Dedicated teacher, surgeon, humanitarian Frank B. Miller, M.D., passed away Dec. 23, 2017. The Department of Surgery held a memorial service in his honor in January. It is no surprise that more than 220 people attended because to know Dr. Miller was to love him. His kindness toward others shined brightly throughout his life, and he committed much of his life to giving back through teaching and medical mission work.

An Indiana native and graduate of Indiana University School of Medicine, Dr. Miller served a tour of duty in Vietnam, where he was a captain, prior to completing a general surgery residency at the University of Louisville. He joined the University of Louisville Department of Surgery faculty in 1984. Dr. Miller rose to the rank of Professor of Surgery, where he enjoyed a distinguished career as a surgeon and educator, and served as Chief of Surgery at University of Louisville Hospital for more than a decade. He also served as Chief of General Surgery, Director of Surgical Education and Director of Trauma for the Department of Surgery.

Dr. Miller was a member of several prestigious surgical societies. He had numerous leadership roles on a local, state and national level and lectured throughout the world. He published more than 100 scientific articles and book chapters and received innumerable teaching awards—so many that one such award was subsequently named in his honor. Dr. Miller had a long history of international medical service in third-world countries on three continents.

“Dr. Miller was the safety net for a generation of surgical residents, who always called upon him to help with the most difficult situations. He practiced general, vascular and trauma surgery with the greatest skill and compassion imaginable,” said Kelly McMasters, M.D., Ph.D., Chairman of the Department of Surgery. “He improved or saved the lives of innumerable patients. He was adored by an entire generation of medical students, residents, fellows, nurses and other healthcare professionals for his teaching skill and compassion. His service to University of Louisville Hospital was unrivaled.”

On July 18, 2018, the operating suites at University of Louisville Hospital were officially renamed the Frank B. Miller, M.D. Operating Suites in honor of the venerable Dr. Miller. In addition, his brothers John “Spider” Miller and Don Miller created the Frank Miller, M.D. Surgery Resident Education and Medical Mission Fund, which supports scholarships for surgery resident education, as well as participation in medical trips to underserved countries. If you’d like to honor Dr. Miller’s memory and celebrate his legacy at the University of Louisville with a gift to this fund, please contact Élea Mihou Fox at 502.852.3380 or email her at elea.fox@louisville.edu.
Welcome to the 2018 issue of Sutureline, a newsletter about the Hiram C. Polk, Jr., M.D., Department of Surgery at the University of Louisville.

While it has been a tumultuous year for the University of Louisville, the Department of Surgery has continued to thrive. Once again this year, we recruited an outstanding group of residents in General Surgery and Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery and excellent Colorectal Surgery, Surgical Oncology, Pediatric Surgery, Critical Care and ERCP fellows.

In this issue of Sutureline, we pay tribute to accomplished surgeon, academician and a man highly revered by all, Frank B. Miller, M.D., who passed away last December. We continue our faculty and staff feature that we launched last year, boast about numerous faculty and staff accomplishments, and much more.

We would like to thank all of you who have donated to the Department of Surgery this year. We truly appreciate your loyalty. We need your support more than ever this year to continue our missions in surgical education, patient care and research so the tradition of excellence of the Department of Surgery at the University of Louisville, which dates back to 1837, can continue.

If you have not already given or have the capacity to do more, please consider making a gift to the Department of Surgery this holiday season.

Warmest wishes for the holidays and the year ahead,

Kelly M. McMasters, M.D., Ph.D.
Ben A. Reid, Sr., M.D., Professor and Chairman
Hiram C. Polk, Jr., M.D., Department of Surgery
University of Louisville School of Medicine

Owen’s Wish Fund Update

The Owen’s Wish Fund for Cancer Immunotherapy Research of the J. Graham Brown Cancer Center was established in honor of Owen McMasters in October 2016. It will enable the Brown Cancer Center to develop a world-class group of scientists and physicians dedicated to advancing the field of cancer immunotherapy and providing state-of-the-art immunotherapy care for patients in our region.

To date, $123,629 has been raised, and the Brown Cancer Center is conducting a search for two immuneoncologists. Gifts will be used to support their needs in establishing this research program.

To donate, please visit uoflbrowncancercenter.org/owens-wish

Department Surgeons, Alums Admitted into American College of Surgeons Academy of Master Surgeon Educators™

Department of Surgery faculty members Hiram C. Polk, Jr., M.D. and J. David Richardson, M.D. were among a group of 91 esteemed surgeons from seven countries selected into membership or associate membership in the new American College of Surgeons (ACS) Academy of Master Surgeon Educators™. The Academy’s first induction ceremony was held Oct. 3, 2018.

Drs. Polk and Richardson were selected as members. Former Department of Surgery faculty members Kirby Bland, M.D. and Lewis Flint, M.D. also were selected as members. In addition, former Department of Surgery fellows David Livingston, M.D. (Trauma and Surgical Critical Care fellow), Romeo Ignacio Jr., M.D. (Pediatric Surgery fellow) and Don N. Reed Jr., M.D. (ERCP fellow) were selected as associate master educators.

Developed under the auspices of the ACS Division of Education, the Academy recognizes surgeon educators who have devoted their careers to surgical education. Individuals are selected as members or associate members following stringent peer review.
The Department of Surgery held the inaugural R. Neal Garrison, M.D. Lectureship Feb. 15 and 16, 2018. The speaker was Charles M. Miller, M.D., program director for liver transplantation at the Cleveland Clinic. Dr. Garrison was a Professor of Surgery and Professor of Physiology and Biophysics in the Department of Surgery for 35 years.

During his distinguished career, Dr. Garrison served as Chief of Surgery for 12 years, Associate Dean for Veterans Affairs and Acting Chief of Staff at the Veterans Administration Medical Center. In addition, he directed the Department of Surgery undergraduate surgical education curriculum for eight years. In the eighties, he was instrumental in developing the abdominal organ transplant program for the Department of Surgery. He was the co-founder of the Kentucky Organ Donor Affiliates (KODA) in 1987 and continued as its Medical Director. He was named a University of Louisville Distinguished University Scholar from 2008 to 2015.

In 2015, KODA pledged $100,000 to establish the R. Neal Garrison, M.D. Endowed Surgical Lectureship Fund in honor of Dr. Garrison’s role in co-founding KODA and the important work he has accomplished related to transplantation in Kentucky.
HARSHINI SAROJINI, Ph.D., received a Wound Healing Research Scholarship presented to her at the Symposium on Advanced Wound Care and the Wound Healing Society in San Diego, CA. Dr. Sarojini joined the VitaSol™ research group in 2011 at the University of Louisville to elucidate the cellular mechanisms behind the faster wound healing. She has received several awards for her research contributions. She is studying the molecular mechanisms responsible for faster wound healing and is the principal investigator of the diabetic wound healing project at the University of Louisville.

Dr. Sarojini with Past President of the Wound Healing Society, Marjana Tomic-Canic, Ph.D.

A champion of medical education and a patient advocate, clinical faculty member JOHN L. FALCONE, M.D., M.S., was recently recognized for his tremendous contributions as a surgical educator with the Association for Surgical Education Linnea Hauge, Ph.D. Promising Educational Scholar Award. In addition, he was selected to receive a University of Louisville Gratis Faculty Teaching Award.

At the University of Louisville Department of Surgery, Dr. Falcone has been an integral part of our teaching faculty in the community rotation in Owensboro, KY. The hospital in Owensboro is a regular rotation for general surgical residents who are actively mentored and trained in a comprehensive, community surgical experience. As many academic institutions now lack a meaningful community hospital rotation, Dr. Falcone’s leadership of that program has been invaluable to the education of our surgical residents. His teaching evaluations from medical students and surgical residents are always excellent.

A Major in the United States Air Force, Dr. Reid practiced medicine at nearly all area hospitals for more than 50 years before retiring in 2013. He has been on the clinical faculty in the Department of Surgery since 1975.

Dr. Reid served on the Board of Directors of St. Mary & Elizabeth Hospital and Preferred Physicians. He served as President of the Medical Staff at St. Mary & Elizabeth Hospital and Louisville Surgical Society. He has been a member of numerous professional organizations including the American College of Gastroenterology, Kentucky Medical Society, the American College of Surgeons and the American Society of General Surgeons.

The Department of Surgery presented the 2018 Samuel Gross, M.D. Career of Service Award to Dr. Reid at the 2018 Chief Residents’ Dinner in June.

CAREER OF SERVICE

Ben A. Reid, Jr., M.D.
Recipient of 2018 Samuel Gross, M.D. Career of Service Award

The Department of Surgery established the Samuel Gross, M.D., Career of Service Award in 2006 to honor physicians who have dedicated their lives to medicine.

This year’s recipient is lifelong friend of the Department of Surgery, former resident, clinical faculty member and dedicated surgeon Ben A. Reid, Jr., M.D.

Dr. Reid received his medical degree in 1966 from the University of Kentucky School of Medicine. He completed his general surgery residency at the University of Louisville Hospital in 1971.

2017 Gross Award Recipient
Dr. Ben A. Reid, Jr. with Dr. Kelly McMasters, Chairman, Department of Surgery, at the 2018 Chief Residents’ Dinner

The Department of Surgery presented the 2018 Samuel Gross, M.D. Career of Service Award to Dr. Reid at the 2018 Chief Residents’ Dinner in June.
The Kentucky Medical Association presented its Educational Achievement Award to **Bradon Wilhelmi, M.D.** at the 2018 KMA Annual Meeting on Aug. 25, 2018. The award is presented to individuals who have made outstanding contributions and achievements in the area of continuing medical education.

Dr. Wilhelmi is the Leonard Weiner Endowed Professor and Chief of Plastic Surgery and Reconstructive Surgery and Residency Program Director in the Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. He was recognized for his efforts to revitalize the University of Louisville’s Plastic Surgery Residency program. Upon joining the faculty in 2007, Dr. Wilhelmi worked to revamp the program. Since his changes were implemented, the program’s annual in-service scores have improved by 200 percent, and the board pass rate has been 100 percent since he came to the Department. His mentorship of students involved in research projects has culminated in 130 scientific research publications and 25 textbook chapters. He is often lauded by colleagues for having a passion and dedication to teaching and has mentored more than 25 residents and 75 medical students.

A native of Joliet, IL, Dr. Wilhelmi attended medical school at Rush Medical College and completed his residency in general surgery at Northwestern University and plastic surgery at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. He then completed a fellowship in hand/microsurgery at the Massachusetts General Hospital prior to a beginning his career in academic plastic surgery at Southern Illinois University.

Dr. Wilhelmi said his mother encouraged him to pursue a career in medicine.

“My mom brainwashed me over breakfast since I was 5 years of age, telling me daily that I should become a doctor and plastic surgeon over homemade chocolate pancakes, Belgian waffles and crepes,” he said. “Ultimately, I went into medicine to help people, possessing a charged intrinsic drive to help heal and help others both spiritually and physically.”

He chose plastic surgery to help others become whole again.

“Caring for my dad after he amputated his thumb when I was 12, I recognized the challenge of the field of plastic surgery and hand surgery to make patients whole again as my father had his thumb successfully replanted,” Dr. Wilhelmi said.

Dr. Wilhelmi’s approach to care is to strive to deliver safe and appropriate care as though each patient were a family member.

“Appropriate care is individualized to the patients’ needs and demands based on their family situation, job expectations and hobbies as developed through multiple in-depth discussions and visits with the patients prior to operations,” he said.

His anatomic research interest is to perform plastic and hand surgery procedures more safely and with minimally invasive approaches, and his clinical research is aimed at individualizing care in the reconstruction of breast cancer defects, and hand, breast and abdominal conditions.

“I am very fortunate to have this position and opportunity to help patients, residents and students full time day and night,” he said.

Outside of work, Dr. Wilhelmi enjoys dining at “weird” Louisville restaurants with his wife, attending his son’s swim meets, Louisville sporting events and the Kentucky Derby, family vacations, fishing and golf.
Debbie Krause, Department of Surgery Coordinator, received the inaugural Dean’s Lifetime Achievement Award at the University of Louisville School of Medicine Dean’s Appreciation Reception, Nov. 13, 2018.

The Dean’s Lifetime Achievement Award was created by School of Medicine Dean Toni Ganzel, M.D., as a special recognition for employees who have served the school with excellence for many years. Debbie has worked for the Department of Surgery for nearly 45 years. During her tenure, she has completed a variety of tasks in service to the University of Louisville with the greatest loyalty, professionalism, competence and grace.

“Debbie exemplifies the excellence we strive to achieve in the Department. Throughout the course of her career, Debbie has always paid meticulous attention to detail and plans well in advance for every possible contingency. She is the consummate ambassador for the University, as she is our liaison with countless other institutions and leaders in American medicine and surgery,” said Kelly McMasters, M.D., Ph.D., Chairman of the Department of Surgery. “She exudes warmth for our medical students and residents, as well as new and veteran faculty and co-workers. She remembers the names of their spouses and children, as well as special details about each and every one of them. For her role in coordinating our visiting lectureships and grand rounds programs, Debbie is the perfect host and continually receives letters of praise from visiting professors and their staff.”

Debbie was hired to join the Department of Surgery in 1974 as a receptionist. Today, she coordinates grand rounds, visiting lectureships, the annual Chief Residents’ Graduation Dinner, retirement celebrations and memorial services. She also organizes the Louisville Surgical Society and the Hiram C. Polk, JR., M.D. Surgical Society, and always helps out anywhere else she is needed.

Debbie said her favorite part of her job is the people she has met and the places she has visited. She also takes great pride in the national exposure and recognition Department faculty members receive. She values the way the Department faculty, staff, residents and fellows come together in time of need.

“This is truly my other family,” Debbie said. “When I was diagnosed with breast cancer, I came into the office before my first chemo treatment and there on Sharlene’s desk was a “Little Debbie” box of goodies, along with pins with my photo and a breast cancer ribbon. The staff collected money in my honor that went to the Susan Komen Foundation. Can you imagine any place more giving and kind?”

Outside of work, Debbie enjoys spending time with her family, including her beloved grandson, following UofL sports and reading. She and her family also enjoy “all things Disney” so one of their favorite places to vacation is Disney World.

While Debbie has given so much of herself the past 40 years, she also has gained something in return.

“Growing up I was very insecure and unsure of myself. At the beginning, under the guidance of Dr. Polk, he once told me ‘I wouldn’t ask you to do something that I didn’t think you could do,’” Debbie said. “And for the past 13 years under Dr. McMasters’ direction I have been made to feel able to do just about anything. I feel more proud and amazed than I could ever have imagined.”

Debbie with her grandson, Harrison, and husband, Gary
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Please return this card with your gift and indicate any change in your address.

Questions? Contact Elea Mihou Fox at 502-852-3380 or email her at elea.fox@louisville.edu.

Please mail this form back to:
Lex Wafford
UofL Department of Surgery
Ambulatory Care Building
550 South Jackson Street
Second Floor
Louisville, KY 40202

SAVE THE DATE

MATHEWS ORATION
Thursday, January 24, 2019............. Louisville Surgical Society
Friday, January 25, 2019............... Surgery Grand Rounds

GARRISON LECTURESHIP
Thursday, February 28, 2019............. Louisville Surgical Society
Friday, March 1, 2019 ..................... Surgery Grand Rounds

GRISWOLD LECTURESHIP
Friday, March 15, 2019 .................... Surgery Grand Rounds

GROSS LECTURESHIP
Friday, May 17, 2019 ..................... Surgery Grand Rounds

CHIEF RESIDENT GRADUATION DINNER
Thursday, June 27, 2019

SHORT LECTURESHIP
Thursday, September 5, 2019 ............. Louisville Surgical Society
Friday, Sept. 6, 2019 ...................... Surgery Grand Rounds

YANDELL POLK LECTURE
Thursday, October 17, 2019 ............. Louisville Surgical Society
Friday, October 18, 2019 ................. Surgery Grand Rounds
Where Are They Now

2018 Residents

DAVID ALBERS, M.D., Private Practice, Houston, TX
SAMUEL CARSON, M.D., Colorectal Fellowship, Houston, TX
JAHONGIR MURADOV, M.D., Private Practice, Greenville, KY
ANNIE NAGENGAST, M.D., Surgical Critical Care Fellowship, Portland, OR
DUSTIN PORTER, M.D., Private Practice, Rupert, ID
JESSICA RAQUE, M.D., Private Practice, Owensboro, KY
JONATHAN RICE, M.D., Thoracic & Cardiovascular Research, Louisville, KY
JESSICA WEAVER, M.D., Surgical Critical Care Fellowship, Philadelphia, PA

Left to right: Sam Carson, M.D., Dustin Porter, M.D., Annie Nagengast, M.D., Jessica Weaver, M.D., Kelly McMasters, M.D., Ph.D., Chairman, Jessica Raque, M.D., Jo Muradov, M.D. and Molly Poole, Graduate Medical Education Coordinator

CALL TO ALUMNI:
Please keep in touch and let us know what is happening with you, your practice and your family. We apologize in advance for any errors of omission. Please send your news items and updated addresses to RTBomb01@louisville.edu or call 502.931.8804.