

# Mount Sinai inside



William Donovan, born three weeks early with congenital heart disease, looks at his mother Jennie from the safety of his bed in Mount Sinai's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. He arrived from NYU Langone Medical Center at the height of the storm.

## Care and Shelter From the Storm

On behalf of the Mount Sinai Boards of Trustees, I want to express profound appreciation for the extraordinary efforts of physicians, nurses, staff, students, and executive leaders as Hurricane Sandy assaulted New York City and much of the East Coast of the United States.

Putting patient, neighborhood, and staff safety first, leaders at The Mount Sinai Medical Center activated the Emergency Command Center at 6 pm on Sunday, October 28, and the response was swift, coordinated, and truly exemplary. Physicians, nurses, and staff reported to duty and on that first night, more than 300 volunteers—including many students—stayed on campus, sleeping in shifts to ensure full staffing in all areas.



Peter W. May,  
Chairman, Boards  
of Trustees,  
The Mount Sinai  
Medical Center

(continued on back page)

## Swift Response and Selfless Dedication: A Letter From Kenneth L. Davis, MD

It has been two weeks since Hurricane Sandy made landfall in the greater New York City area, and since that time, The Mount Sinai Medical Center has operated beyond its regular inpatient capacity and will continue to do so for the next few weeks. Our ability to coordinate a strong-and-nimble response during a citywide crisis, and to provide continuous, high-level care to so many patients, is a testament to the outstanding staff we have in all areas of the institution.

To put patients first under extraordinarily challenging circumstances, you made great personal sacrifices. You organized car pools when public transportation was down, arranged child and elder care on short notice, slept in ad-hoc dormitories and on your office floor; you also delayed resolving your own storm-related problems in order to keep Mount Sinai Hospital fully staffed. These and other selfless acts brought peace of mind to all of our patients and their families during a harrowing time. I could not be more proud of your effort, performance, and commitment.



In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, Kenneth L. Davis, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer of The Mount Sinai Medical Center, LEFT, toured Mount Sinai's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit with CNN Chief Medical Correspondent Sanjay Gupta, MD, to visit some of the tiniest patients who were brought there.

### Lookinside

- A Hospital, Prepared
- Students Provide Vital Support
- Mount Sinai Hosts Three-Day SinaInnovations Conference

(continued on back page)

# A Hospital, Prepared

The Mount Sinai Medical Center was preparing for an increase in the demand for emergency and inpatient services as Hurricane Sandy approached. "Patients who were scheduled to be released from Mount Sinai were safely discharged before the inclement weather, and all ambulatory and elective services were postponed to accommodate new patients," said Wayne Keathley, President and Chief Operating Officer, The Mount Sinai Hospital.

When NYU Langone Medical Center and Bellevue Hospital Center lost power, Mount Sinai was ready with beds and staff to accept 107 evacuated patients, many of whom had serious and complex conditions and arrived with sparse medical records. "Physicians, nurses, support, and ancillary staff all worked side by side to handle this tremendous influx of patients," said Erin DuPree, MD, Chief Medical Officer of The Mount Sinai Medical Center. Kevin Chason, DO, Director of Emergency Management, and Brad Beckstrom, Director of Community and Government Affairs, served as liaisons to city and state officials, and the Greater New York Hospital Association, to coordinate patient transfers.

The Medical Center's Emergency Command Center was activated and began to make plans for infrastructure protection, patient care, supply procurement, and around-the-clock staffing to keep all patients and employees safe. "Many RNs, as well as other staff, came to work a day ahead of the storm, and planned to stay for the duration," said Carol Porter, DNP, RN, FAAN, Chief Nursing Officer, Senior Vice President of The Mount Sinai Medical Center, and the Edgar M. Cullman, Sr. Chair of the Department of Nursing.

Building Services set up accommodations for 1,200 staff and physicians who needed periods of rest, and security personnel created shuttle services for employees and patient discharges. Meanwhile, a team of 140 food service department employees kept patients and staff fed; IT developed extra precautions to safeguard patient records; Building Services and Engineering personnel helped transform a former ambulatory cancer treatment center into an inpatient unit; and Pharmacy and Materials Management staff ensured adequate supplies.

There are hundreds, if not several thousand Mount Sinai employees who performed selfless acts of personal kindness for colleagues. Among them was Kathleen Leonard, MD, Assistant Professor of Pathology, who emailed Ila Singh, MD, PhD, Vice Chair of Clinical Pathology, the day after the storm: *"I have a 4-wheel drive SUV, and a full tank of gas. If there is staff willing to come, I can pick them up."*

In the days after the storm, Mount Sinai continued to reach out to the New York community. David T. Stern, MD, Professor of Medicine, and Medical Education, took a suggestion from his wife, Alexandra



Members of the Emergency Command Center team, SEATED FROM LEFT: Marianne Coughlin, Vice President, Hospital Operations; Carol Porter, DNP, RN, FAAN; Maria Vezina, EdD, RN, Senior Director, Nursing Education and Professional Practice; Mark Callahan, MD, Chief Medical Officer of the Faculty Practice Associates and Mount Sinai Network; and Barbara Murphy, MD, Acting Chair, Department of Medicine; STANDING FROM LEFT: Toni Maily, Senior Director, Department of Laboratories; Claudia Colgan, RN, Vice President of Quality Initiatives; David T. Stern, MD; Andrew Dunn, MD, Acting Chief, Division of Hospital Medicine; Grace Marin, MBA, MSN, RN, Clinical Program Manager, Cullman Institute; Brian Radbill, MD, Vice Chair of Quality for the Department of Medicine; Anne Dickerson, Project Coordinator, Hospital Administration; and Kenny Chu, Senior Director, IT Security



Annabelle Nieves, Security Manager, and volunteers from Mount Sinai staff, helped load a van with hospital supplies for Staten Island physicians.

Ackerman, MD, to Mr. Keathley and Tim Burgunder, Director of Security, to have the hospital help Staten Island. Dr. Stern, his two sons, Harrison and Parker, and volunteers from Mount Sinai staff brought 10 boxes of cleaning supplies, sponges, gloves, and garbage bags to Staten Island physicians, donations made possible by Building Services and Crothall Healthcare. "Mount Sinai once again has met the challenge of providing care under extraordinary circumstances to our patients and our communities," said Mr. Keathley.



FROM LEFT: In the former Derald H. Ruttenberg Treatment Center, which was transformed into an inpatient unit, are Marie Payen, RN; Emma Migrino, RN, BSN; Jeffrey M. Baumgardner, MD, Chief Resident, Internal Medicine; Katie Ip, RN, BSN, MSN, Clinical Nurse Manager; Julia Eagan, LCSW; and Elizabeth Koskinen, LCSW.



Nurses from NYU Langone Medical Center were welcomed to Mount Sinai by, FRONT ROW: Erin DuPree, MD, left; Carol Torchen, MSN, RN, Director of Nursing, Women's and Children's Services, second from left; Carol Porter, DNP, RN, FAAN, fourth from left; Peter W. May, Chairman, Boards of Trustees, The Mount Sinai Medical Center, middle; Kenneth L. Davis, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer, The Mount Sinai Medical Center, fifth from right; BACK ROW: Michael Brodman, MD, Chair, Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Science; Rachel Barr, MD, Resident; and Susan Hiraldo, RN.

## Students Provide Vital Support

Before Hurricane Sandy bore down on New York City on Monday, October 29, with 80-mile-an-hour winds and the highest storm tides ever recorded in the region, Mount Sinai School of Medicine students were organized and ready to pitch in. Using the lessons learned from their involvement in Hurricane Irene only a year earlier, members of the students' Disaster Preparedness Committee created their own command center in the Patricia and Robert Levinson Student Center on the first floor in the Annenberg building, and began assigning volunteers.

"It was incredible how many students stepped up for multiple six-hour shifts," says Carine Davila, a first-year student and member of the Mount Sinai Student Council, who was one of the organizers. All told, some 250 students from the medical school and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences—almost one-quarter of the student body—volunteered their time over several days.

Students from the graduate school assisted in making sure more than 200 of Mount Sinai's research labs were secure. They documented emergency contacts, checked to make sure digital thermometers were set to appropriate temperatures on all of the refrigerators and freezers holding experiments, and were ready to transport dry ice in case the power went off. In addition, they checked for flooding in the classrooms and outpatient clinics.



FROM LEFT: Teddy John Wohlbold and Jacqui Rabkin, both second-year MD, PhD students; and Jason Rapaport, a second-year medical student, were among 30 volunteers from Mount Sinai who provided assistance to elderly residents living downtown without electricity on Saturday, November 3. The students checked on patients' vital signs, made sure prescriptions were filled, and distributed ready-made meals from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Photo courtesy of Syd London

Medical students concentrated their efforts in clinical areas, providing one-to-one patient observations, manning reception desks, and assisting in the arrival of patients from NYU Langone Medical Center and Bellevue Hospital Center.

"Mount Sinai's student volunteers were organized and tireless in their efforts to ensure that our clinical operations ran smoothly throughout the storm and beyond," says 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. "Witnessing their selflessness and dedication, I am confident that they will become scientists and physicians who are committed, selfless, ethical, and at the same time transformative in their accomplishments."



Student leaders coordinated assistance throughout the storm.

FRONT ROW, FROM LEFT: Carine Davila, first-year medical student; Lauren Feld, second-year medical student and Chair of the student-run Disaster Preparedness Committee; Rishi Kothari, fourth-year medical student and President of the Student Council. BACK ROW, FROM LEFT: Robert Conley, second-year medical student; Tobias Cohen, third-year MD, PhD student, and former Chair of the Disaster Preparedness Committee; and Alex Peters, second-year medical student

**"Mount Sinai's student volunteers were organized and tireless in their efforts to ensure that our clinical operations ran smoothly throughout the storm and beyond."**

— DENNIS S. CHARNEY, MD

Five faculty members took turns coordinating the students' efforts with Mount Sinai's official command center: Peter M. Gliatto, MD, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education and Student Affairs; Basil G. Hanss, PhD, Associate Dean in the School of Biomedical Sciences, and Associate Professor of Medical Education; David Muller, MD, Dean for Medical Education, and Professor and Chair of Medical Education; Valerie Parkas, MD, Associate Dean for Admissions, and Associate Professor of Medical Education; and Phyllis Schnepf, Associate Dean for Education and Translational Research Operations.

"Our students were truly outstanding," says Ms. Schnepf, the first faculty member to work with the students during the storm. "They are smart and enthusiastic, and were ready to serve the Mount Sinai community no matter what the circumstances."

As new patients were admitted to Mount Sinai, the students stepped in. At 2 am on Thursday, November 1, Mount Sinai's command center called second-year medical students Paul Peng and Ching See Lau to interpret for a group of psychiatric patients who had been evacuated from Bellevue Hospital and spoke only Mandarin or Cantonese.

Mr. Peng, who speaks Mandarin, immediately helped two patients, an elderly man and a young woman. "They told me how extremely tired they were," he says. "I learned how at Bellevue the power outage had knocked out the hot water, and they had climbed down 18 flights of stairs before arriving here. Neither patient had ever heard of Mount Sinai. The most memorable part of the night was making the patients feel more comfortable in an unfamiliar place."

Says Rishi Kothari, a fourth-year medical student and President of the Student Council, "During the storm, we were told time and again how much of an impact we were making. It made us realize how important we are to an institution as large as Mount Sinai."

## Care and Shelter From the Storm *(continued from page 1)*

On Monday night, October 29, as Hurricane Sandy made landfall and battered the City with sustained and violent winds and rain, Mount Sinai's leaders coordinated with those at NYU Langone Medical Center to receive transfer patients when NYU experienced a power outage. That night, thanks to strong and steady efforts of hundreds of volunteers, Mount Sinai took in 64 patients from NYU and one from Bellevue Hospital Center. Patients arrived—and were immediately and expertly cared for—in the areas of adult critical care, including transplant; pediatric critical care; neonatal intensive care; and obstetrics.

That night, more than 600 volunteers representing all areas of the Medical Center slept in shifts on campus, and on Tuesday, Mount Sinai prepared to take in additional patients.

Throughout the crisis, Mount Sinai's press, digital, and social media teams maintained a seamless stream of updates for patients, concerned families and friends, the media, and the general public on the institution's website, as well as on Facebook and Twitter. This is digital technology at its very best—when it is used to disseminate critical information and highly anticipated, newsworthy updates to worried constituent groups.

In the darkest hours of the storm, the spirit of family and community shone bright and bold at Mount Sinai, and knowing our staff, it will endure throughout the recovery effort. My pride, and that of every member of the Boards of Trustees, for Mount Sinai's physicians, nurses, staff, students, and leaders cannot be overstated. It is during crises such as these, that we all witness and appreciate the outstanding institution that we all represent—and the truly extraordinary individuals who make it so.

— Peter W. May, Chairman,  
Boards of Trustees,  
The Mount Sinai Medical Center

## Swift Response and Selfless Dedication *(continued from page 1)*

This successful effort began with high-level strategy meetings in the days prior to the storm's arrival, and commenced in full with the activation of the Emergency Command Center at 6 pm on Sunday, October 28. This 70-person unit—which meets and trains regularly throughout the year—had a range of experts on duty during the storm and for more than a week as the recovery began. This was the fifth time in 10 years that the center was fully activated. In addition, more than 1,000 physicians and nurses, as well as a broad range of support staff—from security, IT, food service, and facilities—stayed overnight on campus to ensure adequate staffing for inpatient care and the Emergency Department.

Because many of Mount Sinai's subfloors are below the water table, and in close proximity to the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Reservoir in Central Park, engineering staff and volunteer medical students secured those areas with cinder blocks and special insulation. Engineers also made every effort to ensure that electrical power would not fail us. The institution's electrical infrastructure consists of several separate power systems that support the campus and 13 back-up generators. This means that if Mount Sinai had lost power, the back-up system would have immediately mobilized. The generators and transfer equipment are tested monthly in accordance with local and national standards.

Owing to this preparation—and to around-the-clock staffing—Mount Sinai was able to coordinate the transfer of more than 100 patients, many in critical-care units, from NYU Langone Medical Center and Bellevue Hospital Center when those institutions lost power.

Hurricane Sandy was a natural disaster of unprecedented size and scope for New York City, and throughout the crisis, Mount Sinai has been at its very best.

— Kenneth L. Davis, MD,  
President and CEO,  
The Mount Sinai Medical Center

## SINAInnovations

November 12 - 14, Stern Auditorium  
Breakfast and Registration at 7:30 am

### Featured Speakers:

#### Ivan Seidenberg

Retired Chairman and CEO, Verizon

#### David Zaslav

President and CEO,  
Discovery Communications

#### Elazer R. Edelman

Thomas D. and Virginia W. Cabot  
Professor, Health Sciences and  
Technology (MIT)

#### Jeffrey Hammerbacher

Founder and the Chief Scientist,  
Cloudera, and Faculty, Mount Sinai  
School of Medicine

#### Kenneth L. Davis, MD

President and CEO,  
The Mount Sinai Medical Center

#### Dennis S. Charney, MD

Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz Dean,  
Mount Sinai School of Medicine

#### Scott L. Friedman, MD

Founding Dean for Therapeutic Discovery  
and Chief of the Division of Liver Diseases  
at Mount Sinai School of Medicine



### Inside Mount Sinai

2012 Marketing & Communications  
Carrie Gottlieb, Editor  
Marilyn Balamaci, Editor

### Submissions

Box 1475  
[inside@mssm.edu](mailto:inside@mssm.edu)

### Visit Inside on the Web

[www.mountsinai.org/inside](http://www.mountsinai.org/inside)



To find out what's happening  
right now, follow Mount Sinai  
on Twitter @MountSinaiNYC



Visit us on Facebook  
[facebook.com/mountsinainyc](http://facebook.com/mountsinainyc)