



The Obstetrical Society of Philadelphia

To embrace our legacy, foster collegiality, and share expertise to improve the health of women in Philadelphia and beyond

FEBRUARY 2020

Newsletter

VOL. 47, NO. 4

President's Message



DONALD DEBRAKELEER, DO
PRESIDENT: OBSTETRICAL SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA

Welcome to Ob Society 2020!! I'll spare everyone a vision joke.

We are starting the New Year with major initiatives underway. The work on our website is started. We are awaiting our first affiliate members applications. We are hoping to pass a bylaw change that would allow electronic voting and change the quorum requirement at the next meeting in March. We have also committed to having a seminar on Transgender and LGBTQ gynecology care on April 18, 2020 with Dr. Christine McGinn as a keynote speaker. Dr. McGinn has been featured on Oprah and other national media outlets. More details and information about the seminar will be forthcoming, so keep an eye out for the email.

Our January meeting featured a great talk from Dr. Amanda Nickles-Fader from Johns Hopkins on the current state of care, screening and prevention of ovarian cancer. It is no surprise that genetic screening has a large role in the future of identifying patients at risk.

My 2020 started with a little medical scare in my family. My Mother ended up in the ICU while visiting for the holidays and required a pacemaker. She is recuperating well and finally back home in Western PA. Family history was discussed during her evaluation. This gave us all time to think about "inherited" problems. So again, the root of many issues points back to genetics.

Would it not be great to be able to screen for these problems and possibly later in this century fix those genetic flaws, rather than try to treat the problems they cause? Many of you may remember when Dr. Ronald Wapner gave a lecture to OB Society six or seven years ago that not only explained cell free DNA screening but also highlighted some of the amazing things that were being investigated but not commercially available at that time. Genetic research seems to mimic Moore's Law, which states that "the number of transistors in a dense integrated circuit doubles about every two years". With this thought in mind, I invited Dr. Wapner to speak again to present the state of the art in this field. I hope you all will join us to hear Dr. Wapner speak on "Prenatal Diagnosis, The Next Step". He will be discussing the state of the art in whole genome fetal screening. Based on the previous talk, I think we should all be prepared to be amazed!

Hope to see you there! Remember to invite a colleague physician, advanced practice provider or nurse! First year in practice physicians can join for free! 📢

Upcoming Lecture



Thursday, March 12, 2020

6:00 PM

*"Prenatal Diagnosis:
Next Step"*

We hope that you will be able to join us for our November meeting, when Ron Wapner, M.D. of Columbia University, will discuss Prenatal Diagnosis.

See page 3 for details.

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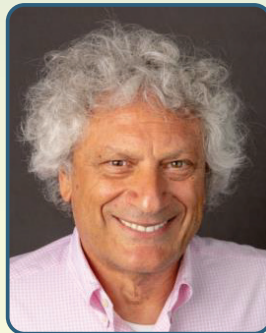
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The Obstetrical Society of Philadelphia

OUR MISSION: "TO EMBRACE OUR LEGACY, FOSTER COLLEGIALITY, AND SHARE EXPERTISE TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF WOMEN IN PHILADELPHIA AND BEYOND."



RON WAPNER, M.D.
DIRECTOR, REPRODUCTIVE GENETICS
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Topic: **Prenatal Diagnosis: Next Step**
Date: Thursday, March 12, 2020
Location: *The National Liberty Museum*
321 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia
Time: 6:00 PM Cocktails, 6:30 PM Dinner and Program

Discounted parking available in the Bourse Garage!

Payment by check or *online* at www.obphila.org

We cannot accept payments at the door.

Members - \$60.00 Non-members \$70.00

RSVP's are due no later than Monday, March 2nd.

Please make your check payable to The Obstetrical Society of Philadelphia
308 Rolling Creek Road, Swarthmore, PA 19081.

PHOTOS FROM THE DECEMBER MEETING

“Ovarian Cancer Treatment and Screening”

AMANDA NICKLES FADER, M.D.
DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR RARE GYNECOLOGIC CANCERS
JOHNS HOPKINS MEDICINE, BALTIMORE, MD



Dr. Fader signs The Book



New Member, Julia Switzer, M.D., signs The Book



New Member Ariella Glazer, M.D. signs The Book.
Dr. Glazer is pictured with Drs. Wolf and DeBrakeleer.

Foster Collegiality



Foster Collegiality





Introduction to Caring for the Most Vulnerable a “Moral, Ethical, Medical Responsibility”



NICOLE SALVA, MD
MEMBER AT LARGE
PENN MEDICINE WASHINGTON SQUARE

Dear Colleagues,

At the outset of my medical career, I had the honor and privilege of working with the Ludmirs in a clinic they created at Pennsylvania Hospital. The clinic served women who would otherwise have no access to prenatal and gynecologic care. Many of these women were in desperate need of caring and compassion, as they had emigrated from dangerous conditions in their home country to the United with little family or resources. The Obstetrical Society of Philadelphia is pleased to share a recent article spotlighting their outstanding work that now continues at Jefferson. Dr. Ludmir has always been an inspiration, not just to me, but to many physicians around the world. His work has touched the lives of women and their families, not just locally, but globally.

Sincerely,
Nicole Salva, MD
Member at large

We are pleased to reprint a recent article spotlighting the good work done by the Ludmirs, the volunteers and staff at the Jefferson Latina Women's Clinic





Caring for the Most Vulnerable a "Moral, Ethical, Medical Responsibility"

BY CINDY LEFLER

*Jefferson's Latina
Women's Clinic
Dispenses Care
and Compassion*

Standing outside the exam room door, Blima Ludmir warns her husband, Jack Ludmir, MD, that the patient inside is skittish and shy.

She quickly relays the young woman's story: She arrived from Honduras just four weeks ago, somehow making it across the border into the United States with her five-year-old daughter. She speaks no English. She doesn't know exactly how far along she is in her pregnancy. She only knows she had to escape the violence in her country.

Ludmir nods, motions to the two medical students with him to follow, then throws open the door with a jovial, "Hola!"

Inside, 26-year-old Ingris sits on the examination table nervously toying with the paper pink-orange hospital gown, her daughter, Sandra, by her side. Ludmir immediately starts speaking to her in Spanish, making conversation to put her at ease. He asks her about her previous pregnancy, her family, and then he asks about leaving Honduras.

Speaking softly, she tells Ludmir why she had to leave her country. It was dangerous there for her—so much brutality. Gangs had killed her brother. They had killed many of her friends. For no reason. She feared for her life and the life of her daughter. She risked the dangerous



Jack Ludmir, MD, with a patient at the Jefferson Latina Women's Clinic



Ludmir with a midwife and two nurses in obstetric triage at a Peruvian public hospital for poor pregnant women

This could be the only time they will be treated with dignity and respect.

journey to join her husband in Philadelphia. "And this is why we do this," says Ludmir, turning to his students.

Mother and daughter came with only the clothes they were wearing. They had no identification documents, no money, and certainly no medical records from Ingris' first pregnancy.

"Do you think we can get any medical records?" the doctor asks the students. He answers his own question with a shake of the head and weary smile, "Welcome to my world."

That world consists of the most vulnerable of humanity—pregnant, frightened, and often undocumented immigrants in need of someone to trust. These poverty-stricken members of society somehow find their way to the Jefferson Latina Women's Clinic, where the OB-GYN, his wife, and the dedicated volunteer staff offer medical care and kindness.

"This could be the only time they will be treated with dignity and respect," Ludmir says. "That is why it is so important to take time, give them some TLC. They are used to being abused by everyone in society—they will not be abused here."

The Jefferson Latina Women's Clinic, which just celebrated its first anniversary, is a comfortable space with a cheerful waiting room and four exam rooms. Here, providers deliver prenatal and postnatal

care for women with no money, no support system, and nowhere else to turn.

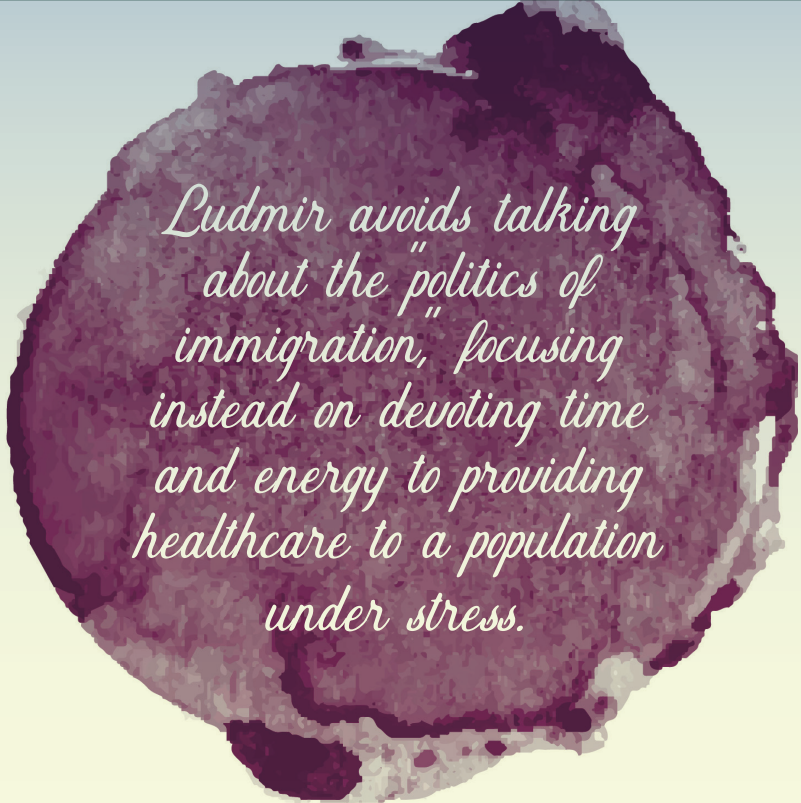
While the clinic is the brainchild of Ludmir, he says the "backbone" of the center is his wife, Blima, the volunteer patient navigator, translator, and 24-hour on-call advocate for the disenfranchised.

Both Jack and Blima grew up in Peru and moved to the United States to pursue their education. Throughout their lives they have shared a common belief that they were put here to do some good in the world.

After medical school, Ludmir trained at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in OB-GYN with a specialty in maternal-fetal medicine. He served on Penn's faculty for several years, and then moved to Boston in 1992. After a six-year stint at Harvard, he returned to Philadelphia as chief of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Pennsylvania Hospital.

Around 2003, he started to notice an inordinate number of Hispanic women showing up on his labor and delivery floor who had never had prenatal care. "Most were from Mexico, and I was really concerned and wanted to find out what was going on," he said. What he found out was the history of Hispanic migration to the United States.

Over the years, the regions of origin of the Hispanic population in Philadelphia has shifted. In the 1940s and 1950s the majority came from Puerto



Ludmir avoids talking about the "politics of immigration," focusing instead on devoting time and energy to providing healthcare to a population under stress.

OPPOSITE, FROM TOP:

The interns and residents at the public hospital for poor pregnant women in Peru threw a party for Ludmir to thank him for his help.

Ludmir's patient at the Latina Women's Clinic

The whole team following Ludmir in patient rounds emphasizing safety quality, but primarily humanism and professionalism toward the poor women being treated at the Peruvian public hospital

Rico; in later years, immigrants from the Dominican Republic settled in the United States, and in 2000, an influx of Mexicans sought to build a life working in the restaurant industry as dishwashers and line chefs.

Wanting to learn more, Ludmir sought out Steven Larson, MD, an emergency department physician at the University of Pennsylvania, who had been working with the migrant population in Kennett Square for many years. The two spoke about undocumented immigrants and the need for low-cost or free healthcare; they came up with a plan for a patient and community-centered clinic that served the Hispanic community.

The nonprofit they created was Puentes de Salud ("Bridges of Health"), with an extra component called Latina Community Health Services that specifically catered to women. Puentes de Salud in South Philadelphia continues to serve as a multidisciplinary, community-based collaborative that promotes health and wellness through low-cost, high-quality healthcare, innovative educational programs, and community building.

In 2016, Ludmir decided it was time to take a sabbatical—a working sabbatical. He and Blima traveled to Colombia to work toward reducing maternal mortality rates. However, while they were there a new challenge in the region developed—the Zika virus. Ludmir was contacted by Colombia's Minister of Health to help write national guidelines

on how to deal with Zika during pregnancy. Once the unexpected assignment was completed, the Ludmirs turned their attention back to the United States.

"You don't have to go overseas to encounter misery and poverty—you can find it here in our own neighborhoods," Ludmir says. Although the city boasts areas of great wealth, Philadelphia is overall the poorest of the large urban cities in the United States. More than 25 percent of its residents live below the poverty line; it has some of the highest rates of obesity, smoking, HIV, low-birthweight babies, and maternal mortality of any of the country's 10 major cities; more than 20 percent of the population does not have access to inexpensive, nutritious food; and there is a serious lack of available healthcare in many of its poverty-stricken neighborhoods.

Because of these staggering statistics, Ludmir sought a new opportunity to help on a "glocal" basis—global and local. That opportunity came in a phone call from Stephen K. Klasko, MD, MBA, president and CEO of Thomas Jefferson University and Jefferson Health.

"He gave me the task of creating an initiative that will narrow the health disparities gap and improve conditions in Philadelphia. And that is where the Philadelphia Collaborative for Health Equity originates," Ludmir says.

The P-CHE is a new citywide initiative Jefferson is helping to launch that addresses the social determinants that contribute to the health disparities in so many communities within Philadelphia. The grassroots approach seeks to build trust in the communities and create an alliance of government, business, philanthropic and nonprofit organizations, and citizens to address challenging issues that contribute to the complex social problems of Philadelphia and its residents.

The Jefferson Latina Women's Clinic is part of that collaborative effort. Once a week approximately 16 to 20 women seek low-cost or no-cost prenatal and postnatal care at the clinic—women such as Ingris, who Ludmir says is an example of the latest wave of immigrants from Honduras fleeing the violence that claims one out of every 1,000 people in that country.

The lucky are able to escape to the United States, and yet, they are still afraid. The political climate in the country has all undocumented immigrants on edge, concerned they will be scooped up by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and deported to home countries to face what amounts to a death sentence.

But to Ludmir's team, caring for pregnant women



To see a video interview with Jack Ludmir, MD, and to find out more about the Latina Women's Clinic and P-CHE—and how to get involved—visit Jefferson.edu/Bulletin.

wrong, it is a “moral, ethical, and clinical issue; prenatal care should be a universal right,” he says.

Lack of prenatal care puts both the mother and child at significant risk for health complications, including premature birth. Many complications of pregnancy are easily preventable and easily treatable, but can be serious or fatal if left untreated.

“It just makes medical sense to provide this care, it makes moral sense ... and it makes financial sense,” he says, noting an extensive study in California that found it costs three times more to care for a sick baby than to provide basic prenatal care that would result in a healthy baby.

“**Como esta, amiga?**” Ludmir greets Berenice, a very pregnant woman, as he enters the exam room.

Berenice is from Mexico and speaks very little English. She is all smiles, and says she is grateful that she only pays \$5 or \$10 for the clinic visits that help to keep her pregnancy healthy—and that she doesn’t have to pay at all if she doesn’t have any money that day.

He then recruits her as his “ambassador” to the community by asking in Spanish, “Will you tell others what good care you get here?”

“Oh yes, yes,” she replies emphatically in English.

Due to the political issues surrounding undocumented immigrants, the clinic relies on word of mouth to let patients know it exists. But Ludmir avoids talking about the “politics of immigration,” focusing instead on devoting time and energy to providing healthcare to a population under stress. Aside from poverty, the language barrier, high rates of suicide attempts, and other challenges, his patients often face societal prejudice, even from some within the medical community—something he is trying to change by bringing more healthcare professionals into the clinic to experience its mission firsthand.

The team at the center includes Ludmir’s “right hands”—Dacey Stratton, CRNP, medical director at Puentes de Salud; Annette Silva, LPN, community nurse liaison at Puentes de Salud; and Sanlly Helena, a medical assistant with Jefferson’s OB-GYN department—as well as ultrasound sonographers and receptionists. In addition, SKMC residents and medical students rotate through, as do visiting residents from other programs. In an exchange program with Latin American countries, a recent medical school graduate from Colombia doing a year clerkship with the OB-GYN department also lends a hand.

“We went into this challenging field to care for people, and I hope we can inspire at least one person to do the same,” Ludmir says. “I hope we can help them to understand what a great privilege it is to care for another human being.”

SAVE THE DATE

THE OBSTETRICAL SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA

Presents



Topic: **Welcoming Trans and Non-Binary Patients in the Office: A Workshop**

Date: Saturday, April 18, 2020

Location: ***Zedeck Amphitheater, Evans Hall, PCOM***
4170 City Line Avenue
Philadelphia, PA

Time: 8:00 AM. – 12:00 PM

Transgender and gender non-binary individuals are in need of gender-affirming health care. Presentations, panel discussions, and small group exercises will provide skills and tools needed to establish trans health services in a primary care, family planning, or abortion clinic. Topics include gender-inclusive language, best practices in gender affirming hormone therapy, financial considerations, and behavioral health and legal services. We will facilitate a discussion on the use of gendered language in health care and advocacy.

Who Should Attend?

Physicians

Students, Residents & Fellows in Ob/Gyn

Nurse Practitioners

Physician Assistants

Practice Managers & Support Staff

Admission is free. However, RSVP's are a must. Please respond to obphila@yahoo.com or call 484-343-8199 so we may have enough refreshments and materials.

Remaining 2020 Meeting Schedule



Dinner Meetings



March 12, 2020

Prenatal Diagnosis: The Next Step

Ronald Wapner, M.D., Director, Reproductive Genetics
Columbia University, New York, NY



April 16, 2020

JOINT OB/PARES MEETING

Role of Laparoscopy in Infertility Evaluation and Treatment

Mark Fritz, M.D., Charles Hendricks Distinguished Professor and Director
UNC Reproductive Endocrinology & Infertility, UNC-Health Care



May 14, 2020

PRESIDENT'S NIGHT

Innovation in Obstetrics and Gynecology and Our Role in Stewardship

Donald DeBrakeleer, D.O.

Cocktails: 6:00 p.m. Buffet 6:30 p.m. Lecture 7:00 p.m.

THE VENUE FOR THE DINNER MEETINGS IS THE NATIONAL LIBERTY MUSEUM, 321 CHESTNUT STREET.
DISCOUNTED PARKING AT THE BOURSE GARAGE ON 400 RANSTEAD STREET.

Resident Education Day

Friday, May 8, 2020 at the
Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania





Call For Papers – S. Leon Israel Award

THE S. LEON ISRAEL AWARD WAS ESTABLISHED TO RECOGNIZE EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH IN THE DISCIPLINE OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY.

The S. Leon Israel Award was established to recognize excellence in research in the discipline of obstetrics and gynecology. The award is open to all current obstetrics and gynecology residents in programs associated with the Obstetrical Society of Philadelphia. **Original research manuscripts not published prior to April 1, 2020 will be accepted for review.**

The resident must be the first author, but not necessarily the only author of the paper. It is expected that the resident will have primary responsibility for the literature review, implementation of the study and final drafting of the discussion section. Review articles will not be accepted. Papers should be written in a scientific format to include title, authors, institution, abstract, introduction, materials and methods, results, and discussion and should conform to the instructions for the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Two copies should be submitted. One copy should have all institution and author information removed. The award and stipend (\$500.00) will be conferred at the Annual Resident Day Bowl and Symposium on Friday, May 8, 2020. The author of the winning paper will be asked to present a brief summary of his/her work at the Resident Day Symposium and at President's Night, Thursday, May 14, 2020.

Manuscripts must be received no later than April 1, 2020 to allow adequate time for review. Any manuscripts received after April 1, 2020 will be ineligible for consideration.

Manuscripts should be submitted to:
Teri Wiseley, CMM, Executive Secretary via email to
obphila@yahoo.com



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