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2022 CADUCEUS RETREAT EXAMINES "PERSONALITY AND RECOVERY"

Registration is now open for the 35th Caduceus Retreat, scheduled for June 10-12 at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs in Franklin, TN. This year's sessions are titled, "Personality and Recovery: How Did 'I' Get Here?" led by Sky Kershner, LPC, MCSW, ALPS; the retreat will close Sunday with a recovery message from retired U.S. Airline Captain Lyle Prouse.

Register & Book Your Room By May 20

Registration for the event is \$110.00 per person, due by May 20. Attendees can register and pay online or download a PDF form and mail registration in with payment.

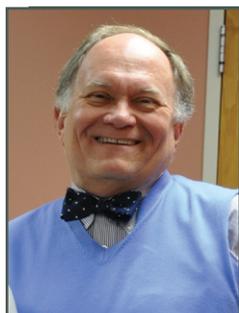
2022
CADUCEUS
RETREAT

JUNE 10-12
FRANKLIN MARRIOTT
COOL SPRINGS
FRANKLIN, TN

Register & Rooms by May 20
e-tmf.org/2022-caduceus-retreat

REGISTER
NOW!

(More Caduceus Retreat info on page 3)



PHP PROFILE

I OWE EVERYTHING TO MY BATTLE BUDDIES

BY ERIC W. BERG, III, MD
TMF Graduate 2013

After 30 years of service, I was a year away from retirement as an active-duty Army colonel pathologist at Fort Campbell when confronted by my boss and two other superior officers. I had been drinking vodka at work for two years and getting away with it, or so I thought.

The road was treacherous for an alcoholic. In 1975, Friday evening happy hour at the officers' club was mandatory; by the time the Defense Department deglamorized alcohol and prohibited happy hour years later, this alcoholic was too far along. I'm not blaming the Army any more than I blame my college fraternity -- these were but the enablers of my character defects. On that day in May 2008, the deception was over. I had already realized I was powerless over alcohol, but now I understood

the second clause of the first Step, that my life had become unmanageable. "Eric, do you have a problem with alcohol?" My boss' demeanor melted when I paused for reflection and said, "Yes, sir, I do." My hospital commander (a military CEO) instantly shifted from threatening to empathic. My three physician bosses understood well the medical model of alcoholism.

My superiors gave me better than I deserved. I was sent to a domiciliary recovery center in Nashville for seven weeks instead of the Army's austere barracks-style three-month recovery program. My treatment was paid for out of the local hospital's budget, not by the Army. There were no board actions, credentialing consequences, fines, legal actions, loss of status or lost salary. I was allowed to remain as chief of

(Continued on page 4)



MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

MALPRACTICE LITIGATION STRESS: YOU WILL SURVIVE - PART 1

BY MICHAEL BARON, MD, MPH

A wise attorney once told me, “The road to serenity is not paved with litigation.” How true. Unfortunately, those of us who practice medicine are likely to find our serenity traumatized by a lawsuit during our career. The stress can be overwhelming and even debilitating but it doesn't have to be. I offer two common idioms to remember if you are sued for malpractice: “You are not alone,” and “You will survive.” This is the first part of a two-part article aimed at helping you through the malpractice litigation process.

Fight or Flight

The instinctive response to an external threat -- even a non-violent one -- can be helpful in some situations and detrimental in others, especially in the case of a malpractice lawsuit. Seeing your name associated with alarming legal terms like *gross negligence*, *compensation*, and *patient injury* causes a visceral reaction -- an emotional kick in the gut -- and that feeling may repeat itself with every new message or document about the lawsuit.

Physicians who are sued usually experience a trauma reaction, called Malpractice Stress Syndrome. They ruminate, begin to second-guess themselves, and have self-doubt. They are warned not to talk about the case with others and become more isolated. They experience guilt and even toxic shame.

The Odds

More than 85 percent of U.S. physicians will face a malpractice claim during a 40-year career. The good news is that almost half of malpractice claims are dropped, and another 25 percent are dismissed with no award or settlement. Overall, only about 15 percent of malpractice claims result in a payment.

Studies show about 95 percent of us report significant emotional or physical reactions, and about 40 percent will experience at least one episode of a Major Depressive Disorder.

Physicians have an exaggerated sense of responsibility; we will overwork to make sure everything has been done correctly. We also have an exaggerated sense of self-doubt that we missed something, so we check and recheck. These traits foster a compulsiveness that makes us good physicians but can backfire on us during a malpractice case.

Grief Emotions

The loss or grief we feel is sometimes described as a loss of innocence, similar in many ways to the stages of the grief reaction first described by Kübler-Ross. The emotions described below do not always happen in a linear manner; for the duration of a malpractice lawsuit, our processing of emotions can cause us to cycle through these phases again and again.

SHOCK

The initial notice of a malpractice lawsuit usually sends the physician defendant into Shock. Physicians may experience

a visceral reaction at seeing their name associated with such accusations. The inflammatory words are deliberately chosen to trigger a desire for a quick settlement. For those of us whose self-worth is realized in our identity as physicians, it can be unfamiliar and denigrating to suddenly identify ourselves as a defendant. All this is made worse when it's unexpected and we cannot remember the patient or details of the case.

ANGER

Anger quickly follows, driven by frustration, resentment, embarrassment, feeling out of control, and shame. Physicians may exhibit cynicism or detachment (symptoms of burnout). They may become sarcastic and irritable. Those prone to passive-aggressive behavior may start leaning more toward aggression. The physician may question their own judgment and assume others are, as well. The physician often feels betrayed and may begin to distrust their own patients.

FEAR AND ANXIETY

Paramount in this phase is the fear of financial insecurity. Physicians want to know what happens if the plaintiff wins and damages exceed the limits of their malpractice policy. They may talk with their financial planner or personal attorney to try to protect personal assets. There is fear about what other physicians and their patients will think when they hear about the case. Also common is catastrophizing -- predicting the worst possible outcome -- and ruminating on the past or future to avoid thinking about the present.

DEPRESSION

As mentioned, around 40 percent of physician defendants will meet the DSM-5 criteria for a Major Depressive Disorder. Many others will experience subclinical symptoms such as reduced energy, decreased social interest, decreased motivation, crying, and changes in constitutional habits. The Depression phase may be expressed as feelings of hopelessness or helplessness, feeling overwhelmed and disappointed. Some physicians will self-medicate with alcohol or prescription drugs which will lead to its own set of problems. Some physicians will contemplate or fantasize about suicide.

RESOLUTION

The Resolution phase can be experienced as emotional neutrality or acceptance. Physicians who fight or avoid the reality of the lawsuit will not get to this phase. Resolution doesn't mean they are not experiencing distress, but instead have learned to live with or accept the situation. Resolution can feel like self-validation, self-compassion, wisdom, and pride -- the physician was able to be vulnerable and tolerated their emotions. The physician is engaging with reality as it is and not how they want it to be.

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CADUCEUS RETREAT *Continued from Page 1*

2022 CADUCEUS RETREAT

JUNE 10-12
FRANKLIN MARRIOTT
COOL SPRINGS
FRANKLIN, TN

REGISTER
BY MAY 20
e-tmf.org/2022-caduceus-retreat

Rooms at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs are available at a special TMF rate of \$159.00 per person, per night, plus tax; the deadline to access the TMF rate is May 20 and the room block is limited, so early reservations are encouraged. Reservations can be made via the TMF Retreat web page or by calling the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs directly at 615-261-6100; to receive the special rate please mention you are with the TMF Caduceus Retreat. For details and links, visit the Caduceus Retreat web page at e-tmf.org/2022-caduceus-retreat.

Our Program



Sky Kershner, MSW, DMin, is an emotionally focused pastoral counselor and has a deep interest in the mysteries of personality, relationships, addiction, and recovery. As an Assistant Professor at West Virginia University School of Medicine, Charleston Division, he teaches Affect Phobia Therapy and Psychodynamics. He is a member of the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers

and is a MINT Certified Trainer (one of 80 worldwide).

As a person in recovery, Dr. Kershner states that he comes from a long line of men with drinking problems,

having wrestled with his own drinking when he was in his psychotherapy residency in New York City, where, he says, if you are anxious enough, you can do 90 meetings in seven days!

Learn more about Dr. Kershner: wv-mi.com



Retired Airline Captain Lyle Prouse is the first person arrested and convicted under a federal law for flying under the influence. A decorated U.S. Marine Corps pilot in Vietnam, Prouse made headlines for his 1990 arrest; he was fired from his airline, stripped of all flying certifications, and served 16 months in federal prison. Despite seemingly impossible obstacles, Prouse got

sober, returned to Northwest Airlines, and retired as a 747 captain. In January 2001 he received a full pardon from then President Bill Clinton.

Learn more: lyleprouse.com

The Caduceus Retreat is required attendance for current participants in the Physician's Health Program; graduates are encouraged to attend to continue learning and growing in recovery, and to connect with and support colleagues who are just beginning their recovery journey. ♡

QUESTIONS? For more information, visit e-tmf.org/2022-caduceus-retreat or contact Jennifer Rainwater at 615-467-6411 or jenniferr@e-tmf.org.



TMF ANNUAL REPORT: SERVING AND EDUCATING TN HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN 2021

The TMF is pleased to announce the publication of our 2021 Annual Report, *Saving Lives. Saving Careers.*

In 2021, the TMF continued its recovery assistance, wellness and impairment education, and provision of the Tennessee Professional Screening Questionnaire (TN-PSQ) for health professionals in distress. We are deeply grateful to our donors and partners who made this possible.

To learn more about our work and outcomes for 2021, visit e-tmf.org/tmf-releases-2021-annual-report. ♡



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS: TMF ASSISTANCE AND RESOURCES MUCH NEEDED

BY MICHAEL R. MILLER, DO

As I write my first column for the TMF newsletter, I must begin by saying I believe the current times underscore the critical need for this Foundation and the Physician's Health Program.

When I first met with former TMF Medical Director Dr. David Dodd over 20 years ago, I would have never guessed at the wonderful life, career, and friendships I would have, thanks to my sobriety and the support of TMF. Being a Board member for the last eight years has allowed me to observe the changes and progress this organization has experienced. It's been my pleasure to get to know the current medical director, Dr. Michael Baron – few people realize how much time and effort he spends traveling the state to share the benefits of TMF assistance and advocacy.

There has never been a time that the TMF has been more needed. Some estimates say anxiety and depression have quadrupled in the general population since 2019; add to that the risk, fear, and job pressures health professionals have been dealing with over the past two years. Even before COVID, the TMF realized this need and began working to develop the Tennessee Professional Screening Questionnaire – launching it just before the pandemic. This mental health screening tool is free to health professionals served by the TMF and provides access to mental health providers who can help facilitate access to further care if needed. It has been used by over

400 individuals so far and has proven an effective tool for this difficult time.

The TMF has the responsibility to be both monitor and advocate for health professionals struggling with addiction, depression, burnout, and other mental health difficulties. I am impressed with how committed and successful the TMF has been with these goals. As a physician, I feel extremely fortunate to be in a state with a physician health program that is one of the best and a model for PHPs both within and beyond the U.S.

I am honored to serve as President. I look forward to my time in this position and am excited about the upcoming Caduceus Retreat. We have some interesting and inspiring speakers this year. If you are eligible and able, please join us in June; you'll find details inside these pages.

If I had to sum up what the TMF represents, I would use the same statement I use when asked about recovery and that is, "There is hope here." Hope is the thing most missing when we are in the throes of addiction, depression, anxiety, or burnout; I'm glad to be part of a group that offers this much-needed resource in our most difficult times. †

MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE *Continued from page 2*

A malpractice case is a stop-and-go process with an initial tsunami of emotions, a decrescendo effect during times of no activity, and wave-after wave of emotion with each turn in the case. The accompanying emotions may dissipate a little quicker with each subsequent wave of activity, especially if the events bring promising news. For some, resolution may only be reached after there is a settlement or the case is closed. This is an individualized process: some physicians feel like they are on an emotional roller coaster whereas others just feel the high stress of the unknown. †

Part 2 of this series on Medical Malpractice Stress will be published in the Fall edition of Physician's Health. This series is adapted from an article Dr. Baron wrote for State Volunteer Mutual Insurance Company. Share your thoughts with Dr. Baron at michaelb@e-tmf.org.

PHP PROFILE *Continued from page 1*

pathology and, to my great surprise, was still asked to serve as acting deputy commander of the hospital during the incumbent's absences. This also meant chairing the credentials and risk management committees that handled similar "discipline problems" when doctors drank, used, or bullied.

Nobody reported me to the TMF; it was almost an afterthought when they mentioned the Tennessee Medical Foundation but there was no obligation. I signed a monitoring agreement with my treatment program at discharge, but contacted the TMF Physician's Health Program for additional aftercare because of its reputation for efficacy.

Caduceus support group meetings in 2008 were followed immediately by local meetings of the International Doctors in Alcoholics Anonymous (IDAA). It was there that I met many titans of sobriety, people I have come to revere. Among them, I chose my first and only sponsor, the man who took me through the Steps and held me accountable.

After my five-year TMF agreement expired, I remained active in Caduceus meetings and retreats well beyond my contractual obligation. I currently have the unexpected and undeserved honor of serving on the TMF Board of Directors. Today, I owe everything to the "battle buddies" in the Army and the TMF who have surrounded and supported me. †

MEET THE BOARD

NEW TMF LEADERSHIP FOR 2022

The TMF is pleased to announce new leadership and members for its Board of Directors, all of whom began serving their new positions and three-year terms at the Fall Board meeting in October.



Dr. Miller

Board President **Michael R. Miller, DO**, succeeds **Timothy P. Davis, MD**, who served three years as president and now moves into an ex-officio position as past president. Dr. Miller is a TMF-PHP graduate who has served on the board since October 2015; a primary care physician for over 30 years, he focuses on family medicine and serves in an administrative role with Saint Thomas Medical Partners in Nashville, TN. Dr. Davis, a pediatrician with Galen Medical Group in Chattanooga, TN, is also a TMF alumnus who has served on the board since 2011.



Dr. Davis



Dr. Runnels

The new board vice president is **Clay Runnels, MD**, chief physician executive for Ballad Health in Johnson City, TN. An emergency medicine specialist, Dr. Runnels said over his clinical and administrative career he has seen the positive impact the TMF has had on the health and well-being of his colleagues and medical staff members. He has been a board member since 2016.



Dr. Gray

Filling an East Tennessee board slot is **Keith Gray, MD, MBA, FACS**, a surgical oncologist and chief medical officer at the University of Tennessee Medical Center in Knoxville, TN. Dr. Gray has worked closely with the TMF to ensure the health and wellness of the medical team at UTMCK.



Dr. Thompson

Natascha Stone Thompson, MD, FACP, is a medicine-pediatrics specialist serving as associate dean for Graduate Medical Education at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis, TN. She is credited with growing the UTHSC Med-Peds program to the second largest program in the country and providing mentorship to many medical trainees, which includes working with the TMF when a resident or fellow is struggling.



Dr. Woods

John Woods, MD, of Jackson, TN, is assistant medical director for Cumberland Heights. He is assistant medical director for Cumberland Heights, an addiction treatment center with locations across the state. Originally trained in internal medicine, Dr. Woods found his passion in the field of addiction medicine after his own personal experience with recovery and with the TMF. ♡

MEET OUR PARTNER: THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE



Have you heard that the TMF has received a \$5,000 grant from The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee?

These funds will be used to support our Physician's Health Program services and resources and will directly help us in our mission to save the lives and careers of Tennessee health professionals in crisis or distress.

The Community Foundation awarded more than \$2.43 million in grants to 350 nonprofit organizations as part of the 2021 annual grantmaking process. To learn more, please visit www.CFMT.org. ♡

DONOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OUR MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS

The TMF annually enjoys the staunch financial support of the **State Volunteer Mutual Insurance Company (SVMIC)**, the **State of Tennessee Board of Medical Examiners (BME)**, **Board of Osteopathic Examiners (BOE)**, **Committee on Physician Assistants (COPA)**, and the **Tennessee Medical Association (TMA)**. Together they provide approximately 70% of the annual budget for the Physician's Health Program. Without their support, our crucial work would not be possible and

we are immensely grateful. Below are contributors who provide the rest of our program funding. We thank each and every one of you for the support you give to the mission of **Saving Lives, Saving Careers**.

NOTE: Our acknowledgements have changed to a single annual listing in the Spring issue of Physician's Health, reflecting all gifts received in the prior year.

Organizational Contributions 2021

HOSPITAL & HEALTH SYSTEMS

Ascension Saint Thomas	\$10,000
Ballad Health	\$5,000
Baptist Memorial Health Care Corporation	\$10,000
Blount Memorial Hospital	\$3,000
CHI Memorial Health Care System	\$1,000
East Tennessee Children's Hospital	\$1,000
Erlanger Health System	\$10,000
Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center	\$3,000
Hardin Medical Center	\$500
Henry County Medical Center	\$1,000
Holston Valley Medical Center-Ballad Health Medical Staff	\$1,500
Johnson City Medical Center-Ballad Health Medical Staff	\$15,000
Livingston Regional Hospital	\$500
Maury Regional Medical Center	\$2,000
Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare	\$5,000
Saint Francis Hospital	\$4,950
Siskin Hospital for Physical Rehabilitation	\$250
Southern TN Regional Health System-Winchester	\$500
Sumner Regional Medical Center	\$250
Sweetwater Hospital Association	\$1,000
Tennova Healthcare	\$5,000
TriStar Summit Medical Center Medical Staff	\$5,000
University of Tennessee Medical Center-Knoxville	\$2,500
Vanderbilt University Medical Center	\$7,500
Williamson Medical Center	\$3,000

FOUNDATIONS & GRANTS

Drs. Subhi & Maysoun Ali Foundation, Inc.	\$500
Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee	\$5,000
Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation	\$10,000
Fred & Gertrude Perlberg Foundation**	\$1,000
HCA Foundation	\$25,000
Medical Foundation of Chattanooga	\$2,000
Memorial Foundation, Inc.	\$15,000

Tennessee Medical Education Fund, Inc.	\$15,000
James H. Tharp Award	\$5,000
West Tennessee Healthcare Foundation	\$1,500

GROUP MEDICAL PRACTICES

Abercrombie Radiology	\$1,000
Heritage Medical Associates, PC	\$1,000
Highlands Dermatology & Surgical Associates, PC	\$1,000
Premier Medical Group	\$1,000
Summit Medical Group, PA+	\$3,000
The Jackson Clinic, PA+	\$2,000
The Surgical Clinic, PLLC	\$2,000

CORPORATIONS

Pinnacle National Bank	\$2,500
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Benton-Humphreys County Medical Society	\$250
Franklin County Medical Society	\$300
Montgomery County Medical Society	\$1,000
Nashville Academy of Medicine	\$1,000
Northwest Tennessee Academy of Medicine	\$4,000
Tennessee Academy of Physician Assistants	\$1,000
Tennessee Academy of Family Physicians	\$750
Tennessee Chapter-American College of Physicians	\$1,000
Tennessee Osteopathic Medical Association	\$1,000
Tennessee Radiological Society	\$1,000
Tennessee Society of Addiction Medicine	\$1,500
Tennessee Society of Anesthesiologists	\$2,000
Tennessee Veterinary Medical Association	\$2,500
West Tennessee Consolidated Medical Association	\$1,000
Williamson Medical Society	\$1,000

ORGANIZATIONS

Tennessee Medical Association Alliance**	\$50
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

HOW ARE YOU?

BY JENNIFER RAINWATER

It's a simple question and we ask it all the time. A lot of times we ask it just to make polite conversation. I've even asked a stranger this question as I've passed them

on the street. And what do you do when you are asked this question? Many times I respond with a trusty old "fine" and move right along without another thought. Sometimes I don't even answer at all. It's just a friendly gesture, right?

I remember being thrown off a bit in a social situation when a person I really didn't know well responded by saying, "Do you want an honest answer?" Did I? Did I really want an honest answer? I must admit that in the moment I really didn't want to delve that deeply. I was just "being polite." It made me more careful about asking in the future, and more thoughtful about really listening to the response when I do. It's more important than we think.

We encounter medical professionals every day at the TMF who are not "fine." Our team members are deliberate

in their interactions with those who contact the TMF and they listen to the real answer to "How are you?" with compassion and care. They understand how important it is to be a safe place for people who are in the vulnerable position of asking for help.

You help us provide this safe place. So many of you show how much you care through your unfailing support year after year. And your support goes way beyond the financial; you support us with your kind words of encouragement, your referral of others to our program, and your positive endorsements across our state.

So, how are you? If you are a medical professional (or know of one) who needs our help, please know that we are always here to listen to your real answer and help in any way we can. ♡

Share your thoughts with Ms. Rainwater at jenniferr@e-tmf.org.

IN MEMORIAM

DR. DONALD GAINES



The TMF is saddened by the loss of Donald L. Gaines, MD, 87, of Brentwood, TN, on October 14, 2021. He was a former TMF Board member and officer, serving as vice president from 2005-2008 and president from 2008-2010.

"Dr Gaines was a strong supporter of the TMF for many years. His

lovingly confrontational style and presence at Caduceus group and local 12-Step meetings will be missed," said TMF Medical Director Dr. Michael Baron.

A Missouri native, Dr. Gaines earned his medical degree from the University of Tennessee in September 1958, subsequently joining the United States Air Force Reserve as a flight surgeon. In 1968, he completed his residency in orthopedic surgery at Vanderbilt University Hospital. He went on to study at the University of Minnesota and specialize in the treatment of scoliosis, then returned to Nashville with his family and to private practice, serving as chief of staff at Donelson Hospital and subsequently Summit Hospital until his retirement in 1999.

He was a member of the Tennessee Orthopaedic Society and the Nashville Academy of Medicine, and was a Fellow in the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.

Dr. Gaines was predeceased by wife of 22 years, Alice Bradshaw Gaines; he is survived by five children, five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. ♡

DR. ANDY SPICKARD



TMF leaders, friends and family are in mourning for the loss of Dr. William Anderson "Andy" Spickard, Jr., a longtime friend and partner to the TMF Physician's Health Program, who died December 8, 2021, at the age of 90.

Born in New Jersey, Dr. Spickard earned his medical degree from Vanderbilt University; after one year at Johns Hopkins and two years with the National Institute

for Infectious Diseases, he returned to Vanderbilt where he became the first Hugh Morgan Chief Resident in general medicine. A principal in the Vanderbilt General Internal Medicine group, Dr. Spickard was trained in alcohol recovery at the St. Mary's Rehabilitation Center in Minnesota; he then organized the Vanderbilt Institute for the Treatment of Addiction (VITA), where patients with addiction were treated and students and residents were trained in the diagnosis and treatment of addiction disorders. He served as national director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's "Fighting Back" Project, aimed at reducing the demand for illegal drugs and alcohol in 14 U.S. cities.

In 1999, he founded and served as director of the Center for Professional Health at Vanderbilt (CPH), and in 2002, was appointed to the Chancellor's Chair in Medicine at Vanderbilt. He also chaired the Vanderbilt Physician Wellness Committee. In many of these capacities he worked closely with the TMF-PHP.

"Dr. Spickard was a mentor, a friend, an ally, and a wonderful example of forward-thinking in the field of professional health. He will be severely and sincerely missed," said TMF Medical Director Dr. Michael Baron.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Susan, his three children, and 10 grandchildren. ♡



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CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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TMF MEDALLION SOCIETY

RECOGNIZING SPECIAL COMMITMENT

Every donation to the TMF is deeply appreciated. Yet, special acknowledgement is given to those of you whose contributions exemplify your commitment to TMF mission of *Saving Lives, Saving Careers*. Your leadership is recognized by membership in the **TMF Medallion Society**, honoring individuals who have given \$10,000 or more over a 10-year period. We honor you for your generosity and commitment.

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Memorial Members

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 Roland Gray, MD, Deceased
 Evelyn B. Ogle, MD, Deceased
 Mrs. Judy Loy, Deceased*
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*New member