiple weekly teaching conferences at Cleveland Clinic Florida in Weston and Memorial Regional in Hollywood were hosted, and there is a monthly Journal Club where residents present recent articles from the literature. Additional courses focus on anatomic cadaver dissection, microsurgery, craniofacial, hand and facial trauma. The residents are kept busy with a very full and enriching training experience.

Cleveland Clinic Florida’s donors’ positive commitment to education, medical training and research gives the program the opportunity to advance the care of the plastic surgical patient and to train leaders in plastic surgery for years to come. With this support, the program is excited to introduce two highly qualified residents starting in July 2011, Dr. Kirin Gill from the University of Chicago, and Dr. Pedro Viera from Albert Einstein University in New York City.
The path to becoming a practicing physician is a long and rigorous one. Applicants to most medical schools have completed their undergraduate education at a four-year college or university. Those successful in gaining acceptance to medical school have not only completed their undergraduate studies with distinction, but have scored well in standardized medical college admission tests.

Those students “making the cut”, begin medical school with much anticipation and excitement. As the student progresses through the four-year program, he or she will transition from basic science studies to fundamentals of clinical medicine and, finally, to actual participation in patient care. Students will typically spend time rotating through Internal Medicine services, Surgery, Obstetrics & Gynecology, Pediatrics and Psychiatry as well, often during the final year, in “elective” time in more specialized areas in which they wish to gain exposure and experience.

During the final year of medical school, the student will apply for a residency position in the field they wish to first pursue. Acceptance into these programs is often very competitive. The “intern” or first year of residency is often considered to be the most challenging time in a doctor’s medical education. The duration of residency training varies greatly depending upon one’s chosen area of specialization, but generally ranges from 3-6 years.

Upon completion of residency training, some graduates will choose to pursue additional training in a fellowship program to gain expertise in a subspecialty. For example, a graduate of an internal medicine residency program may seek additional training in cardiology for an additional 2-3 years. A graduate of a general surgery program may spend a similar period of time perfecting their skills in a cardiac surgery fellowship. Further sub specialization in cardiac transplantation or in pediatric heart surgery would require an additional year or more of training.

The final challenge in realizing the goal of becoming a practicing physician is to complete the certification process, allowing the physician or surgeon to practice within their chosen field. This last hurdle involves written and, frequently, an oral examination required by the specialty board. Passing these examinations is required for the practitioner to become “board certified”. In the capacity of “attending physician”, a doctor may begin to apply the knowledge and skills acquired over these many years of training.

For the doctor, however, the education is never complete. Some physicians and surgeons choose to practice in an academic center such as Cleveland Clinic Florida, serving as teaching faculty and mentors for medical students, residents and fellows. For those who choose a private or community practice setting, continuing medical education and maintenance of certification become a lifelong commitment.
Dr. Viviana Navas, cardiologist, and Dr. Tolga Erim, gastroenterologist, came to Cleveland Clinic Florida in pursuit of furthering their medical education training.

“I fell in love with this place from the beginning, including Dr. Muniz, the residents, and the attendings,” Dr. Navas says.

During his internship at Palmetto Hospital, Dr. Erim did some rotations at Cleveland Clinic Florida and he fell in love with it as well.

The couple met during Dr. Erim’s second year of residency and Dr. Navas’ first year. They started dating at the end of her first year.

They married in 2006, after Dr. Navas finished her residency and Dr. Erim finished his year as chief resident. Dr. Erim then began his three-year gastroenterology fellowship, supported by Cleveland Clinic Florida donors Victor and Rita Bertrand. At the same time, Dr. Navas began her three-year cardiology fellowship, supported by Cleveland Clinic Florida donor Mareb Hoke.

Moving to Cleveland, Ohio, in 2009, Dr. Navas did an extra training year in heart failure and transplant at Cleveland Clinic, and Dr. Erim worked as a private practice general gastroenterologist.

A year later, Dr. Navas returned to Cleveland Clinic Florida as a staff cardiologist and Dr. Erim went to Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston to do a year specializing in advanced endoscopy but always knew he wanted to come back to Cleveland Clinic Florida. After completing his time in Boston, Dr. Erim returned to Cleveland Clinic Florida as a staff gastroenterologist.

The couple has been married for five years. “We feel so happy and fortunate. Everything we have is because of Cleveland Clinic Florida – our training and each other,” Dr. Navas says with a smile. “We love this place.”
WHERE DOES FUNDING FOR CLEVELAND CLINIC FLORIDA’S MEDICAL EDUCATION AND RESEARCH PROGRAM COME FROM?

“Through the generous philanthropic support of our patients, we are able to augment a portion of the program’s expenses. In the future we hope that increased philanthropic support will enable us to expand the number of student physicians we accept and the number of accredited areas of study.”

— Bernardo B. Fernandez Jr., MD, Chief Executive Officer

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Cleveland Clinic Florida is grateful for each gift. To learn how you can make a difference, contact Institutional Relations and Development at 954.659.6238 or supportccfl@ccf.org. To make an online gift to Cleveland Clinic Florida, visit giving.ccf.org/florida.
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