GSGD founder, Dean Emeritus Goldman, dies

Henry M. Goldman, D.M.D.

GSGD Dean Emeritus Henry M. Goldman, D.M.D., the founder of the world's first school for graduate dentistry, and a recognized visionary in the field of periodontal sciences, died on July 23 after an extended illness. He was 79.

An internationally known specialist in periodontology and oral pathology, Goldman conceived of and established the School of Graduate Dentistry in 1963, making it the first institution to offer postgraduate education and training in all the recognized dental specialties.

Steel to lead global elderly-health-care program

R. Knight Steel, M.D., who established the Department of Medicine's Section of Geriatrics 14 years ago, has been appointed by the World Health Organization (WHO) as director of the Program on Health of the Elderly, in Geneva.

Steel, who is a professor of medicine and social sciences and director of the Home Medical Service, will assume his new role in October. He is continuing forward to the job. "It's daunting but very exciting!" he said.

The WHO Program on Health of the Elderly is the outgrowth of a smaller-scale program that the WHO has had for several years. In his post, Steel will oversee cross-national epidemiological studies in four areas concerning the aged: dementia, osteoporosis, immunology, and "successful" aging. Concern over the health of the elderly constitutes a new direction for the WHO, which traditionally has focused primarily on health issues concerning babies and children and the control of infectious diseases, such as malaria, smallpox, and polio.

"Thanks to the WHO, smallpox, [for instance,] has basically been eradicated," Steel said. Now the WHO, which is an agency of the United Nations, is also addressing such issues as occupational health and the health of the elderly, both of which have significant political and economic ramifications.

In the study of "successful" aging, WHO researchers will seek an understanding of what constitutes growing old with maximal function and capability. Evidence indicates that disease, not aging, is the primary factor leading the body to fail. People who manage to avoid disease appear to have an excellent chance of living a long life.

"If it's primarily environmental factors [i.e., disease] that cause aging, they are potentially addressable," Steel said.
Goodglass: His dedication to study of aphasia hasn't dimmed

From his office on the 14th floor of the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Jamaica Plain, Harold Goodglass, Ph.D., a professor of neurology, talks about his research with the ardor of a fledgling scientist. A 26-year veteran of the School of Medicine's Department of Neurology, he has dedicated his career to trying to come to grips with a devastating medical condition rarely heard of by the layperson: aphasia.

Aphasia is characterized by a variety of speaking disorders resulting from injury to the left side of the brain. It leaves a person whose intellectual capacity often is fully intact unable to communicate, either partially or completely.

While the condition takes a variety of forms, depending on the location and type of damage, in general the capacity of the victims to use language is seriously debilitated. Some victims lose completely the ability to talk; others recognize an object but use the wrong word to describe it; others use nonsensical words unwittingly, while still others have difficulty reading or writing. Some cannot communicate, even through gesture. Aphasia is most commonly caused by stroke, though head injury, tumors, infections and other diseases also can cause the condition.

As the director of the University's Aphasia Research Center, a section of the Department of Neurology, Goodglass oversees an interdisciplinary department that both pursues theoretical studies of aphasia and provides rehabilitation therapy for patients. His staff includes researchers, physicians and research-clinical speech therapists who specialize in such fields as linguistics, neuroanatomy and speech pathology. Much of the staff's progress in understanding aphasia and developing effective therapies has been achieved through their empirical studies on patients.

While aphasia remains a crippling affliction for many, the outlook for recovery has improved over the last two decades, thanks in large part to the work at such institutions as the University's Aphasia Research Center. The longest-running organization for the study of aphasia in the nation, the Center currently is begin-

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also was a member of the board of trustees of The Hospital.

"In naming the School for Henry Goldman, Boston University recognized his unprecedented role as the only begetter of one of the premier schools in the world," said Boston University President John Silber, Ph.D. "Goldman was a great physician, a great educator and a great administrator, as well as a generous adviser, wise counselor and valued friend. The creator of the Graduate School of Dentistry, Dr. Goldman lives on in the lives and work of the hundreds of health professionals trained and educated here."

Spencer N. Frankl, D.D.S., M.S.D., dean of the Goldman School, described Goldman as "a leader, a scholar, a researcher and a mentor." He revolutionized the teaching and practice of dentistry by making it an integral part of medicine, Frankl said. "His outstanding achievements, vision and energy have left a legacy of excellence that will continue to flourish."

Goldman: "A great physician, a great educator, a valued friend"

Goldman published countless articles on periodontology, as well as numerous dental textbooks, including Periodontia, a standard textbook. During the course of his career, he served as editor of the Journal of Periodontology and Periodontics.

He received honorary degrees from Boston University, Brown University, University of Pennsylvania, New Jersey College of Medicine and Dentistry, University of Marseilles (France) and Central University of Venezuela.

His leadership roles also were numerous. He served as president of the American Society of Periodontists, president of the American Academy of Oral Pathology and chief of the Dental Pathology Section of the U.S. Army. He also was a consultant to the National Institutes of Health, the Surgeon General, the American Dental Association, the National Institute of Dental Research, the National Research Council, and the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command.

A native of Boston, Goldman graduated from Boston Latin School, received his bachelor's degree from Brown University in 1931 and his D.M.D. degree from Harvard School of Dental Medicine in 1935. Goldman, who was a resident of Chestnut Hill, Mass., is survived by his wife, Dorothy, two sons, Richard and Gerald, and six grandchildren.
Glaucosa screening results prove informative

One hundred fifteen Medical Center employees and their families participated in a free glaucoma-screening clinic on June 20, sponsored by The University Hospital's Gundersen Eye Center. This year's screening was broadened to include employees of Boston City Hospital and the Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center, as well as their families. Among the 115 people screened at the clinic, 6 percent showed evidence of glaucoma; 63 percent showed no evidence of glaucoma, and 31 percent who also showed no indication of glaucoma were advised to arrange for follow-up examinations due to other findings made during the screening, reports Maryellen Sheehan, assistant clinical supervisor at the Gundersen.

Of those participants who showed evidence of glaucoma, 57 percent reported a family history of the disease. Of those who showed no indication of the disease, 16 percent reported a family history of glaucoma. Twenty-six percent of those who showed no evidence of glaucoma, but were advised to seek follow-up, reported a family history of the disease, Sheehan notes.

A total of 22 percent of all participants reported a family history of the disease. According to Sheehan, the mean age of those who showed evidence of glaucoma was 48 years. The mean age of all 115 participants was 41 years old.

Hard work and tuition remission pay off for employee graduates

This past spring, seven School of Medicine employees, pictured below, received graduate degrees from the School of Medicine's Master in Public Health program, under Boston University's tuition-remission plan. The plan funds up to 100 percent of the tuition for employees and dependent children enrolled in most Boston University courses, and up to 50 percent for spouses of employees. University-wide, 42 Boston University employees graduated with masters degrees in various programs this spring.

Jane Marie Geraci, M.D.
Research Fellow, General Internal Medicine
Master in Public Health in epidemiology and bio-statistics, School of Medicine

Geraci is now an attending physician at the Houston VA Medical Center in Texas.

Marybeth Mercer
Administrative Assistant, Dermatology
Master in Public Health in social and behavioral sciences, School of Medicine

Mercer worked toward her degree on a part-time basis during the last three years, and currently is doing a part-time internship with the visiting Nurses Association of Greater Lynn in their HIV/AIDS program. She hopes to find a job as a health educator, teaching people about AIDS.

Scott Elliot Sherman, M.D.
Research Fellow, General Internal Medicine
Master in Public Health in epidemiology and bio-statistics, School of Medicine

Sherman is now an attending physician at the VA Medical Center in Sepulveda, Calif.

Charles Arthur Pickering
Assistant Radiosotope Safety Officer, Radiosotope Center, Radiation Protection Office
Master in Public Health in environmental health, School of Medicine

Constance Phillips
Director, Biochemistry
Master in Public Health in health services, School of Medicine

Phillips, who is director of the Program in Biomedical Laboratory and Clinical Sciences at the School, said she decided to get her masters degree the day she started her job and found out there was tuition reimbursement. "In monetary terms, it's a $20,000 degree for a couple of hundred dollars," she said.

Not pictured:
Marianne B. Sutton, M.D.
Physician, Pediatrics
Master in Public Health in health sciences, School of Medicine

Second University dental facility opens

Boston University's new Dental Facility at 930 Commonwealth Avenue West, which serves employees enrolled in the new Boston University Dental Health Plan, opened officially on June 17. The center has a full dental staff affiliated with the Goldman School of Graduate Dentistry. The University's other state-of-the-art dental facility is located at the Goldman School, at 100 East Newton Street.
Steel's WHO program will focus on cross-national studies on elderly

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But even looking at those without chronic illnesses, some people appear to age more successfully than others. "We're therefore studying successful aging to try to determine how we all might alter our lives so as to maximize our function until the latest possible time," Steel said.

By studying the members of multiple societies, researchers hope to find clues as to what factors promote not only longevity but successful aging. As part of their study, researchers will attempt to ascertain what these factors are and how information learned can be applied universally. Some indicators are already in.

"One of the correlates—not necessarily a cause—of living for 80 years is maintaining normal blood pressure," Steel said.

Strides in disease prevention and treatment already have had an enormous impact on life expectancy. In 1947, people in China could expect to live only until they were about 40 years old; today they can expect to live until they're 70 years old. In the United States, people born in 1900 had a life expectancy of 47 years; in contrast, Caucasian women born today can expect to live for about 80 years.

One of the goals of the Program on the Health of the Elderly is to promote research and appropriate policy development for the elderly of each society.

Steel is ready for the challenge. "I hope most earnestly that in a few years our program at the World Health Organization will be able to provide some clues to the causes of some of the most widespread diseases of the elderly, such as dementia and osteoporosis," he said. "In addition," he added, "may it contribute significantly to the more effective use of the resources available in both developed and developing countries to promote and maintain the health of all elderly persons in all parts of the world."

Steel's WHO program will focus on cross-national studies on elderly

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n a $600,000-per-year, five-year, National Institutes of Health grant. "We're busier now than ever before," Goodglass said.

In studying aphasia, researchers are seeking answers to fundamental questions about how the brain works. By learning why some patients physically can utter words but use language nonsensically and why other patients can come up with names of objects and body parts but not other types of words, researchers are gaining insight into the way in which language is processed. While fundamental questions remain, researchers have made significant headway in understanding and even in treating the condition.

One of the Center's most significant theoretical breakthroughs, spearheaded by Goodglass, was determining in the early 1950s that language is generated almost entirely on the left side of the brain. "The whole notion of cerebral dominance that is so popular now came out of observations on aphasia," many of which were made at the Center, Goodglass said. "It was used to be thought that if a person is left-handed, language is located in the left side of the brain, if right-handed, on the right side. I was possibly the first to publish a major piece of work that showed that was not so." Goodglass also was the first to suggest that left-handed people have a proclivity for developing aphasia, a theory that is still accepted.

Another important contribution of the Center was the development of a rehabilitation technique called Melodic Intonation Therapy, which enables some patients who are unable to express words through speech to utter the same words by chanting them rhythmically. Research indicates that melody is produced in the right hemisphere of the brain, which may explain why this technique works. This therapy has enabled many patients to break through the bondage aphasia has inflicted upon them.

Such breakthroughs in understanding language disorders put researchers that much closer to understanding the process of naming functions in healthy people, Goodglass pointed out. With each new insight, the web that makes up the language processes of the brain becomes more understandable. "That's why people stay in the field," Goodglass said.