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“There are advantages to using telemedicine for the care of inmates for both providers and the corrections’ facilities,” said Dr. Lisa Kaplowitz, Associate Professor, Division of Quality Health Care, and Medical Director of Ambulatory Care and the Telemedicine Program. For the Department of Corrections, transport of inmates to MCV Hospitals is not required, which greatly reduces security risks and saves money as well. For providers, there are fewer missed clinic visits, since visits are frequently cancelled by the DOC for security or personnel reasons. Providers within the DOC are present during telemedicine consultations, improving communication between physicians on the MCV Campus of VCU and providers within the DOC. In addition, providers within the DOC gain expertise in the management of chronic diseases such as HIV and hepatitis C.

Currently, there are three major telemedicine clinics within the Department of Medicine. The HIV clinic, attended by Dr. Evelyn Fisher, Associate Professor, Division of Infectious Diseases, as well as Robert Higginson, PA-C, and Jane Settle, NP, is held ten times per month. The cardiology clinic, attended by Dr. Walter Malloy, Assistant Professor, Division of Cardiology, is held once a month. The hepatology clinic is held twice a month and attended on a rotating basis by faculty of the Section of Hepatology. Special clinics in other specialties are held as needed. Because the
Robert Irby passed away on Sunday, January 21, 2000. He will be remembered by all with whom he came in contact at VCU, both patients and members of our health care team.

Dr. Irby joined the MCV faculty in 1954 and became an Emeritus Professor at VCU in 1992. He served as President of the Richmond Society of Internal Medicine (1966–67), President of the Richmond Academy of Medicine (1974), Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Richmond Academy of Medicine (1975), President of the National Society of Clinical Rheumatologists (1983–85), President of the MCV Foundation (1987–90), and Emeritus Member of the MCV Foundation Board of Directors (1994). He was a recipient of the Distinguished Faculty Award in Medicine from the Alumni Foundation in 1989, and received Distinguished Service Awards from the National Arthritis Foundation in 1956 and again in 1978 and from the VCU School of Medicine in 1995. He was a Master of the American College of Rheumatology and received the Laureate Award from the Virginia Chapter of the American College of Physicians. In 1994, the Robert Irby Professorship was established, with almost $300,000 in cash and over $100,000 in pledges. VCU honored Dr. Irby in 1998 by awarding him the Presidential Medal. Later this year, the Caravati Award from the MCV Alumni Association will be posthumously bestowed upon Dr. Irby.

Fundraising is where Dr. Irby has made singularly unique and outstanding contributions to VCU, unsurpassed by any other member of our school. Because of his clinical prowess, charm, indefatigable wit, and empathetic approach and assiduous devotion to patients and their families, he catalyzed fundraising for numerous endowments, amounting to in excess of $7,000,000:

- Charles and Evelyn Thomas Chair (Rheumatology, Allergy & Immunology)
- Elam Toone Professorship (Rheumatology, Allergy & Immunology)
- Talalern-Scott Professorship (Rheumatology, Allergy & Immunology)
- Charles Thomas Professorship (Rheumatology, Allergy & Immunology)
- Evelyn Thomas Professorship in Epidemiology (Public Health)
- Caravati Professorship (Gastroenterology)
- W. T. Thompson Professorship (Pulmonary)
- Thomas Lectureship (Rheumatology)
- Thomas Student Loan Fund Endowment (Medical Students)
- Thomas Fellowship Endowment (Rheumatology, Allergy & Immunology)

Our community has benefited immeasurably from Dr. Irby’s involvement. He will be long-remembered.

Contributed by Lawrence B. Schwartz, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor and Chairman, Division of Rheumatology, Allergy, & Immunology

Art Medicine
Highlighted at Medical Grand Rounds

Carlos Espinel, M.D., former faculty member in the VCU Department of Internal Medicine, reviewed evidence of disease depictions in art on February 4th, including polio, recognized by medical science only in the nineteenth century yet found in a 1426 fresco by Masaccio, and juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, also recognized in the nineteenth century yet found in a 1608 work by Caravaggio. Dr. Espinel, currently clinical professor at Georgetown University Medical Center, has recognized illness afflicting artists including Kooning, Rembrandt, and Michelangelo.

A native of Richmond, Dr. G. Watson James, III, graduated from the Medical College of Virginia in 1943. After his residency at MCV, he served in the US Army Medical Corps from 1946 to 1948, attaining the rank of Captain. After the service, Dr. James returned to MCV as a research fellow in Medicine with the rank of assistant professor. He was promoted to associate professor in 1954 and then to professor of medicine and pathology in 1965. From 1958 to 1970, Dr. James served as the Chairman of the Division of Hematology. He was promoted to Professor Emeritus in 1996. Among his numerous awards were the John and May R. Markle Scholarship (1949 to 1954), the MCV Alumni Distinguished Teacher Award (1987), the Louise Obis Memorial Hospital Annual Clinical Conference Award (1989), and memberships in Alpha Omega Alpha, Sigma Zeta, and Sigma Xi. Dr. James published over 65 articles and abstracts.

During his career, Dr. James conducted seminal research on blood disorders, including sickle cell disease, pernicious anemia, and leukemia. His clinical research included some of the earliest efforts in chemotherapy for treatment of cancers and blood disorders.

Contributed by Michael F. Barnes

Dr. G. Watson James, III
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