



**ROTARY CLUB  
OF MIAMI**

*Thomas Brown  
McClelland Trust*

# ALUMNI NEWS

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June 2024

## **Milestone Reached - \$200,000+ In Donations Received!!**

Thanks to each and every one of you who have contributed, we are thrilled to announce that contributions to the Thomas Brown McClelland Trust, from former recipients alone, have now reached more than \$200,000. It is quite an accomplishment considering we only started this reconnect project in 2010! Every dollar contributed goes back into the Trust to add to the funds available for future scholarships. Keep up the good work. If you have not made a contribution yet, think about giving now to help those future physicians following in your footsteps.

## **Another Year of Scholarship Applicants Interviewed**

The Rotary Club of Miami, once again, had the privilege of interviewing (→) 78 outstanding students, in medical school or in the process of applying, seeking financial support from the Thomas Brown McClelland Scholarship Trust. Approximately \$300,000 in scholarships will be awarded. What a wonderful opportunity for Rotarians and friends to speak to these future physicians and learn



about their experiences and what their hopes and dreams are for the future.

The interviews continue to be held at the Miami-Dade Medical Examiner's office (←) and we greatly appreciate Chief Medical Examiner Dr. Kenneth Hutchins and his staff for allowing the Club to annually use their facilities.

Thank you also goes out to our TBM Alum interviewers, Drs. Alex and Hilit Mechaber and Dr. Prashant Parek, who took time out of their busy schedules to join us on a Saturday morning to relive their own interview experience from the other side of the table. Great having you there! Dr. Alex Mechaber and Dr. Yogi Hernandez share the table with Rotary's good friend Sue Ryan (center) (→). Sue is the widow of former Club President and long-time member Tim Ryan, who sadly passed away and left funds to the Thomas Brown McClelland Trust to match 50% of any donations now through the end of December 2024. We are overwhelmed by Tim's generosity and it was great to see Sue, who now lives in Orlando. Be sure to take advantage of this extended matching opportunity and make your donation now.



## **FIU Pinning Ceremony Held**

Florida International University Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine pulled out all the stops to celebrate the pinning of FIU recipients of the 2023-24 scholarships from the Thomas Brown McClelland Trust at a lovely reception and ceremony. The students at the FIU Medical School have benefited greatly from the support of the Trust. All students were acknowledged and new recipients received their TBM pins and stethoscopes (purchased from a fund set up by Marcia Brod, TBM Alumni Coordinator and Newsletter Editor, in the Rotary Club of Miami Foundation for that purpose). Dean Juan Cendan (upper right) and Senior Associate Dean for Students Affairs and Associate Professor Yolangel (Yogi) Hernandez Suarez (lower right) joined in the celebration as well.



### **We Mourn the Passing of Dr. Jeffrey Hertz**

TBM recipient Dr. Jeffrey Hertz passed away in April 2023. He obtained his medical degree from the University of Miami. After completing a fellowship at the University of Kentucky, he received additional endovascular training at the Arizona Heart Institute. Dr. Hertz worked in the Memorial Healthcare system for nearly 20 years, dedicating his career to vascular surgery and saving lives. He absolutely adored his dog Rigley, enjoyed great food, U Miami sports, traveling and spending time with family and friends. He is missed by all who knew him.

**Here's the latest on some of our TBM Alumni Family:**

**Alex Bandin** ('15) completed a urology residency at Yale New Haven Hospital and followed with a fellowship in minimally invasive urologic oncology at Hartford Hospital. Since finishing training in 2022, he has been working in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he enjoys a broad urology practice in a very underserved community, with wonderful access to the beautiful mountains of New Mexico in his free time.

**Laureen Benafield** ('92) joined MANA's Northwest Arkansas Pediatrics in September of 2000. She is board certified in Pediatrics by the American Academy of Pediatrics and was voted as one of the Best Pediatricians by readers of AY Magazine in 2018. In her spare time, Laureen enjoys cooking, reading, and spending time with her family. →



← **Moira Breslin** ('08) is a Board-certified allergist and Board-certified pediatrician. She has moved back to Miami to found Bloom Allergy, a clinic for patients with food allergies. She specializes in the treatment of food allergies, food intolerances, chronic hives, asthma, environmental allergies, skin and drug allergies. Her hope is to provide clarity and solutions to patients living with food allergies.

**Shekeab Jauhari** ('12) is currently working as a medical director at Merus, an oncology biotech based in Cambridge, MA. The company is clinically advancing leading-edge, targeted treatments to address the unmet needs of patients with various types of cancer.



**Anam Mendha** ('14) is proud to be a "true Miami girl" having completed medical school, residency and her fellowship program in the U of Miami-Jackson Hospital Program. She is now a Clinical Neonatologist with Kidz Medical Services, in addition to being a kindergarten mom. →

**Carlos M Parra** ('18) graduated from UM Miller School of Medicine in 2019 and completed his OBGYN residency at NYU Grossman in NYC last summer. He is now in his first of three years of Reproductive Endocrinology & Infertility fellowship, also at NYU Grossman.

**Karla Santoyo** ('23) recently had the privilege of participating in Estetoscopio Latino, corazón que escucha: Empowering & Advocating for the Next Generation of LHS+Physicians. It was an inspiring event where she had the opportunity to engage with fellow medical professionals and enthusiasts by showcasing a research project.

**Kristyn Vicente** ('23) is completing her third year at New York Medical school. She has enjoyed interacting with a variety of populations, cultures, and perspectives. Kristyn plans to apply to Plastic Surgery residency in the future but has decided to engage in a year-long research fellowship position in plastic surgery before her fourth year of medical school. With this new plan, she will graduate in May 2026 and hopes to return to Miami for residency.



← **David Weithorn** ('14) is a surgeon at Montefiore Medical Center, in Bronx, NY, and focuses on using minimally invasive techniques, including robotic surgery, to treat a wide range of surgical diseases. He is also interested in outcomes-based research using minimally invasive surgical techniques to reduce morbidity and speed recovery for a wide range of general surgical conditions, especially acute and/or emergent surgical conditions.

**Bernard Zaragoza** ('89) graduated from Harvard Medical School. He has been in private practice since 1995 and specializes in all aspects of general surgery including Breast, Thyroid and Laparoscopic surgery. Currently he holds an appointment as Clinical Assistant Professor at Nova Southeastern University. Bernard has lectured on breast cancer risk and prevention to lay and medical audiences. →



Please use the enclosed envelope and consider making a *tax deductible* contribution today:

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***In a few words, please let us know what you've been doing:***

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If you have any suggestions, ideas, or thoughts on the newsletter, please contact TBM Alumni Coordinator and Newsletter Editor, Marcia Brod at: [miamirotarytbmalum@yahoo.com](mailto:miamirotarytbmalum@yahoo.com). **We would love to hear from you!**