

# VITALSIGNS

AMERICAN FRIENDS OF RABIN MEDICAL CENTER

2009/2010

GENETICS ON THE RISE

NEW CANCER TECHNOLOGY

DRUZE COEXISTENCE

LIVER TRANSPLANT ODYSSEY

WOMEN'S HEALTH STATISTICS



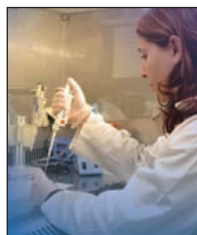
**RABIN MEDICAL CENTER**

ISRAEL'S PREMIER MEDICAL COMPLEX

PIONEERING HEALTHCARE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

# VITALSIGNS

## IN THIS ISSUE



### EXECUTIVE REPORTS

- 1 Personal Invitation  
A Lasting Impact  
Advances in Medical Technology

### FEATURE

- 2 The Recanati Genetics Institute
- 4 Genetics Q & A



### MEDICAL TRIUMPHS

- 5 Cancer Technology Saves Lives  
A Single Drop of Blood  
Fetal Gender Affects Pregnancy



### THE AMERICAN SCENE

- 6 Ninth Annual Gala  
Women Fight Breast Cancer  
Golf Outing Helps New ER
- 7 Real Estate Networking  
Wall Street Celebrates Israel  
Web Magazine Debut  
Remembering Harry Snyder  
Los Angeles & Israel Bond



### THE ISRAELI SCENE

- 8 Remembering Ruth Davidoff  
Druze Coexistence  
Vital Stats: Women's Health

### EVERYDAY MIRACLES

- 9 Liver Transplant Odyssey  
Infant Overcomes Blindness  
Twins Battle Cystic Fibrosis

## A PERSONAL INVITATION



Joshua Eli Plaut

This summer I again visited the Rabin Medical Center in Petach Tikvah, Israel. I was truly inspired by my meetings with its exceptional physicians and department heads. It was inspiring to hear about each doctor's individual work and professional dreams. Every doctor expressed profound appreciation for all that we do here in the United States on behalf of the hospital in Israel.

The newest outstanding addition to the hospital is the Raphael Recanati Genetics Institute, an international center that enables Rabin Medical Center to develop and advance its renowned genetic research and clinical work with the most advanced equipment and cutting-edge technology, operating according to the highest international standards. Genetics holds the key to thousands of new treatments and diagnostic tools for countless potentially fatal diseases. And Rabin Medical Center is now at the forefront of the advancement of genetics in medicine.

I invite each and every friend of ours in the United States to visit the hospital on your next trip to Israel. I promise that what you will see at the hospital will make you proud of your support for this premier hospital. Please call me at 212 279 2522 or email me at [afrmc@afrmc.org](mailto:afrmc@afrmc.org) so I can help you witness firsthand the modern day miracle that is the Rabin Medical Center. I thank you for being our friend and hope you will take me up on my offer to have the hospital host you and your family and friends for an insider's look at a world-class Israeli medical institution.

Best wishes and in friendship,

Joshua Eli Plaut, Ph.D.

Executive Director, American Friends of Rabin Medical Center

## AMERICAN FRIENDS OF RABIN MEDICAL CENTER • [www.afrmc.org](http://www.afrmc.org)

American Friends of Rabin Medical Center educates Americans about the Rabin Medical Center, located in Petach Tikvah, Israel and raises funds on behalf of the hospital.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Abraham "Barry" E. Cohen, CHAIR  
Stephen Siegel, PRESIDENT

Arnold Burns, Esq.  
Yaron Cohen  
Stephen M. Flatow, SECRETARY/TREASURER  
Robert J. Ivanhoe, Esq.  
Lawrence Magid, ASSISTANT TREASURER  
Arlene Strelitz  
Ofer Yardeni

Joshua Eli Plaut, Ph.D., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Andrew C. Freedman, Esq.,

### DIRECTORS

Aline Davidoff  
Dawn Effron  
Bilha Fish, M.D.  
Jacalyn Barlia Florin  
Claude Mann  
Raquel Ramati  
Amira Rotem  
Michael H. Steinhart  
Phyllis B. Trobman  
Walter Weiner, Esq.  
Mortimer B. Zuckerman  
Esther Zuhovitzky  
Jonathan Zuhovitzky

### HONORARY BOARD

Hon. Tony Beilinson  
Dolores Beilinson  
Hon. Zbigniew Brzezinski  
Joel Frankel, M.D.  
Zvi Fuks, M.D.  
Sherwood D. Goldberg, Esq.  
Hon. Alexander M. Haig, Jr.  
Senator Daniel K. Inouye  
Hon. Henry Kissinger  
Hon. Samuel W. Lewis  
Maestro Zubin Mehta  
David Onn  
Halina Peabody

Miriam Romm  
Barbara Seaman  
Daniel S. Shapiro, Esq.  
Hon. George P. Shultz  
Neil Simon  
Senator Arlen Specter  
Congressman Henry A. Waxman  
Professor Elie Wiesel  
Peter Yarrow  
Senator Howard Metzenbaum (deceased)  
(Founding Chair)

RABIN MEDICAL CENTER  
Dr. Eyran Halpern, CEO

ISRAEL FRIENDS OF RABIN MEDICAL CENTER  
Pinchas Cohen, CHAIRMAN  
Nava Barak, PRESIDENT

Editorial Committee: Miriam Jayanti, Ph.D., Rabbi Joshua E. Plaut, Ph.D., Rabbi Steven Stern, Ph.D., Shellie Wislizki, Yvette Pomerantz Design: JM Design  
Vital Signs is a publication of American Friends of Rabin Medical Center (AFRMC), Inc., a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization, which is solely responsible for its contents.

636 Broadway, Suite 218, New York, NY 10012 tel 212 279-2522 [afrmc@afrmc.org](mailto:afrmc@afrmc.org)

A LASTING IMPACT



Abraham "Barry" E. Cohen

A tumultuous year has passed by swiftly, challenging most people in a variety of ways, so it is with particular enthusiasm that I look forward to two major American Friends of Rabin Medical Center events. The first is our annual gala dinner scheduled for Monday, November 2, 2009 and the second, a major Los Angeles fundraising event in Beverly Hills, set for January 17, 2010. This event is sponsored by Mrs. Claude Mann, an outstanding philanthropist and a member of our Board of Directors. We hope you will be able to join us at both of these events.

This year, the American Friends of Rabin Medical Center annual gala dinner will be held on the deck of a symbol of strength and innovation, the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum. Proceeds will support the tremendous progress and potential taking place in the field of cardiology at Rabin Medical Center. It is an effort that will leave a lasting effect on Israel and ultimately people around the globe. As we learn more about the root causes of suffering in an area of health that affects so many of us, we will be able to provide treatment accordingly, thereby making it possible for people to look beyond their own family histories and quite literally be given new leases on life.

As in all areas of medical research, scientists continually make progress by identifying what is universal within that which is unique, a human being. Perhaps some day that approach will transcend science and medicine and find its way into political and cultural attitudes. At Rabin Medical Center today, this world already exists. Patients of all races, religions and nationalities are treated with advanced medical technology and compassion. It is a beacon of hope and healing in the entire region.

Thank you for your continued support. See you on board.

Warmest regards,

Abraham "Barry" E. Cohen  
Chairman, American Friends of Rabin Medical Center

ADVANCES IN MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY



Dr. Eyran Halpern

I am proud to share our latest achievements with you, as Rabin Medical Center continues to be one of the most prominent integrated health facilities in Israel, offering compassionate health care and access to the latest advances in medicine to all citizens.

We have gone forward with many new and exciting projects including upgrading current equipment and facilities and conducting innovative research. We opened a newly refurbished Ultrasound and IVF Unit, a new Intermediate Heart Care Unit and a new Catheterization Lab for cardiac patients, as well as a state-of-the-art Linear Accelerator suite and an Information Center for cancer patients at the Davidoff Center.

The foundation was laid for the Jusidman Emergency and Trauma Center, slated to be completed in 2012, which will provide superior emergency care to more than 150,000 patients a year. This was made possible thanks to the generosity of Mr. Daniel Jusidman, but your help is urgently needed to fully complete this monumental project.

The hospital is also in the process of gaining accreditation from the prestigious Joint Commission International (JCI) in the United States. This accreditation is based on international consensus of uniform standards for hospitals. It focuses not only on the organization's ability to provide high quality care, but on its actual performance as well. This accreditation will place Rabin Medical Center among the world's top medical facilities.

All these projects would not have been possible without our friends in Israel and abroad, and we look forward to your continued partnership in achieving our future plans, which include important projects such as a new Dermatology Outpatient Clinic, an expanded Pulmonary Institute and a crucial comprehensive Breast Care Center. We thank you for all your support in helping us provide the best healthcare possible. It is your generosity that helps fuel the extraordinary progress of this outstanding medical facility.

Sincerely,

Dr. Eyran Halpern  
Chief Executive Officer, Rabin Medical Center

HAVE A HEART

BUY A PIECE OF HEART EQUIPMENT

To donate please contact:  
AFRMC at 212-279-2522  
or email [afrmc@afrmc.org](mailto:afrmc@afrmc.org)

<p><b>SAVE-A-LIFE EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT</b></p> <p><b>Hospital Bed</b> Cost: \$1,000</p> <p><b>Non-Invasive Blood Pressure Monitor</b> Cost: \$2,500</p> <p><b>Cardiac Defibrillator with Pacemaker</b> Cost: \$6,000</p> <p><b>Intermediate Cardiac Care Unit Monitor</b> Cost: \$12,500</p>	<p><b>Cardiothoracic Department Respirator</b> Cost: \$17,500</p> <p><b>Telemetry Station with Monitor</b> Cost: \$25,000</p> <p><b>SAVE-A-LIFE EMERGENCY SUPPLIES</b></p> <p>\$180 Emergency Cardiac Medicines</p> <p>\$360 Emergency Cardiac Medical Supplies</p> <p>\$500 Emergency Cardiac Relief Fund</p>
---	--

# LEADER IN ISRAEL

# THE RECANATI GENETICS INSTITUTE

**T**he Raphael Recanati Genetics Institute at Rabin Medical Center, the largest and most advanced of its kind in Israel, was established in April 2007 thanks to the generosity of **Mrs. Dina Recanati** and her sons in the name of her late husband **Raphael**. The Institute enables Rabin Medical Center to develop and advance its renowned clinical work and genetics research efforts with the most advanced equipment and cutting-edge technology that operates according to the highest international standards.

This state-of-the-art facility is directed by **Prof. Mordechai Shohat**, also of the Pediatrics and Genetics Department at the Sackler School of Medicine, Tel Aviv University. Prof. Shohat is considered one of the foremost experts in this field. Active in important local and international research projects, he has published countless articles in scientific journals, has 250 research works in circulation, and he has received numerous prestigious awards. In addition, he has developed unique web sites for genetic counseling, which are used by all of Israel's HMO's: *Genopedia*, a special encyclopedia that covers most common practical issues in genetic abnormalities; "Amniometer" which assesses the risk for chromosomal abnormalities based on a combination of test results during pregnancy; and the "Genometer", a revolutionary form which provides expectant couples with a genetic map, based on their family background and the couples' medical history. Prof. Shohat and his research staff also have a patent for the identification of two specific genes which cause mental retardation.

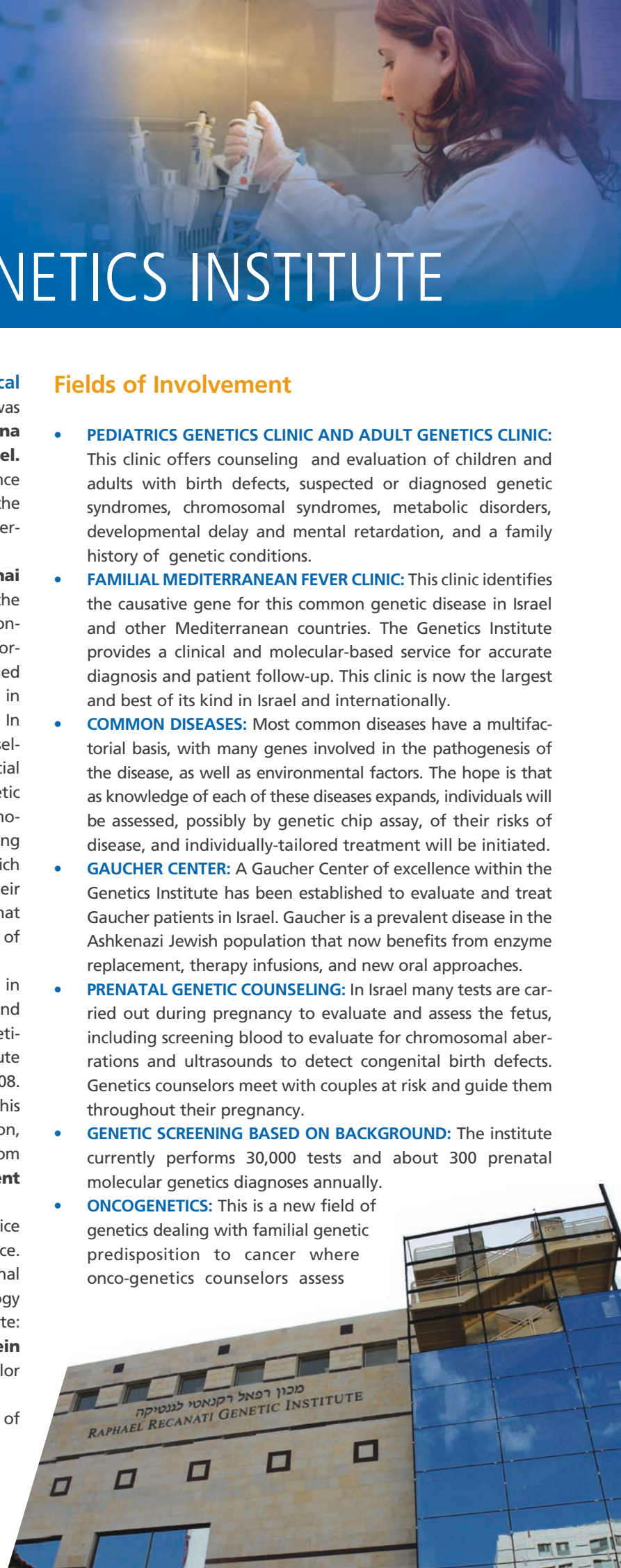
He spent several years as a fellow at Cedars Sinai Hospital in Los Angeles where he was mentored by **Drs. David Rimoin** and **Jerome Rotter**. The latter is an internationally renowned geneticist and a member of the Raphael Recanati Genetics Institute International Advisory Board, which held its first meeting in 2008. Four other prominent geneticists from abroad participate on this board: **Dr. Cynthia Morton** and **Dr. Alan Kopin** from Boston, **Dr. James Lupski** from Texas, and **Prof. Arnold Munnich** from Paris, who is also an advisor and close friend of French **President Nicolas Sarkozy**.

**Dr. Lina Basel** is in charge of the Pediatric Genetics service and **Dr. Hagit Baris** is in charge of the Adult Genetics service. There are also two fellows; **Dr. Idit Maya**, an expert in Internal Medicine, and **Dr. Michal Feingold**, an Obstetrics-Gynecology specialist. There are 5 prenatal genetic counselors in the institute: **Ellen Taub**, **Bella Davidov**, **Gabi Peretz-Amit**, **Yael Zalshtein** and **Nitzan Sharon**, and the leading onco-genetics counselor **Inbal Kedar**. Twenty technicians also work in the laboratories.

The Recanati Genetics Institute is involved in various fields of research, scientific activities, and collaborative efforts.

## Fields of Involvement

- **PEDIATRICS GENETICS CLINIC AND ADULT GENETICS CLINIC:** This clinic offers counseling and evaluation of children and adults with birth defects, suspected or diagnosed genetic syndromes, chromosomal syndromes, metabolic disorders, developmental delay and mental retardation, and a family history of genetic conditions.
- **FAMILIAL MEDITERRANEAN FEVER CLINIC:** This clinic identifies the causative gene for this common genetic disease in Israel and other Mediterranean countries. The Genetics Institute provides a clinical and molecular-based service for accurate diagnosis and patient follow-up. This clinic is now the largest and best of its kind in Israel and internationally.
- **COMMON DISEASES:** Most common diseases have a multifactorial basis, with many genes involved in the pathogenesis of the disease, as well as environmental factors. The hope is that as knowledge of each of these diseases expands, individuals will be assessed, possibly by genetic chip assay, of their risks of disease, and individually-tailored treatment will be initiated.
- **GAUCHER CENTER:** A Gaucher Center of excellence within the Genetics Institute has been established to evaluate and treat Gaucher patients in Israel. Gaucher is a prevalent disease in the Ashkenazi Jewish population that now benefits from enzyme replacement, therapy infusions, and new oral approaches.
- **PRENATAL GENETIC COUNSELING:** In Israel many tests are carried out during pregnancy to evaluate and assess the fetus, including screening blood to evaluate for chromosomal aberrations and ultrasounds to detect congenital birth defects. Genetics counselors meet with couples at risk and guide them throughout their pregnancy.
- **GENETIC SCREENING BASED ON BACKGROUND:** The institute currently performs 30,000 tests and about 300 prenatal molecular genetics diagnoses annually.
- **ONCOGENETICS:** This is a new field of genetics dealing with familial genetic predisposition to cancer where onco-genetics counselors assess



individuals and families with genetic predisposition to cancer. Approximately 1000 patients are evaluated annually.

- **CYTOGENETICS:** The demand for cytogenetic testing has increased and includes amniocentesis, CVS, bone marrow, and FISH analyses.
- **MOLECULAR GENETICS:** New tests are constantly being introduced, including Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy testing, TPMT (a new pharmacogenetic test used to assess a patient's ability to tolerate specific chemotherapy treatment), and soon advanced testing for the genetic component in colorectal cancer.



L-R: Dr. Eyran Halpern, Dina Recanati, Leon Recanati, Dr. Mordechai Shohat, Oudi Recanati

## Collaborative Efforts

Rosetta Genomics and Rabin Medical Center maintain an outstanding collaborative agreement to work together to develop microRNA-based diagnostics in the fields of oncology, gynecology, and obstetrics. The ability to selectively regulate protein activity through MicroRNAs has the potential to form the basis for a new class of diagnostic and therapeutic tools, since many diseases are caused by abnormal activity of proteins. This collaboration will use the potential of microRNAs as highly sensitive and specific biomarkers to develop a wide range of diagnostic and prognostic tests.

The Gastrointestinal Oncology Unit at Rabin Medical Center, headed by **Dr. Baruch Brenner**, and the Gastroenterology Institute, headed by **Prof. Yaron Niv**, are leading one of these cooperative efforts in the field of Gastrointestinal Oncology. The project focuses on the development of tests that will allow for early detection, prediction of recurrence of disease, and response to treatment in colorectal and gastric cancers.

The hospital has already completed a collaborative project with Rosetta Genomics for a test which helps locate the primary source of cancers of unknown origin (CUP). **Prof. Moshe Hod**, director of the Division of Maternal Fetal Medicine at the Helen Schneider Women's Hospital at Rabin Medical Center, is also chairman of the Rosetta Genomics Medical Advisory Board. He sees this cooperation as an important step toward finding new tests, diagnoses and treatments for many diseases which affect thousands of people worldwide.

## Scientific Activities

Tracing genes responsible for hereditary diseases is essential to the development of treatment and prevention programs. The Raphael Recanati Genetics Institute's research activities focus on investigating the molecular and patho-physiological basis of rare syndromes through identifying and studying new genes and generating potential therapeutic protocols, medication treatments and gene therapies. There are currently no therapies available for the treatment of most genetic syndromes. Precise genetic diagnosis also allows for prenatal diagnosis in families at risk, leading to long-term detection of carriers.

**Dr. Lina Basel's** (Pediatric Genetics service) main research interest is in the genetics of mental retardation. She has identified several new genes:

- A new gene that causes nonsyndromic mental retardation, called CC2D1A, whose discovery sheds light on a previously unknown signal transduction pathway important in human cognitive development.
- The gene causing Infantile Bilateral Striatal Necrosis, a neuro-genetic disorder characterized by degeneration of the brain. Discovery of the causative gene will facilitate diagnosis and prevention of the disease in families all over the world, and, hopefully, will assist in the development of treatment.
- Identification of a gene causing skin disease which will enable diagnosis of patients with this rare syndrome worldwide and allow for further understanding of this disease.

Dr. Basel is currently working on mapping new genes for other rare genetic conditions that will enable the institute to establish screening programs to identify carriers and also implement prenatal testing to identify affected fetuses. It is hoped that it will be possible to reduce, or in some cases even eliminate, the risk of children being born with these conditions.

**Dr. Hagit Baris'** (Adult Genetics service) main research interest is in cardiovascular genetics. Her major project focuses on the identification of genes involved in familial coronary artery disease, funded by The Edmond Benjamin de Rothschild Foundation. Dr. Baris received the Rabin Medical Center Young Investigators Award in 2008 for her work in identifying genes involved in a rare cardiac disorder. She is also working on the identification of genes involved in Familial Cardiomyopathy, a genetic disorder of the heart, the leading cause of sudden death in young people. Coronary artery disease is the number one cause of mortality in the Western world.

Genetics holds the key to thousands of new treatments, and diagnostic tools for countless potentially fatal diseases. The Raphael Recanati Genetics Institute will be part of this great future where medical knowledge, technology and expertise meet to create research and services equal to the world's leading genetics institutions.

The Recanati Genetics Institute is planning on initiating two new urgently required services and is seeking support for these new fields: Pre-Implantation Diagnosis (PGD) to help couples at risk of having an affected child, and Array Comparative Genomic Hybridization (aCGH) to be performed on patients with mental retardation and congenital anomalies, and will also evaluate pregnancies at risk.

# GENETICS Q & A

PROFESSOR MORDECHAI SHOHAT, DIRECTOR, RECANATI GENETICS INSTITUTE

**Q: What breakthroughs in the field of genetics are being pioneered and anticipated at Rabin Medical Center at this point in time and for the long term?**

The Genetics Institute runs a comprehensive genetics screening program aimed at couples where the wife is either pre-conception or in the early weeks of pregnancy. Tests are carried out to determine her carrier status for various genetic diseases; the specific diseases tested in each couple are determined by a combination of the husband and wife's ethnic ancestry. In the event that the wife is a carrier of any of the recessive diseases tested, the husband will also be tested. If both partners are carriers, they are offered genetic counseling.

In our oncogenetics clinic, we test patients for their status as carriers of certain cancer-causing genes. In our genetics counseling clinics, we offer infertility counseling. Male patients attending these clinics are offered a series of tests, including specific molecular tests and cytogenetic testing (chromosomal analysis); in other cases, both husband and wife will undergo cytogenetic testing. We also conduct testing for Gaucher's Disease and Familial Mediterranean Fever.

The main focus of our research activities over the past several years has been in the field of neurogenetics. We go to Israeli Arab villages with high rates of specific diseases to identify the causative gene and establish screening programs to detect carriers of mental retardation and infantile bilateral striatal necrosis.

**Q: What genetics research projects are being undertaken by the Institute concerning certain groups in Israel, including the Orthodox Jewish population, Israeli Arabs, and women?**

There are no specific research projects concerning the Orthodox Jewish population because they are genetically no different from non-Orthodox Jews. Much of the neurogenetic research, however, is carried out among the Israeli Arab community, due to the very high rate of consanguineous marriages within this population; in many Israeli Arab villages, there are high frequencies of one or more specific recessive disorders. In each village, where both husband and wife are found to be carriers of the specific condition, couples are offered prenatal diagnosis and possible termination of pregnancy.

**Q: What is the response to the opening of the Genetics Institute?**

There has been a significant increase in people coming for genetic counseling, and in the number of blood samples received from outside venues. Counselors are also seeing increasing severe and complex problems in women with late term pregnancies.

**Q: Who are Rabin Medical Center's key international partners in the field of genetics?**

We have partnered the Department of Medical Genetics at Cedars Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles with the Board of Genetics that oversees the activities of this Institute. The members of this Board are: **Prof. Mordechai Shohat** (RMC), **Mr. Oudi Recanati** (representative of the Recanati family), **Dr. Eyran Halpern** (CEO, RMC), **Dr. Cynthia Casson Morton** (Brigham and Women's Hospital, Massachusetts), **Dr. Jerome I. Rotter** (Cedar Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles), **Prof. Arnold Munnich** (Necker Hospital, Paris), **Dr. James R. Lupski** (Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas), **Dr. Alan S. Kopin** (Tufts New England Medical Center, Boston, Massachusetts), and **Prof. Moshe Garty** (RMC).

**Q: What are the Institute's future needs?**

In the future, the Institute will need to employ additional staff, since our plans include performing microarray CGH testing in our laboratory and also carrying out Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis (PGD).

**Q: Are there any statistics about genetics research or genetic testing at the hospital?**

In 2008, a total of 9750 patients saw genetics counselors while a total of 4862 patients saw medical geneticists. The total number of individuals participating in the genetics screening program was approximately 12,000, each averaging five different tests.

**Q: What leadership role does the Recanati Genetics Institute play in Israel?**

The Raphael Recanati Genetics Institute is one of the few genetics institutes in Israel that carries out molecular genetic testing for the disease Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type 1 (SMA 1). Genetic screening clinics are "walk-in" clinics where people can be tested without having to make an appointment.

**Q: How does the Recanati Genetics Institute interface with the Rabin Medical Center complex?**

The Genetics Institute interrelates with various gynecology departments and ultrasound units, the Cardiology Institute, the Oncology and Hematology Institute, and the pediatric oncology department, as well as other pediatric departments at Schneider Children's Medical Center.

## CANCER TECHNOLOGY SAVES LIVES

In recent years, with the development of a new generation of linear accelerators, tremendous advances have been made in radiation therapy treatment for cancer patients. The linear accelerator, the machine most often used to deliver external beam radiation, works by damaging the DNA of cancer cells so they can no longer reproduce and aims to stop the cancer from growing and spreading.

The Trilogy Linear Accelerator, the most advanced accelerator available in the world today, spares healthy tissues to an extent that was simply unimaginable a few years ago. It can treat cancer anywhere in the body and targets tumors much more precisely, allowing the radiologist to deliver a higher dose of radiation and decrease the number of required treatment sessions. This amazing technology is now available to cancer patients at the Rabin Medical Center's Davidoff Cancer Center. It is the only one in Israel. The Davidoff Center, which treats almost 20% of all Israel's cancer



Trilogy Linear Accelerator

patients, opened its doors in 2005 and is known to be one of the most outstanding technologically advanced centers for the treatment of malignant diseases in the Middle East.

## A SINGLE DROP OF BLOOD



Testing blood in the laboratory

Following organ transplants, there is often acute rejection of the transplanted organ and unstable kidney function soon after the operation.

Now a new test called ImmuKnow (immune cell function test), which uses a single drop of the patient's blood, can be conducted prior to the transplant. It can identify the functioning of the patient's immune system and the pos-

sibility of early acute transplant rejection and unstable kidney function following the transplantation. This is the only test of its kind that has been cleared for use by the FDA, and it is now being performed for the first time in Israel at Rabin Medical Center. This test is particularly critical for Rabin Medical Center, which performs more than 70% of all organ transplants in Israel. This pre-transplant assessment of donor-specific and nonspecific immune parameters can help identify organ recipients who may benefit from closer clinical and immunological surveillance and allow for tailored immune suppression and selective intervention. More than 1,000 tests have already been performed on 200 patients prior to their transplant and have helped identify many important parameters for their post-transplant care.

## FETAL GENDER AFFECTS PREGNANCY

While women are often mistakenly called the weaker sex, a new study shows that it's the other way round. In an interesting research project, Prof. Marek Glezerman, Dr. Yariv Yogeve and Dr. Nir Melamed of the Rabin Medical Center's Helen Schneider Hospital for Women found that a male fetus "is an independent risk factor" for a variety of different complications during pregnancy and childbirth. This wide-ranging study was based on the findings of over 66,000 women who gave birth at the Rabin Medical Center (RMC) in Petah Tikvah between 1995 and 2006. The results were quite surprising, showing that women who gave birth to boys had a 70% greater chance of premature labor and delivery, a 10% increased risk of having a Caesarean-section birth, suffered more gestational diabetes and an abnormal fetal heart rate, and an over 50% greater chance of vacuum fetus extraction when compared to those giving birth to girls. Male fetuses were larger in comparison to the female fetuses.



L-R: Prof. Marek Glezerman, Dr. Marianne Legato, Dr. Eyrans Halpern

However, female fetuses were more likely to be in breech position and suffer from intrauterine growth restriction. Although the study did not investigate the reasons for the differences, these findings can be helpful in future research to understand the mechanisms involved in premature birth and factors that influence fetal growth in the uterus.

## NINTH ANNUAL GALA: HONORING ROBERT IVANHOE AND CHARLES STROUSE



L-R: Eyrn Halpern, Claude Mann, Joshua Plaut & Barry Cohen



L-R: Robert Ivanhoe & Stephen Siegel



L-R: William Safire & Charles Strouse

**A**merican Friends of Rabin Medical Center's (AFRMC) Ninth Annual Gala Dinner was held in the magnificent newly renovated Plaza Hotel Ballroom on November 5, 2008, the day after a historical presidential election and a momentous day in the history of the nation. The annual gala event was a sold-out affair of over 600 attendees.

AFRMC's own Executive Board Member, **Robert J. Ivanhoe**, Chairman, Global Real Estate Practice Group and New York Office of Greenberg Traurig, LLP was honored at the event for his leadership, generosity, kindness, and benefactions. Broadway legend and three-time Tony Award-winning composer and lyricist **Charles Strouse** received the Award of Excellence. He

serenaded the crowd with his rendition of "Tomorrow," from the musical *Annie*, after being presented with an Award of Excellence for his countless cultural contributions. Two Broadway Tony Award-winning actresses sang Mr. Strouse's songs and entertained the audience. **William Safire**, the renowned *New York Times* columnist, was the keynote speaker and Master of Ceremonies for the evening and spoke with a sharp wit that left the room buzzing. The evening's entertainment was provided by The Jazz Museum in Harlem All-Stars Band, with special appearances and performances by opera star **Sherrill Milnes**. The lively "After Party" featured the legendary **Johnny Colon** and his twelve member band playing salsa music.

## JOURNALIST AND AMBASSADOR UNITE AGAINST BREAST CANCER



L-R: Journalist Paula Zahn with Ambassador Gabriela Shalev

**A**FRMC held its third Annual Women's Luncheon on April 23, 2009 at the United Nations to benefit a new \$2.7 million comprehensive Breast Care Center at Rabin Medical Center. The new Breast Care Center will integrate and expand current services at the hospital by bringing together all relevant breast cancer detection, care, and research services in one state-of-the-art facility.

The event co-chairs were **Phyllis Arnold, Bonnie Anfang, Dawn Effron, Arlette Erenberg, Bilha Fish, Jacki Florin, Joanne Kassin, Millie Magid, Shirin Moinian, and Arlene Strelitz**. The luncheon was hosted by Ambassador **Gabriela Shalev**, Israel's first woman ambassador to the United Nations, who gave an eloquent diplomatic briefing about current events affecting Israel. Ambassador Shalev was then interviewed by celebrity newscaster **Paula Zahn** about her experiences at the United Nations and her own life. The luncheon was attended by over 80 women, who were served an elegant meal and treated to a behind-the-scenes tour of the United Nations.

## GOLF OUTING BENEFITS HOSPITAL



L-R: Gerry Friedman, Stephen Siegel, Dennis Herman & Glen Isaacson

**A**merican Friends of Rabin Medical Center held its Third Annual charity Golf Tournament on May 19, 2009, at the Quaker Ridge Golf Club, Scarsdale, New York, under the leadership of **Stephen Siegel**, global chairman of **CB Richard Ellis**, and AFRMC Board President, to benefit the new Emergency and Trauma Center at the Rabin Medical Center. **Gadi Peleg** chaired the Golf Tournament committee. This event has become known as an exclusive real estate outing on the charity circuit, attracting major companies and sponsors: **Cape Investment Advisors, CB Richard Ellis, First Title American Insurance NY, Goldman, Sachs & Co., Greenberg Traurig LLP, KurzCorp, MF Global, Inc., Stonehenge Partners Inc., Taconic Investment Partners LLC, The Schoenheimer Foundation**.

Please mark your calendars for the next annual Golf Tournament, scheduled for Tuesday, May 18, 2010.



## REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS PARTY



Oren Heiman, event chair, conducts equipment appeal

The fourth annual celebration of American Friends of Rabin Medical Center New Circle for Young Professionals in Real Estate and Finance was held in March at the SICIS mosaic showroom in Soho, New York. Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, **Professor Gabriela Shalev**, made opening remarks. The evening featured keynote addresses by **Michael Stoler**, **Madison Realty Capital** and **The Stoler Report**, New York City, and by **Eli Tene**, **Bridgelock Capital/iShort Sale**, Los Angeles.

The event was chaired by **Oren Heiman**, and co-chairs were **Guy Benbenistie**, **Joe Berko**, **Yaniv Blumenfeld**, **Tzameret Fuerst**, **Yoav Oelsner** and **Edan Shibolet**.

Thanks to the corporate patrons and sponsors: **Asset Foreclosure Services Inc.**, **Bridgelock Capital**, **CB Richard Ellis**, **DSE Properties**, **99 Havemeyer Street Corporation**, **iShort-Sale**, **Studio Daniel Libeskind**, **Shibolet LLP**, **Artimus**, **Berko & Associates**, **Gaia Real Estate**, **The Lykon Group**, **Massey Knakal**, **The Real Deal**, **Sign Expo**, and **Shvo**.

## BRINGING LOS ANGELES CLOSER TO ISRAEL



Claude Mann visits Rabin

**Claude Mann**, a member of the American Friends of Rabin Medical Center Board of Directors, recently visited Rabin Medical Center in Petach Tikvah, Israel. Hosted by **Dr. Eyran Halpern**, CEO of the hospital, she visited the Davidoff Center, the most advanced center for the treatment of malignant cancer diseases in the Middle East, the newly relocated IVF Clinic, and other hospital departments. She was

impressed by the advanced care and state-of-the-art medical technology that is available to all citizens of Israel, which would not have been possible without the support of Rabin Medical Center's friends abroad.

Claude Mann is pleased to be able to help promote the needs of the hospital, particularly in her hometown of Los Angeles, and she hopes to increase support for Rabin Medical Center on the West Coast. Claude Mann plans to host an event in Los Angeles for the hospital on January 17, 2010. For more information, please call AFRMC (212) 279-2522.

## WALL STREET CELEBRATES ISRAEL

In July 2009 American Friends of Rabin Medical Center held the second annual Wall Street, High Tech and Life Sciences industries (WHALE) event, to benefit the new Emergency and Trauma Center at Rabin Medical Center. This successful networking event was underwritten by TD Bank, and had the theme "Wall Street Celebrates Israel." About 125 guests enjoyed the evening, which featured a panel discussion on "Surviving Tough Economic Times" with three well-known keynote speakers: **Yaron Galai** (Outbrain), **Dr. Joel Naroff** (TD Bank), and **Dr. Lindsay Rosenwald** (Paramount Biocapital).

## AFRMC WEBSITE & WEBZINE DEBUT

Check out our new updated Web site at **www.afrmc.org**. You'll find it packed with information, articles and videos about the hospital, as well as new developments in health and AFRMC local events. AFRMC also sends out regular electronic updates, on topics related to the hospital and health issues. To subscribe to this e-mail list please write **afrmc@afrmc.org**.

Please register for the complimentary AFRMC networking Hotlist Database for Real Estate, Tech, Finance & Life Sciences Professionals at **http://hotlist.afrmc.org**.

## REMEMBERING HAROLD SNYDER



Harold Snyder with Tamar Hirshl Snyder

**Harold Snyder**, generic drug pioneer and American Friends of Rabin Medical Center benefactor, has died at the age of 86. In 1964 he founded Biocraft Laboratories, the first generic drug manufacturer to be listed on the New York Stock Exchange. In 1996, Biocraft was acquired by Teva Pharmaceutical Industries, the largest drug company in Israel. Mr. Snyder served as a director of Teva and was a

principal at HBJ Investments LLC, which provides capital to a wide range of start-up companies. Born in New York City to immigrant parents, he was deeply involved in philanthropy from local charities to medical research and was a passionate promoter of progressive causes. He is survived by his daughter, **Beryl**, his sons, **Brian** and **Jay** and his wife, **Tamar Hirschl Snyder**.

Harold Snyder was a friend and supporter of Rabin Medical Center for many years. He generously sponsored two projects to train Arab Israeli physicians to provide advanced healthcare in the Arab Israeli population: The Harry Snyder Fellowship in infectious diseases is held by **Dr. Morad Wattad**, and the internship in Gynecology at Rabin Medical Center was awarded to **Dr. Abeer Massarwa** who hopes to advance women's healthcare in the Arab Israeli population. We will always be thankful for our strong friendship with Harold Snyder and his family and to have been touched by his extraordinary caring and altruism.

## REMEMBERING RUTH DAVIDOFF

A memorial service for **Ruth Davidoff** was held at Rabin Medical Center during the Third International Davidoff Center Board meeting in March. The ceremony was attended by family members and friends from Israel and abroad, including her son **Alberto** and his wife **Monica** and her nephew **Paul**.

Ruth (nee Misrachi) was born in Mexico City in 1927. The Misrachi home was a cultural center in Mexico City. Among the friends of the family were world-renowned artists **Diego Riviera** and **Frida Kahlo**, **Rufino Tamayo** and **Juan Soriano**.

Ruth was educated in Mexico and the USA, where she attended Bryn Mawr College. After marrying **Leon Davidoff**, she raised four children, **Suzy**, **Claudia**, **Alberto** and **Aline**. Leon



Ruth Davidoff, of blessed memory

and Ruth were ardent Zionists and had a second home in Jerusalem for many years, which was a gathering place for many Israeli intellectuals and leaders. In recent years they mainly lived abroad, but always continued their support for Israel and visited the country frequently. Ruth fostered cultural and artistic pursuits throughout her life, as she chronicled in her 2007 autobiography, *Volaron las Palomas (The Doves Flew Away)*.

Rabin Medical Center is privileged that Leon and Ruth Davidoff generously established the Davidoff Center, which today is the leading oncology facility in Israel and the region. Following her artistic interests, Ruth became very much involved in selecting the beautiful artwork spread throughout the Davidoff Center.

## TOGETHER IN PEACE

Leaders of the Druze community from the south of Israel, dressed in traditional garb, visited wounded soldiers at Rabin Medical Center after the Gaza War in January 2009 (Operation Cast Lead). Since the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, the Druze community, whose culture is Arab and whose main language is Arabic, have served as volunteers in the Israel Defense Forces and the Border Police. Through all of Israel's wars they have sent their sons into battle to protect the country of Israel, which they call home.

Throughout their visit they stood gen-



Druze leaders visiting wounded Israeli soldiers

tly by each soldier's bed bearing gifts and well wishes for their recovery, and presented them with letters of recognition for their bravery. Perhaps equally important were their words of brotherhood and hope for peace. The Druze know the pain of war and have paid a heavy price, burying many of their children killed in action. Yet they have never wavered from their duty to serve in the army and are proud to do so.

The example of the relationship between the Druze and the Jews of Israel is one of true peace.

## VITAL STATISTICS FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH

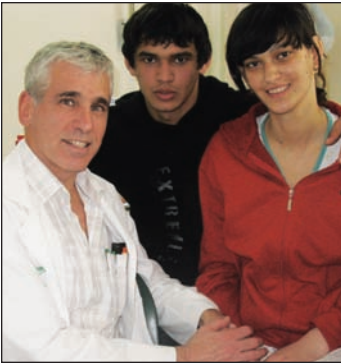
The **Helen Schneider Hospital for Women** at Rabin Medical Center, headed by **Prof. Marek Glezerman**, is the largest comprehensive hospital for women in Israel, and deals with all aspects of women's health. The staff includes 81 doctors, 156 nurses, 54 midwives and 81 additional staff members. The hospital has 144 beds, 13 labor delivery suites, four operating theaters and five different inpatient facilities. Over the past year there were 8,650 births (4,400 boys and 4,250 girls) including 241 twins, 4 triplets



Helen Schneider Hospital for Women on Rabin Campus

and 202 premature infants. 4,500 operations were performed, 1,600 which were Caesarean-sections. There were 38,000 outpatient visits, and 1,200 IVF treatment cycles were performed. In addition there were 20,000 ultrasound examinations and 28,000 women visited the emergency room. In 2008 a new all-natural birthing suite in the style of Feng Shui was opened, and in 2009 Prof. Glezerman initiated the first meeting of The Israel Society for Gender Based Medicine, which took place at the hospital.

## TRANSPLANT SAVES LIFE OF TOURIST



L-R: Prof. Eytan Mor and Miriam's brother with Miriam Kisishvili

**M**iriam Kisishvili, a nineteen-year-old from Georgia (former Soviet Union), was visiting Israel on a Taglit-Birthright tour when she was brought in critical condition to Rabin Medical Center, suffering from a severe liver infection. She was treated by **Prof. Ran Tur Caspa**, Head of the Liver Institute at Rabin Medical Center and a well-known liver disease specialist. She was found to be suffering from a rare genetic disorder, "Wilson's Disease", that erupts suddenly and destroys the liver.

It became clear that she would die without a liver transplant, and would not survive the flight back home. Time was of the essence. As foreign citizens are not eligible to receive a transplant from a dead donor in Israel, Rabin Medical Center immediately called the Prime Minister's Office. Nativ, the Russian Desk of Israel's Foreign Ministry, obtained Israeli citizenship for Miriam within two days. Clalit Health Services then was able to give her medical insurance for the transplant, which ordinarily costs over \$200,000.

In the interim her mother had arrived on the first available plane, and was standing by ready to donate a lobe of her own liver to save her daughter's life. Fortunately, a matching liver became available the day before the transplant instead.

**Prof. Eytan Mor**, head of the Department of Transplantation and one of the foremost authorities in this field, performed the transplant and the young girl is now recuperating nicely. She had originally wanted to immigrate to Israel, and now she wants to remain in Israel forever.

## IDENTICAL TWINS BATTLE CYSTIC FIBROSIS



Amir and Tal Askenazi

**A**mir and **Tal Askenazi**, 24 year-old identical twin brothers, share everything in their lives including their friends, their apartment, their workplace and sadly their affliction with cystic fibrosis, a terrible genetic disease.

The twins were diagnosed with cystic fibrosis very soon after they were born. This disease affects the exocrine mucus glands of the lungs, liver, pancreas, and intestines, causing progressive disability due to multisystemic failure. Most patients have a short life expectancy. In Tal's case the disease had progressed further, and at only 23 years old he was attached to an oxygen tank 24 hours a day,

## INFANT SAVED FROM BLINDNESS

**A** complicated corneal transplant was performed at Rabin Medical Center on a one-month old Arab Israeli baby. **Nibal Samech-Samech** was saved from a life of blindness. This surgical procedure is rarely done on such a young infant, and few such transplants have been carried out in the world. The surgery was performed by **Prof. Yisrael Kramer, Dr. Moshe Lusky**, and an expert medical team headed by **Prof. Dov Weinberger**, director of the Institute of Ophthalmology at Rabin Medical Center.



Nibal Samech-Samech and her mother at Rabin Medical Center.

The baby was diagnosed at the age of four days old as suffering in both eyes from the disease known as Peter's Anomaly. In this disease the cornea, which transmits light from the outside world through the lens to the retina, becomes opaque, thus causing blindness. This is a rare eye disease, which is a developmental error of early pregnancy. A corneal transplant is the only way to prevent blindness.

Prof. Weinberger noted that several international cornea centers were contacted urgently to get the corneas, but luckily at the last minute a cornea donation was found in Israel. The very complicated procedure required great surgical skills as it was first necessary to reconstruct the structure of the eye and only then to perform the corneal transplant. Thankfully, this small infant was saved from a life of darkness.

and could barely breathe. He became extremely depressed, because he knew that without a lung transplant he would soon die. The waiting was the most difficult part, but finally he received a long-awaited call from **Prof. Kramer**, head of the Pulmonary Institute at Rabin Medical Center. A matching lung had been donated by the family of a young man who had died in a car accident. One family's tragedy had become another's family's hope.

Tal underwent a successful lung transplant at Rabin Medical Center. His brother Amir never left his side, except when Tal was on the operating table. He is now back in the apartment he shares with Amir and has begun to enjoy the freedom of his new life. Though his brother Amir's condition is currently stable, Tal knows that one day he will also need a lung transplant, and he only prays that when that day comes, his brother will be just as lucky as him.



AMERICAN FRIENDS OF  
RABIN MEDICAL CENTER

636 Broadway, Suite 218  
New York, NY 10012

[www.afrmc.org](http://www.afrmc.org)

AN EVENING ON THE INTREPID AIR-SEA-SPACE MUSEUM

BROADWAY

ON

THE

HUDSON

AMERICAN FRIENDS OF  
RABIN MEDICAL CENTER



TO BENEFIT THE RABIN MEDICAL CENTER OF ISRAEL

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2009

American Friends of Rabin Medical Center  
Invites you to an Evening of Celebration  
on The Intrepid, Pier 86, New York City

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2009

6:45—9:15 PM

Cocktails, Tours, Dinner & Entertainment

9:15—11:00 PM

After Party: Dessert, Music & Dancing

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Larry King, CNN Host of *Larry King Live*

HONOREES

Teva Pharmaceuticals North America

William S. Marth, CEO and President,  
Teva Pharmaceuticals North America

LIVE BROADWAY MUSIC AND COMEDY

Legendary Comedian Robert Klein

*Memphis*, a New Broadway Musical

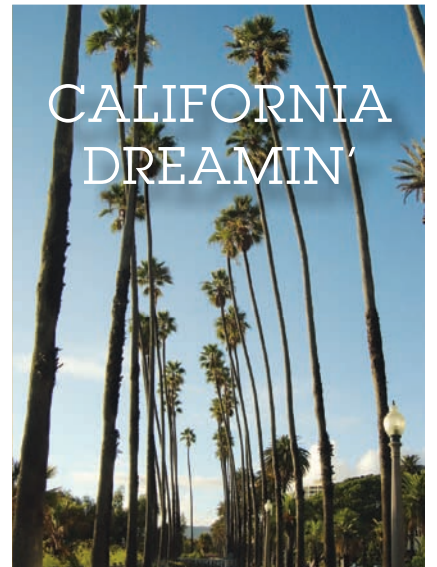
Renowned Dancer Savion Glover

Jazz Museum in Harlem All-Stars Band

New York City Swing (After Party)

Reservations: 212-279-2522 or [afrmc@afrmc.org](mailto:afrmc@afrmc.org)

CALIFORNIA  
DREAMIN'



Sunday, January 17, 2010

Beverly Hills, California  
celebration on behalf  
of American Friends of  
Rabin Medical Center,  
hosted by Claude Mann

For more information  
or to RSVP call AFRMC  
212-279-2522 or e-mail  
[afrmc@afrmc.org](mailto:afrmc@afrmc.org)