

# Medical Education

## Symposia on Campus

Two major symposia were held at NYU Medical Center last spring. One marked the 50th anniversary of an accomplishment, an event that saved countless lives: the development of the polio vaccine by Jonas Salk, M.D. The other explored the impact of a tragedy, an event that claimed countless lives: the Indian Ocean Tsunami.

### JONAS SALK CELEBRATION WEEK

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the polio vaccine, the School of Medicine's Master Scholars Program and Sackler Institute Colloquium honored alumnus Jonas Salk, M.D. ('39) on April 11–14. The symposium was co-hosted by Mariano Rey, M.D., ('76) Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and Mel Rosenfeld, Ph.D., a

Master of the Jonas Salk Society for Biomedical and Health Sciences. Among the dignitaries who addressed the assemblage were Peter L. Salk, M.D., (Jonas Salk's son), Vice President and Scientific Director of the Jonas Salk Foundation, who talked about the history of polio in the United States and shared personal reminiscences about his father; and David M. Oshinsky, Ph.D., the George W. Littlefield Professor of History at the University of Texas, who summarized the life and work of Jonas Salk.

### THE INDIAN OCEAN TSUNAMI

To examine the medical and humanitarian response to the Indian Ocean tsunami that struck on December 26, 2004, the Center for the Study of

Asian American Health and the NYU Asian/Pacific/American Studies Program and Institute held a conference on March 1. It examined the extraordinary scope of the disaster.

Speakers stressed the importance of certain issues to the international community of responders, such as knowing that different affected areas have different needs; being sensitive to pre-existing medical, cultural, and political conditions; and assuring the sustainability of the relief effort after international interest has waned. One of the most interesting observations to emerge from the conference was that distrust of government in tourist areas resulted in a greater death toll; citizens in those areas ignored warnings that a tsunami was on the way. ■

## NYU Surgical Skills Lab Opens at Bellevue

The NYU Surgical Skills Laboratory, funded by a generous gift from the New York City Council, opened at Bellevue Hospital in June. Created under the leadership of Thomas S. Riles, M.D., Chairman of the Department of Surgery, the lab is a forum for students, residents, and faculty members to practice new skills and learn new technologies. It is equipped with state-of-the-art models and simulators and was designed with input from experts in education, information technology, audiovisual technology, and successful skills labs at other academic medical centers. With fewer inpatients to learn from and less time than ever to train and retrain themselves, surgical students and residents—as well as experienced faculty—can now practice their craft under ideal conditions. Skills such as OR etiquette, knot-tying/ suturing, instrumentation handling, airway techniques, and laparoscopic techniques can now be mastered in an environment that facilitates learning, fosters reflection, and poses no risks to students, residents, and, most important, patients. ■

*As Thomas S. Riles, M.D., Chairman of Surgery, looks on, Dean Glickman practices a procedure in the new Surgical Skills Lab.*

