CUMC CELEBRATES acknowledges faculty, staff, and students at Columbia University Medical Center who receive major research grants, who earn prestigious honors, who are elected to honorary societies, or who take leadership positions in professional organizations. Celebrates also gratefully acknowledges the gifts made by donors and friends of the Medical Center and highlights faculty who have appeared in the news recently. If you have an award or honor that you would like to have listed in Celebrates, please fill out this [online form](#). Please note: all federal grants are automatically included based on institutional data provided by Sponsored Projects Administration. For more information, send an [e-mail](#) to the Celebrates editor.

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**Research Grants**

**Awards & Honors**

**Philanthropic Gifts**

**CUMC in the News**

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**RESEARCH GRANTS**

(REPRESENTATIVE LISTING)

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**College of Physicians and Surgeons**

**Asa Abeliovich**, MD, PhD, Pathology, received $1,750,000 over five years from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke for "The Role of Synuclein Transcript Variants in Neuronal Pathology and Function."

**Joan Bathon**, MD, Medicine, received $285,952 over two years from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases for "Treat to Target to Reduce Atherosclerosis in Rheumatoid Arthritis."

**Peter Canoll**, MD, PhD, Pathology & Cell Biology, received $289,492 through May 2014 from the James S. McDonnell Foundation for "Predicting and Controlling Glioma Recurrence: The Role of Heterogeneity and Microenvironment."

**Jason Choi**, MD, Medicine, received $269,946 over two years from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute for "Dusp4 in the Pathogenesis of LMNA Cardiomyopathy."

**Karina Davidson**, PhD, Medicine, received $3,835,215 over five years from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute for "Depression Screening RCT in ACS Patients: Quality of Life and Cost Outcomes."
Devangere Devanand, MD, Psychiatry, received $3,091,310 over five years from the National Institute on Aging for "Olfactory Deficits and Donepezil Treatment in Cognitively Impaired Elderly."

Donna Farber, PhD, Medicine, received $12,423,364 over five years from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for "Tissue Compartmentalization of Human Lymphocytes."

Henry Ginsberg, MD, Medicine, received $1,599,781 over four years from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute for "Assembly and Secretion of APOB-containing Lipoproteins."

James Goldman, MD, PhD, Pathology & Cell Biology, received $482,592 over three years from the National Multiple Sclerosis Society for "HGF: c-met Signaling in Oligodendrocyte Development and Its Inhibition by CD82."

Joshua Gordon, MD, Psychiatry, received $1,990,007 over five years from the National Institute of Mental Health in a competitive renewal for "Exploring the Pathophysiology of Anxiety: The Role of the Hippocampus, Amygdala and Medial Prefrontal Cortex."

Nancy Green, MD, Pediatrics, and Arlene Smaldone, DNSc, CPNP, School of Nursing, received $413,592 over two years from the National Institute of Nursing Research for "Hydroxyurea Adherence for Personal Best in Sickle Cell Treatment: HABIT."

Thomas Jessell, PhD, Biochemistry & Molecular Biophysics, received $469,000 over two years from Project A.L.S. for "Defining Mutant SOD1 Astrocyte Mediators of Motor Neuron Toxicity."

Sheng-Han Kuo, MD, Neurology, received $940,071 over five years from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke for "The Role of Glucocerebrosidase and Chaperone-mediated Autophagy in Parkinson's Disease."

Esi Sama Lamouse-Smith, MD, Pediatrics, received $316,397 over three years from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for "Impact of Antibiotic-induced Alterations on the Intestinal Flora and on Adaptive Immune Function in Infant Mice."

Andrew Lassman, MD, Neurology, received $449,148 over three years from the James S. McDonnell Foundation for "Phase II Clinical Trial of Perifosine + Temsirolimus for Recurrent Glioblastoma with Tissue and Imaging Correlates of Response."

Cathy Lee Mendelsohn, PhD, Urology, received $960,000 over four years from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases for "Retinoic Acid Signaling Controls Urothelial Development and Regeneration."
Umrao Monani, PhD, Pathology & Cell Biology, received $300,000 over three years from the Muscular Dystrophy Association for "Elucidating the Role of the SMN Protein in the Developing Neuromuscular System."

Siddhartha Mukherjee, MD, PhD, Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center, received $1,980,800 over five years from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute for "Yes 1 as a Quiescence Regulator in Hematopoietic Stem Cells."

Kenneth Olive, PhD, Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center, received $1,260,888 over four years from the Lustgarten Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research for "Focused Ultrasound Technologies for Diagnosis, Monitoring and Treatment of Pancreatic Cancer."

Arthur Palmer III, PhD, Biochemistry & Molecular Biophysics, received $1,562,910 over five years from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences in a competitive renewal for "Training Program in Molecular Biophysics."

Boris Reizis, PhD, Microbiology & Immunology, received $374,000 over two years from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases for "A Novel Genetic Model of Systemic Lupus Erythematosus."

Claudia Schmauss, MD, Psychiatry, received $440,000 over two years from the National Institute of Mental Health for "Epigenetic Modulation of Antidepressant Efficacy."

Paul Schulze, MD, Medicine, received $2,983,285 over five years from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute for "Cardiac Lipotoxicity and Ceramide Metabolism in Heart Failure."

Carrie Shawber, PhD, Obstetrics & Gynecology, received $440,000 over two years from the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering for "Concurrent Ultrasound & Molecular Evaluation of a Lymphatic Malformation Model."

David Vawdrey, PhD, Biomedical Informatics, received $1,997,612 over four years from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality for "Addressing Hospital Patient Information Needs Using a PHR Portal."

Gail Wasserman, PhD, Psychiatry, received $3,738,429 over five years from the National Institute on Drug Abuse for "Translational Research to Increase Service Access for NYS Juvenile Probationers."

Carolyn Westhoff, MD, Obstetrics & Gynecology, received $408,092 over seven years from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development in a competitive renewal for "Core Function Activities."
Debra Wolgemuth, PhD, Genetics & Development, received $1,335,680 over four years from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences in a competitive renewal for "Function of the Bromodomain Protein Brdt in Spermatogenesis."

Shan Zha, MD, PhD, Institute for Cancer Genetics, received $550,000 over five years from the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society for "ATM Kinase as a Tumor Suppressor in Developing B Cells."

MAILMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Lisa Metsch, PhD, Sociomedical Sciences, received $692,435 over five years from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for "Miami Women's Interagency HIV Study (WIHS)" and $346,336 over five years from the National Institute of Mental Health in a competitive renewal for "HIV Center for Clinical and Behavioral Studies."

Carmen Rodriguez, PhD, Population & Family Health, received $588,985 over five years from the Administration for Children and Families for "Columbia University Head Start."

Rachel Shelton, ScD, Sociomedical Sciences, received $729,000 over five years from the American Cancer Society for "Treatment Decision-making among Stage II Colon Cancer Patients."

Yun-Hsin Wang, MD, ScD, Health Policy & Management, received $470,576 over two years from the National Cancer Institute for "Estimating State-Specific Potential Annual Healthcare Cost Savings from Reducing Obesity."

Renee Wilson-Simmons, DrPH, Health Policy & Management, received $300,000 over one year from an anonymous sponsor in a competitive renewal for "Core Support for National Center for Children in Poverty."
AWARDS & HONORS

CUMC

ColumbiaDoctors Midtown captured Best in Category (among ambulatory care centers) in the International Interior Design Association's 2013 Healthcare Interior Design competition. The competition honors originality and excellence in the design and furnishings of interior healthcare spaces. Columbia Doctors Midtown was designed by Perkins+Will of New York City.

P&S

Four faculty members have been named Irving Assistant Professors for 2013 - 2016: Julian Abrams, MD, Medicine; Benjamin Lebwohl, MD, Medicine; Melissa Stockwell, MPH, MD, Pediatrics; and June Wu, MD, Surgery. The Irving Scholars program, founded in 1987 by Herbert and Florence Irving, supports young assistant professors as they begin a career in clinical research.

Cande V. Ananth, MPH, PhD, Obstetrics & Gynecology, was appointed to the editorial board of BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, published by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

Edward J. Ciaccio, PhD, Medicine, is the new editor-in-chief of Computers in Biology and Medicine, a journal published by Elsevier with both print and online editions.

Deborah L. Cabaniss, MD, Psychiatry, was named a Teichner Scholar for the third time by the American Academy of Psychoanalysis and Dynamic Psychiatry and the American Association of Directors of Psychiatry Residency Training. The visiting scholars program is intended to enhance the teaching of psychodynamics.

Jean C. Emond, MD, Surgery, has been named 2013 Physician of the Year by the Greater New York Chapter of the American Liver Foundation. He will be presented with the award at a gala in September.

Robert L. Fine, MD, Medicine, received a 2013 Ruth Leff Siegel Award for Excellence in Pancreatic Cancer Research from the Pancreas Center at Columbia University for his development of GTX, a three-drug regimen that relies on synergy among gemcitabine, capecitabine, and docetaxel, and his ongoing commitment to advancing pancreatic cancer therapies through basic science and translational research.

Research projects led by Martin B. Leon, MD, Medicine, and Ronald J. Wapner, MD, Obstetrics & Gynecology, were selected by the Clinical Research Forum as among the top 10 clinical research achievements published in 2012. The annual top 10 awards honor clinicians
who use research and innovative approaches to benefit human health and welfare. Dr. Leon was recognized for leading the team studying catheter-based aortic heart valve replacement. Dr. Wapner was recognized for work that shows how a new genetic test using microarray analysis can provide more clinically relevant information than the current standard method of prenatal testing, which uses karyotyping.

**Jon A. Levenson**, MD, Psychiatry, has been selected to receive the 2014 Outstanding Clinical Care Award from the American Psychosocial Oncology Society. The award will be presented during the APOS 11th annual conference in February 2014.

**Dodi Meyer**, MD, Pediatrics, was honored by the Manhattan Times and Bronx Free Press as a 2013 Woman of Distinction in recognition of her work to help kids and families learn and maintain healthier lifestyles. Leaders across the city from industry, government, health care, art and culture, and nonprofit work were honored for providing for the well-being and vibrancy of their communities.

**Stephen W. Nicholas**, MD, Pediatrics and Population & Family Health (Mailman), received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Wyoming for his national and international contributions as a physician and humanitarian. Dr. Nicholas received his bachelor's degree from Wyoming in 1975.

**Laura Pasqualucci**, MD, Pathology & Cell Biology, was elected to the Scientific Advisory Board of the Lymphoma Research Foundation. The 45-member board reviews grant proposals and guides the strategic direction of the foundation's research programs and consortia. Her five-year term began July 1, 2013.

A P&S student is among 69 medical, dental, and veterinary students from across the country who will engage in laboratory research for a year as participants in the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Medical Research Fellows Program. **Eli Sayegh** will spend the 2013-14 academic year at Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine.

A P&S student, **Patrick van Nieuwenhuizen’16**, is among 15 individuals chosen from across the nation as winners of a competition to create educational materials about concepts that will appear on the new medical school entrance exam when it debuts in 2015. Winners will produce a new collection of tutorials on pre-health competencies. The competition was sponsored by the Association of American Medical Colleges, Khan Academy, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Read about all 15 winners [here](#).

**Zhe Xu’14** received a 2013 ASH HONORS (Hematology Opportunities for the Next Generation of Research Scientists) Award from the American Society of Hematology. The award supports her research in the field.
Five P&S students won awards at the 2013 Eastern-Atlantic Student Research Forum. Andrew Chan, Crystal Castaneda, and Howard Park placed first, second and third, respectively, in the Outstanding Clinical Science Oral Presentation category; Mr. Park also placed first in the Outstanding Clinical Science Poster Presentation category, with Sarah Keesecker and Hanna Moisander-Joyce placing second and third.

MAILMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

W. Ian Lipkin, MD, Epidemiology and Neurology and Pathology & Cell Biology (P&S), received the 2013 Distinguished Alumni Award from Rush Medical College. Dr. Lipkin earned the honor for his development of molecular methods for microbial surveillance and discovery and his work as an educator, scientist, and public health leader.

Virginia A. Rauh, ScD, Population & Family Health, received the 2012 Paper of the Year Award from Environmental Health Perspectives. Her paper is titled "Seven-Year Neurodevelopmental Scores and Prenatal Exposure to Chlorpyrifos, a Common Agricultural Pesticide."

Jeffrey L. Shaman, PhD, Environmental Health Sciences, was awarded the 2013 Outstanding Research Article in Biosurveillance prize, in the category of scientific achievement, from the International Society for Disease Surveillance.

Roger Vaughan, DrPH, Biostatistics, received the 2013 Outstanding Teaching Award from the American Statistical Association. He was chosen for his passion for teaching, dedication to his students, and his insights on successful training and instruction.

NURSING

Rita John, DNP, will serve on the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners Awards Development Committee for a two-year term.

Kristine Kulage was appointed to the editorial board of the Journal of Research Administration, the peer-reviewed journal of the Society of Research Administration International.
IRVING INSTITUTE AWARDS

As part of its mission to transform the culture of biomedical research, accelerate the discovery of new treatments, and train the next generation of research investigators, the Irving Institute for Clinical and Translational Research, home to Columbia University's Clinical and Translational Science Award, funds pilot programs and career development initiatives. The Irving Institute announces the selection of award recipients for several programs.

IMAGING PILOT AWARD
This award provides funding, ranging from $5,000 to $10,000 per awardee, for early career investigators using such imaging modalities as magnetic resonance imaging, optical imaging, PET, single photon emission computed tomography/computed tomography, and ultrasound.

Cheryl Corcoran, MD, Psychiatry, "Simultaneous TMS/fMRI in Healthy Young Adults to Characterize the Circuitry of Facial Emotion Processing: A Model of Deficits in Schizophrenia."

Tomoko Sugiyama Kato, MD, PhD, Medicine, "Non-invasive Assessment for Right Ventricular Failure following Left Ventricular Assist Device."

Kristin Myers, PhD, Mechanical Engineering, "Quantitative Magnetic Resonance Imaging of the Human Cervix."

Julie Ann Spicer, PhD, Psychiatry, "Neural Mechanisms of Maternal Stress in Early Postpartum Women: A Pilot Study."

Marcella Walker, MD, Medicine, "Primary Hyperparathyroidism: Cognitive Abnormalities and their Reversibility with Parathyroidectomy."

IRVING INSTITUTE/CLINICAL TRIALS OFFICE PILOT AWARDS
Co-sponsored by the Clinical Trials Office with each award recipient's home department providing matching funds, this program provides one-time $50,000 awards for junior faculty from P&S to conduct pilot studies needed for future independent funding.

Alvaro Aytes-Meneses, PhD, Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center and Urology, "A Systems Biology Approach for the Identification of Molecular Drivers of Metastatic Prostate Cancer."

Lauren S. Chernick, MD, Pediatrics, "The Texting 2 Initiate (T2I) Study: A Pilot Randomized Controlled Trial Using Text Messaging from the Pediatric Emergency Department to Increase Contraception Initiation Amongst Adolescent Females at High Pregnancy Risk."
**Remi J. Creusot**, PhD, Medicine, "Mapping Ectopic Expression of Islet Antigens in Tolerogenic Cell Subsets from Human Peripheral Lymphoid Tissues."

**Raimon Duran-Struuck**, DVM, PhD, Surgery, "Induction of Solid Organ Tolerance Through Bone Marrow and Regulatory T Cell Transplantation."

**Annika Hofstetter**, MD, PhD, Pediatrics, "A Multilevel Approach to Understanding and Optimizing Influenza and Pneumococcal Vaccination of Children with Chronic Medical Conditions."

**Tomoko Sugiyama Kato**, MD, PhD, Medicine, "Serial Analysis of Myocardial Metabolism by Positron Emissions Tomography (PET) in Patients with Heart Failure Undergoing Ventricular Assist Device Implantation."

**Ian M. Kronish**, MD, Medicine, "Using Mobile Health to Improve Medication Adherence in a Social Network."

**Amir Levine**, MD, Neuroscience, "Advancing the Treatment of Pediatric Anxiety Disorders by Predicting Treatment Response Through Biocellular Markers and Sequencing Technology."

**Anthony Pinto**, PhD, Psychiatry, "Neural Mechanisms Underlying Self-Control."

**Simone Sanna-Cherchi**, MD, Medicine, "Identification of Recessive Alleles Underlying Genomic Disorders of the Kidney and Urinary Tract Development."

**Markus David Siegelin**, MD, Pathology & Cell Biology, "Preclinical Translational Studies on a Novel Potent Combined Therapy for Malignant Glioma."

**Nadejda Tsankova**, MD, PhD, Pathology & Cell Biology, "Epigenetic Mechanisms of EGFR Dysregulation in Human Gliomagenesis and Glioma Progression; a Possible Role for Mutant IDH1."

**Daniel S. Tsze**, MD, Pediatrics, "Optimal Volumes of Administration for Intranasal Midazolam in Children."

**Raksha Urs**, PhD, Ophthalmology, "Ultrasound Microbubble Mediated Trans-Epithelial Delivery of Riboflavin for Corneal Cross-Linking Therapy."

**Elaine Wan**, MD, Medicine, "Roles of Vascular Ion Channels in Heart Failure."

**Yanghee Woo**, MD, Surgery, "Prevention and Attenuation of Gastric Tumorogenesis Through Denervation."
COLLABORATIVE AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY PILOT RESEARCH (CaMPR) AWARDS

This two-phase program provides planning funds ($15,000 per team) and start-up funds ($75,000 per team) to newly configured, multidisciplinary investigative teams to support the planning of novel, multidisciplinary projects. Recipients of the 2012-13 CaMPR Phase II pilot awards:

**Rachel J. Gordon**, MD, MPH (PI), Medicine (P&S) and Epidemiology (Mailman), "Staphylococcal Skin and Soft Tissue Infections in MSM: An Internet-Based Quantitative and Qualitative Investigation and US-wide Molecular Epidemiology."

**Jennifer Levine**, MD, MSW, MSc (PI), Pediatrics, "Precision in Pediatric Sequencing (PIPseq) Initiative: Overcoming Challenges to Meaningful Informed Consent for Whole Genome Sequencing in Pediatric Oncology."

*Both CaMPR projects have multiple co-investigators who could not be listed because of space constraints.*

More information about funding opportunities and other resources available to CUMC investigators: [www.irvinginstitute.columbia.edu](http://www.irvinginstitute.columbia.edu)
PHILANTHROPIC GIFTS
(Gifts Received June 21 – August 15)

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

An anonymous donor made a $5,000,000 commitment to support the Center for Translational Immunology.

A family made a $4,936,540 contribution to fulfill a $10,000,000 commitment to establish a Center for Molecular Cardiology at Columbia University Medical Center.

A donor made a $2,500,000 commitment toward an endowed professorship in the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology and a contribution of $500,000 toward that pledge.

A foundation made a $2,100,000 pledge to support construction of the Medical and Graduate Education Building.

A foundation made a $1,950,000 commitment to the Department of Surgery to advance research in lung transplantation.

A donor made a $1,500,000 commitment to provide professorship support to the Taub Institute for Research on Alzheimer's Disease and the Aging Brain and a contribution of $504,000 toward that pledge.

A donor made a $1,380,000 commitment to the Department of Ophthalmology to advance research on latent retina dystrophy.

A P&S alumnus made a gift of $1,000,000 to provide scholarship support for the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

A foundation made a contribution of $1,000,000 toward a $5,000,000 commitment to establish the Gerald D. Fischbach, MD, Professorship Fund in the Department of Neuroscience.

A private foundation made an $811,000 commitment to the Department of Psychiatry to support a fellowship and advance research in domestic violence.

A foundation made a contribution of $757,000 toward a $2,889,320 commitment to the Center for Neuroscience Initiatives at Columbia University Medical Center.

An anonymous donor made a contribution of $500,000 toward a $1,000,000 pledge to provide professorship support to the Department of Pediatrics.
A donor made contributions totaling $450,000 to the Department of Medicine to advance osteoporosis research in the Division of Endocrinology.

A family foundation made a gift of $325,000 to the Department of Pediatrics to support the International Family AIDS Program.

A donor made a $270,000 commitment to the Department of Surgery to advance research on immune tolerance in xenotransplantation.

A donor made a $250,000 contribution toward a $1,000,000 commitment to the Division of Cardiology to advance cardiac care in the new ColumbiaDoctors Midtown facility.

A foundation made a $250,000 contribution to fulfill a $500,000 commitment to support construction of the new Medical and Graduate Education Building.

A family foundation made a $250,000 gift to the Department of Ophthalmology to support the new West Side Vision Care Center.

A P&S alumnus and faculty member made a gift of $250,000 to support construction of the new Medical and Graduate Education Building.

A family foundation made a $225,000 gift to the Department of Pediatrics to support the International Family AIDS Program.

A foundation made a contribution of $200,000 toward an $800,000 commitment to the Celiac Disease Center to advance research and clinical care programs.

A donor made a $200,000 contribution to the Department of Medicine to fulfill a $600,000 commitment to support a fellowship in the Division of Cardiology.

A donor made a $200,000 gift to the Department of Ophthalmology to support medical and surgical treatments.

A foundation made a $150,000 contribution to fulfill a $1,500,000 commitment to provide professorship support to the Department of Neurology.

A foundation made a contribution of $124,000 to the Department of Psychiatry to support a fellowship in women's mental health.

A donor made a $100,000 gift to the Department of Surgery to advance research and living donor surgery.
A donor made a $100,000 gift to the Center for Translational Immunology to advance research in type 1 diabetes.

**COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE**

A bequest of $400,000 was realized to provide scholarship support to the College of Dental Medicine.

**MAILMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

The American Legacy Foundation made a contribution of $187,500 toward its $850,000 pledge to establish the Donald H. Gemson Assistant/Associate Professorship at the Mailman School of Public Health's Center for the History and Ethics of Public Health.
CUMC IN THE NEWS: JULY—AUGUST 2013

NBC NIGHTLY NEWS
*Heavy burden: Obesity may be even deadlier than thought* – August 15, 2013
Obesity kills far more Americans than we think it does, according to a controversial new study that suggests obesity accounts for…three times previous estimates. Ryan Masters, who did the latest study while at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Columbia University, says he's found obesity is the cause of 20 percent of deaths among women and 15 percent of men.

NEW YORK TIMES
*Mystery Virus That’s Killed 47 Is Tied to Bats in Saudi Arabia* – August 21, 2013
An international team of doctors blamed coronavirus in bats for the human outbreak, but said that many questions remained, in part because a perfect match for the virus was found in only a single insect-eating bat out of about 100 Saudi bats tested. Further tests on camels, sheep, goats and a cow will be finished soon, said Dr. W. Ian Lipkin, head of Columbia University's Center for Infection and Immunity, which has already done 15,000 polymerase chain reaction tests tracking the virus. "It's a huge amount of work," he said.

LOS ANGELES TIMES
*Intestine damage raises lymphoma risk in celiac patients, study says* – August 6, 2013
People with celiac disease who had persistent damage to their intestines were at higher risk of lymphoma than people whose intestines had healed, scientists reported...It has been known for years that people with celiac disease have a higher risk of lymphoma, but it was not known that intestinal healing affected the risk, said study coauthor, Dr. Benjamin Lebwohl, an assistant professor of [medicine and] epidemiology.

NBC NIGHTLY NEWS
*US sicker than other developed nations* – July 10, 2013
A new snapshot of America's health shows people in the U.S. are living longer, but the overall pace of improvement in Americans' health is slower than that of other high-income counties. According to Dr. Lee Goldman, dean of Columbia University's school of medicine, "The most dramatic change in Americans' health over the last 20 years is an extraordinary obesity epidemic. And if you look at how much we eat, that trumps the fact that we do a little more exercise."

NY1 NEWS
*Columbia Researchers Identify 18 Gene Mutations For Type Of Brain Cancer*
August 5, 2013
Promising new research shows doctors may be able to better treat a certain type of brain cancer. Scientists at Columbia University say they have identified 18 new mutations known as "driver genes" for glioblastoma. This could lead the way for personalized treatment in some patients.
NEW YORK TIMES

Program Compelling Outpatient Treatment for Mental Illness Is Working, Study Says
July 30, 2013
A study has found that a controversial program that orders patients with mental illness to receive treatment when they are not hospitalized has had positive results. "Is Kendra's Law a good thing?" said Dr. Paul S. Appelbaum, director of the Division of Law, Ethics and Psychiatry at Columbia University's medical school, who has not been involved in any of the research. While "none of these studies are perfect," he said, "these programs are likely to be helpful for a group of patients who are often called revolving-door patients."

NPR

A new report in the journal Nature shows a significant step forward in figuring out what causes things to go wrong in the brain early on in Alzheimer's disease. ...The lead researcher, Dr. Asa Abeliovich, a neuroscientist at Columbia University's Taub Institute, cautions that though this is clearly a promising lead, "I think it would be inappropriate at this point to start taking that medicine based on our work alone."

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

Picked up from HEALTHDAY NEWS
Researchers Spot Mutant Gene Behind Defects That Can Cause Kidney Failure
July 18, 2013
Scientists say they've identified a genetic mutation that causes kidney and urinary tract defects, the leading cause of kidney failure in children. "These findings indicate that DSTYK mutations account for 2.2 percent of urinary tract defects in humans, which is very significant as a single-gene cause of this disease," study author Dr. Simone Sanna-Cherchi said in a Columbia University Medical Center news release.

PBS NEWSHOUR

The Real Reason Behind Public Smoking Bans –July 8, 2013
Public health officials have long argued public smoking bans are meant to eliminate dangers from secondhand, or "sidestream smoke," reduce the environmental impact of cigarette butts, and keep young, impressionable children from picking up bad habits. "I discovered the evidence was really weak," explained lead author Ronald Bayer, a professor at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. Bayer points out that the laws "make it more difficult for smokers to smoke and contribute in an important way to the 'denormalization' of smoking."

CBS NEWS

Soda may make children more likely to destroy things, attack others–August 16, 2013
Public health researchers looked at thousands of 5-year-olds, and found the more sugary soft drinks they consumed, the more likely they were to inflict damage and hurt others. "We found a significant relation with soda consumption with the overall measure of aggression and with the
three specific behaviors we felt were most indicative of aggression: destroying things belonging to others, getting into fights and physically attacking people," wrote the authors, led by researcher Dr. Shakira Suglia, an assistant professor of epidemiology at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health in New York City, in a written statement.

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN
This Brain Discovery May Overturn a Century-Old Theory – August 8, 2013
Since the early twentieth century, many neuroscience professors have taught that the brain is organized according to a strict hierarchical model, in which incoming signals are processed one layer at a time. But this June Randy Bruno, a neuroscientist at Columbia University, and his team published a research paper that calls the old hierarchy into serious question and may blaze a trail toward a very different model of brain function.

USA TODAY
Scientists find clue to age-related memory loss – August 28, 2013
Scientists have found a compelling clue in the quest to learn what causes age-related memory problems, and to one day be able to tell if those misplaced car keys are just a senior moment or an early warning of something worse. Researchers at Columbia University Medical Center examined brains, young and old ones, donated from people who died without signs of neurologic disease. They discovered that a certain gene in a specific part of the hippocampus, the brain's memory center, quits working properly in older people. It produces less of a key protein. "It's the best evidence so far" that age-related memory loss isn't the same as early Alzheimer's, said Nobel laureate Dr. Eric Kandel, who led the Columbia University team. "As we want to live longer and stay engaged in a cognitively complex world, I think even mild age-related memory decline is meaningful," added Columbia neurologist Scott Small, a senior author of the study. "It opens up a whole avenue of investigation to now try to identify interventions."

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