This promises to be an exciting year for our Department of Surgery.

Working on the building and recruitment that we have done over the last year, all our hospitals are experiencing clinical growth—this will allow us to secure our foundation as an academic department.

Since our mission is to educate residents, students, and encourage faculty development and growth—we can only do this with a robust faculty and participating hospitals.

Michael E. Zenilman, MD
Clarence and Mary Dennis Professor and Chairman
Department of Surgery
SUNY Downstate Medical Center
Clinical News

Clinical Accomplishments & Plans

I. At University Hospital, we have continued to exhibit rapid growth in all divisions of our Department, with the most in General Surgery, Vascular, and Transplant.

Compared to 514 operative cases in 2001, General Surgery performed 814 cases in 2005; and Vascular increased from 128 to 245 operative cases.

Of note is that the Transplant service performed 95 kidney transplants, the most since 1987. (Barely 60 transplants were performed in 2001.) These successes are directly the result of the appointment of full time division chiefs, and recruitment of skilled, dedicated and dynamic clinical surgeons. My sincere thanks to Drs Dale Distant & Nabil Sumrani for leading the charge.

In order to help with the volume of cases and help in our academic mission, we recruited Rahul Jindal, MD to the division of Transplant. UHB leadership is committed to the success of this program, and we are all greatly appreciative.

As you know, Dr. Jon Deitch and Gary Gwertzman have moved on to work for Continuum at Beth Israel. Gary has agreed to stay on as an attending at the VA. We were able to work with the administration at Long Island College Hospital, to jointly cover vascular, and Tom Raftery has agreed to become the interim director of the service. Dr. David Glass, a local busy practitioner, has agreed to help as well.

Felix (Ray) Ortega, MD has been recruited as a full time plastic surgeon. He has already made a mark on our wound care service, cardio thoracic surgery service, and cosmetic practice.

II. At Kings County, we successfully recruited full time surgeons in Laparoscopy and Trauma, resulting in similar increases in volume in General Surgery. Trauma is being redefined as an ‘emergency surgery’ service. 
Tom McIntyre, MD and Robert Davis, MD, are our new surgeons in general and trauma surgery, respectively.
Dr Moussa provides some coverage in general surgery.

III. A productive relationship exists with the Brooklyn Veterans’ Hospital, which shares our academic mission. To provide competitive salaries, we developed RVU-based contracts with UPB for new recruits. The model has resulted in growth in Vascular Surgery quality of care and gross operative numbers. We also used the RVU model to recruit Wilbur Bowne, MD as a Surgical Oncologist - he has clinical responsibilities at the VA and UHB, and a laboratory effort at both institutions. With only six months, Dr. Bowne distinguished himself by having an abstract accepted at the upcoming Surgical Forum. He was also awarded a VISN3 grant from the VA for his project "Anti-Tumor Effects of Novel Peptides and Genetic Immunization in Pancreatic Cancer"

I would like to thank Dr. Hueldine Webb who stepped up and became acting director of the surgical service during Dr. Ghosh’s absence. Under their leadership, a recent NSQIP survey showed that our VA surgical service is doing well in measures of quality of care. We plan to adopt NSQIP at University Hospital soon.
IV. Long Island College Hospital’s Department of Surgery continues to contribute an increasing number of operative index teaching cases to the program which include a uniquely large and expanding volume of Head and Neck Endocrine surgical experience.

Dr. Mark Song was recently recruited as Division Chief of Vascular Surgery and Dr. Steven Herman as a Section Chief of Minimally Invasive Thoracic Surgery. Their recruitments have successfully introduced both much needed, endovascular surgery capability and minimally invasive endoscopic approaches in non-cardiac thoracic surgical diseases respectively.

Other additions to the faculty have included Dr. Jonathan Wong, who has provided additional expertise in both advanced laparoscopic and bariatric surgery, Dr. Melita Charles a fully trained surgical oncologist and our own recent program graduate, Dr. Cynara Coomer.

Dr. Michael Bernstein, Department Vice-Chair, has been elected President of the Brooklyn-LI Chapter of the College and Dr. Alfonso has been re-elected to serve a second term as Governor.
Research News
Research Accomplishments & Plans

I.
Our Department has published over 20 papers, abstracts and book chapters in 2005. Our residents and graduate students have presented data at all the major national meetings such as the American Pancreatic Association, American Gastroenterological Association, and Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract, and FASEB.

Our Residents Joelle Pierre, MD and Rosemary Hardin MD, both won first place at the recent Murray Friedman Research Competition, sponsored by the Brooklyn Surgical Society and Brooklyn-Long Island Chapter of the American College of Surgeons.

Rose won the clinical sciences category for the paper entitled "Serum ACE levels as a non-invasive marker for pulmonary ischemia resulting from pulmonary embolism", and Joelle won the basic sciences category for the paper entitled "Anti-Reg I and III antibody treatment induces changes in immunoglobulin levels in the sodium taurocholate model of acute pancreatitis".

II.
Our academic relationship with Brooklyn Polytechnic continues to flourish, with our laboratory taking a leading role in organizing joint projects.

Our laboratory’s collaboration with Dr Richard Gross’ in Poly’s biomaterial section yielded a seminal report in Critical Care Medicine. This paper, on treatment of sepsis with a novel biomaterial, was the focus of an accompanying editorial.

As coordinator of the Molecular Genetic Biomaterials and Drug Delivery Tract, our department chair serves on the admissions committee, of the joint PhD program. Also, a surgical resident in our lab participates in the Master’s course in Biomedical engineering.

This unique opportunity allows the resident to teach graduate-level coursework while in the lab, and earn a Masters Degree after two years. Drs. Danny Kaufman and Joelle Pierre have already done so, and Sophie Fu is up next.
Research News

III.
Under the leadership of Dr. Martin Bluth, Director of Research, we offer projects to surgical residents, graduate students, medical students, college and even high school students.

One of our high school students just received multiple national awards for his participation in research we have co-sponsored with Brooklyn Polytechnic.

IV.
Our department strives to lead surgical education in Brooklyn. We host the monthly Brooklyn Surgical Society, a conference which is directed at all the surgical departments in Brooklyn. We use the Society as a vehicle to bring in nationally recognized speakers.

This year we also helped initiate the first Annual Symposium of Selected Topics in Surgery, hosted in collaboration with Lutheran Medical Center, in December, 2005. This three day conference brought visiting speakers from all over the world to talk on novel techniques, including laparoscopic and robotic surgery. We plan to sponsor the second annual course on 11/30/2006—12/1/2007 at the Westin Hotel, Times Square.
Teaching News

Teaching Accomplishments & Plans

I.
Lisa Dresner, MD, our student clerkship director, has been involved with the medical school in developing the PRIME software for teaching and communication for our surgical clerkship. More importantly, in conjunction with the Department of Surgery at NYU, we will be implementing the web-based teaching system COMET, which contains teaching simulations for medical students.

Over the next year, we plan to set standard minimums for experience for each student and expect to refine the experience and work to make it as uniform and educational experience across sites as is possible. Students will have access to alternative methods including SIMMs, and professional patients, in order to supplement clinical experiences. Finally, students will have access to surgical simulation labs both for open and laparoscopic surgery.

II.
We developed our own web-based resident management system (www.downstatesurgery.org) to allow 360 degree evaluation of residents, faculty and our program, and used it to launch an on-line teaching tool. Bi-monthly quizzes are now given on the web, and data from these tests are used in annual evaluations. Data from this project was presented by Dr. Alex Schwartzman & Resident Dr. Sunny Shah at a recent national ACGME meeting. We plan to further use this program to develop on-line resident teaching portfolios, to document continued learning both inside and outside of the hospital.

Our quarterly on-line quiz will start again in August (Go to www.downstatesurgery.org/presentationdown.aspx for copies of past presentations).
III.

Dr. Tom McIntyre has led the development of a surgical skills laboratory at SUNY. This includes both a wet (live animal) and dry (laparoscopic trainer) lab component. The Department and medical school have both funded the project, since the beneficiaries are both the surgical residents and the students rotating on the clerkship. Tom is based at KCHC, and has made a great impression as a clinical surgeon.

IV - Resident updates

ALL eight of our graduating surgical chief residents passed the Qualifying Examination in 2005, the first time in over 20 years that the pass rate was 100%.

These successes are directly the result of new curricula put in place for the residents, and a focus of attending attention to the medical students. The bar has been set for the new chiefs and those who follow!

Special thanks to Bob Schulze, MD who has successfully coordinated a semi-annual mock oral exam program which has rapidly become very popular- and an important part- of our resident program.

Last year we matched three Downstate students into our program, this year two. Other schools who contributed to our first year class include Cornell, Tulane, University of Pittsburgh, Columbia, and Central Caribe University in Puerto Rico.

This year we are implementing a number of initiatives for resident education, to become fully compliant in our Core Competencies from the ACGME. A recent overview of our residency and goals was given by the chair to the residents here as well.

Dr. Alex Schwartzman has been instrumental in putting together a residency which is state of the art and focused on education. We are now giving on-line tests quarterly, have a functional simultaneous core curriculum at all sites, and are participating in the American College of Surgeons Surgical Curriculum. To participate, all residents need to become candidate members of the ACS.

We recently implemented a novel mechanism to ensure resident compliance in work hour regulations. A fingerprint reader was installed in the Kottemeir library to accurately assess and document resident work hours. I don’t know of any other hospital that does this.
Dr Jindal obtained his M.D from India, residency training in the United Kingdom, followed by specialist qualifications in Transplantation Surgery from the University of Oxford, England.

He then came to the USA, obtained further Fellowship training at the Boston University Medical Center in Kidney transplantation; Liver and Hepato-biliary surgical experience at the Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York.

Following this, Dr Jindal was an Assistant Professor at the Indiana University School of Medicine and University of Glasgow where he initiated the pancreatic and pediatric kidney transplantation.

Dr Jindal was most recently a Professor of Surgery at the Sanford School of Medicine in South Dakota. Dr Jindal received his F.R.C.S from the Royal college of Surgeons, Edinburgh, and Ph.D (Middlesex University, London, UK) in “Improving quality of life, emotional states and medical compliance in recipients of kidney transplants”.

Dr Jindal also successfully completed the M.B.A in South Dakota. Dr Jindal has published extensively in transplant-related topics in peer-reviewed and high impact journals, such as Transplantation, American Journal of Transplantation, American Journal of Kidney Diseases, New England Journal of Medicine, British Journal of Surgery, Clinical Transplantation, Diabetes and Kidney International.


Dr Jindal is currently a visiting Associate Professor at Downstate Medical Center, where he is a Transplant Surgeon, developing a pancreas transplant program and establishing protocols on “Quality of Life in recipients of kidney transplants”. Dr Jindal is also the preceptor for senior medical students in the Department of Surgery.
Dr. Raftery was born in Boston, Massachusetts, and matriculated at Brown University and subsequently New York Medical College. After serving in the US Army Medical Corps, he received general and vascular surgical training in St. Clare’s Hospital in New York under Dr. John Madden.

He has served as Chief of Vascular Surgery at the Catholic Medical Center of Brooklyn and Queens, North Shore and Forest Hills Hospitals, and has directed three vascular laboratories. Recruited by Dr. Alfonso at Long Island College Hospital, in 2002, he has been an attending in Vascular Surgery and Interim Chief of Vascular until recently.

Aside from being a gifted surgeon, Dr. Raftery has served as the president of the Brooklyn Long Island Chapter of the Medical College Surgeons and as a Governor of the American College of Surgeons. His interests are in vascular ultrasound and lower extremity arterial revascularization. Dr. Raftery was born in Boston, Massachusetts, and matriculated at Brown University and subsequently New York Medical College. After serving in the US Army Medical Corps, he received general and vascular surgical training in St. Clare’s Hospital in New York under Dr. John Madden.

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I was born in New York City. For most of my childhood, I lived in East Flatbush on Ocean Ave. I went to Xaverian High School in Bay Ridge.

In 1978, I graduated from West Point and received a commission in the Corps of Engineers. While in the Army, I was an Airborne Ranger and a Green Beret. I left active duty to go to Cornell University Medical School.

During the Gulf War, I took a reserve commission in the Medical Corps. I left as a lieutenant colonel. Following medical school, I completed a surgery residency at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia and plastic surgery at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

I am board certified in both specialties. Before returning to New York, I practiced in South Carolina and North Dakota. I still live in Brooklyn.
Dr. McIntyre is from Baltimore, Maryland. He received an undergraduate degree in anthropology from Vanderbilt University in Nashville. He subsequently attended medical school at the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore and completed his general surgery residency at the Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh.

He recently completed a Minimally Invasive Surgery Fellowship at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.

His professional interests include general surgery, laparoscopic foregut, hernia and colorectal surgery, surgical education, and surgery in developing countries.
Dr. Bowne was born in Charleston, South Carolina, and graduated from Fordham University in 1985. He is a graduate of Matriculated SUNY Downstate Medical School in 1994, and performed and completed residency in Mount Sinai School of Medicine in 2002.

During his residency, Dr. Bowne took time off to perform research at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in the Gastric Mixed Tumor Service, and after his residency he completed the MSKCC surgical oncology fellowship. Following this, he completed our laparoscopic/minimally invasive fellowship in 2005.

Dr. Bowne has had a number of grants and awards recognizing his interest in surgical oncology. He was awarded the Clarence Dennis Society Prize for Surgical Scholarship from our program as a student, the American Association for Cancer Research Young Investigator Award in 1999, and David Dreiling Award for Academic Achievement in the Department of Surgery in Mount Sinai School of Medicine. He has over 25 publications and abstracts.

Since his arrival at Downstate less than a year ago, Dr. Bowne has authored one book chapter, 2 editorials on cancer surgery and recently was awarded a VISN Grant from the VA for his project entitled "Antitumor Effects of Novel Peptides and Genetic Immunization in Pancreatic Cancer." Because of him, our section of surgical oncology is up and running!
Time Clock / Fingerprint Reader at the Department of Surgery, SUNY Downstate Medical Center