



Powell (middle) with colleagues during the USNS *Comfort's* relief mission to Haiti early in 2010.

## CLASS NOTES

### '60s

Three months into his freshman year at Cornell University, **Maurice Mahoney** (MD '62) realized his intended major, chemical engineering, was a mismatch. "I wanted to be able to shift directions, shift emphasis," he says. So, he pursued a career in academic medicine. Now in his 40th year on the faculty at the Yale School of Medicine, Mahoney is professor of genetics, pediatrics, and obstetrics and gynecology, director of clinical affairs, and executive chair of the school's human research protection program (which allowed him to dust off his JD—yes, in the '90s, he studied law, too). Although his responsibilities are now "more diverse than ever," Mahoney still finds time to run with another crowd: triathletes. He says he prefers triathlons to his old hobby of half marathons. "I suppose because on the bike, you get to just sit for a while," he says.

### '70s

At the bedside of a critically ill patient, every syllable and pause has gravity. As a specialist in hematology and oncology, **Eric Kraut** (MD '76) has become a firm believer in the "tremendous power" of language. Ten years ago, he published in *The Oncologist* "At the Edge of Suffering," a poem about his struggle to find the right words for a patient, a 33-year-old woman with leukemia. In March 2010, Kraut was honored with the Earl N. Metz Distinguished Physician Award by Ohio State University Medical Center's Department of Internal Medicine, where he is a professor and director of benign hematology. Kraut relished writing his speech for the ceremony. "It was a great opportunity to reflect not only on the impact I've

had on other people, but on the impact others have had on me." In his talk, he tipped his hat to his mentors, including Arthur Sagone (MD '63), a former Ohio State professor of medicine.

### '80s

At age 17, **Patric McPoland** (MD '80) hosted across Europe. After his first year at Pitt med, he hitchhiked to California. And in the '90s, he served in the Navy as a commander in Operation Desert Storm. This July, McPoland—who's now a civilian dermatologist based in West Palm Beach—set out on another sea excursion. He provided general medical care in Indonesia on the USNS *Mercy* as part of Pacific Partnership 2010, an annual humanitarian-assistance deployment to Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific. On the *Mercy*—which served as a disaster-relief training center for physicians and a floating hospital for patients in Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Timor-Leste—McPoland and fellow Pitt med alums **Alan Lim** (MD '91), **Scott Flinn** (MD '88), and **Arturo Torres** (MD '06) were part of a diverse, international contingent of specialists delivering treatment to regions lacking basic medical care. "It was as intensely colorful as any adventure I've ever had," McPoland says.

As a pediatrics resident at Children's Hospital more than 30 years ago, **Clydetta Powell** (Pediatrics Resident '79, Child Neurology Fellow '82) first used a helicopter to reach sick newborns in the more remote areas surrounding Pittsburgh. This January, Powell—now a medical officer for infectious disease in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)—braved the skies once again, this time transporting trauma victims over Haiti's earthquake-ravaged terrain. As the sole pediatric neurologist on the USNS *Comfort's* relief mission from January to mid-February, Powell worked 19-hour days, treating earthquake-related neurological injuries (such as spinal cord trauma) as well as unrelated conditions

(including tuberculosis). In May, she and fellow *Comfort* neurologists published a paper in *The Lancet Neurology* outlining the importance of neurology and its subspecialties in disaster response.

As a doctor in pediatrics, **Scott Serbin** (MD '82) became dissatisfied with the pace of his job, "running, running all the time." But instead of quitting his practice, he transformed it. Five years ago, Serbin opened a pediatric concierge practice. Appointments can be scheduled nearly any time parents request, and Serbin only makes house calls. Serbin says he "didn't suddenly become a better doctor by switching to this style of medicine." But he did finally have the time to wait for a sick child to stop crying—an advantage that's helped him better connect with his patients.

**John McConaghy** (MD '89), now a professor of family medicine at Ohio State University, has won his department's teacher of the year award six years in a row. The secret to good teaching, he says, is simple: Love what you do. "It's very rewarding watching the young students of medicine grow and mature. We often think of them as our children."

In addition to his performing teaching and clinical duties, he chairs quality and patient safety for University Hospitals East—and keeps up with his actual children. His two teenagers play three sports each, and between all those games, "Dr. Mac" squeezes in scoutmaster duties for his son's Boy Scouts troop. "You've got to enjoy it while it lasts," he says. "You're only young once."

### '90s

In July, **Richard Pan** (MD '91), associate professor of pediatrics at UC Davis Children's Hospital, received the 2010 Physician Humanitarian Award from the Medical Board of California for his dedication to caring for underserved patients in the Sacramento area. Pan is founder of Communities and Health Professionals Together, which connects resident physicians with disadvantaged communities, and cofounder of Healthy Kids Healthy Future, which has provided health, dental, and vision coverage to more than 65,000 California kids.

Pan's experience has taught him that there's a lot more to health than health care, he says. For example, he can tell patients and their families to eat healthfully, but what