



WHITE COAT ADDRESS, 2009 DEAN DENNIS S. CHARNEY, MD

MOUNT SINAI
SCHOOL OF
MEDICINE

Dennis S. Charney, MD, The Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz Dean of Mount Sinai School of Medicine and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs of The Mount Sinai Medical Center, delivered the following remarks at the 12th Annual White Coat Ceremony on September 14, 2009, in Stern Auditorium.

The White Coat Ceremony marks the beginning of the academic year and welcomes first-year students into the medical profession. As students are helped into their white coats by faculty, they are reminded of the significance of their profession and their responsibility to balance scientific knowledge with compassion.

Class of 2013, parents, family members and friends, this is a day to be thankful and proud. It is a day of remembrance and a day to anticipate the future.

Parents—I am sure that the path that has led our newest medical students to today's ceremony was paved by your love, your support—financial and otherwise, and, of course, the example you have set.

You can be assured that we take the education of the students before us today very seriously. In many respects, they are the best and the brightest. They have enormous potential that remains to be tapped.

It is the responsibility of Mount Sinai to make sure that their potential is realized. However, and this I direct to the students, it is your responsibility to put all your passion, your intellectual fire power, and your ethical convictions into the process of becoming a great physician.

As Dr. Davis detailed, the School of Medicine has never been better. It is now one of the truly great medical schools in the world. For example, Mount Sinai is one of only two medical schools to be ranked in the top 20 in research funding from the NIH, to be ranked among the top 20 hospitals in the nation by U.S. News and World Report, and to be a recipient of the Association of American Medical Colleges' most prestigious award for community service.

The key to our success in achieving our tripartite mission of education, research and patient care is a culture of uncompromising excellence.

Our country is poised for healthcare reform that is decades overdue. The success of healthcare reform very much depends upon academic health centers like Mount Sinai.

With increased funding for biomedical research, we are confident, in the years to come, that Mount Sinai will make major discoveries toward the prevention, treatment, and even cures of human disease—which will lower health care costs. We are poised to fully participate in the creation of a healthcare system that is more inclusive and raises the quality of care.

However, perhaps the most important contribution we can make is to train the New American Physician, one who is more committed to both science and patient care, is more selfless, and is more ethical. The students in this room will follow in the footsteps of Mount Sinai Medical School graduates who are known throughout the world for their compassion, technical expertise, scientific discoveries, and leadership.

Many of the students before you today will devote their professional life to the less fortunate—and spearhead efforts to reform our healthcare system to provide equal care to all Americans. Many will become superb clinicians, providing state of the art care to their patients.

And finally these students will become leaders, in what we believe, will be a generation of unprecedented discovery that will fundamentally change the practice of medicine. In their lifetime, cancer will be a chronic and not terminal disease, heart disease will be prevented and cured, Mental Illness will be free of stigma and better understood and treated, and there will be so much more.

So, let the journey BEGIN!