



Special Edition Welcome...

Two events mark the spring season in Pediatrics – Prom and Convocation. Prom is an occasion to celebrate the warmer weather and the end of the school year with our patients and families. And our Convocation acknowledges the academic achievements of our graduating high school seniors. Because these events celebrate and honor our awesome patients, we cherish them deeply and look forward to them all year long.



Cracking each other up at Prom, this couple had lots of fun!



Dr. Gilheeney gives a congratulatory hug to one of our Prom Kings.



Amalia R. shows off her awards after Convocation.



Chris C. shares his graduation day with one of his former doctors, Dr. Meyers.



The graduates became fast friends at Convocation.



Nurse practitioners Rosemarie and Ashley cozy up to a partygoer for a group photo at Prom.



Prom...

Getting Ready...

One of the most important parts of Prom is the dress. Short or long, black or white, tulle or lace – whatever the specifications – “Promingdales” had it. A big thanks to the many individual and group donations of gowns, as well as to The Children’s and Associates Committees of The Society of MSKCC, and The Society of MSKCC’s Kids Kick In Committee for their generosity.

Getting ready for Prom was a party in itself. Makeup was generously provided by Polly Blitzer. We had a rainbow of lip glosses, eye shadows, and nail polish from which to choose — and the face-

painters and cosmetologists to help us apply it. Counters of jewelry, colorful wraps, and matching handbags added to the beautiful chaos and fostered much excitement leading us to the big event.



Friends check out this year’s dresses at “Promingdales.” Looks like shades of red are in for 2008!



A last-minute check in the mirror before going to prom.



Molly is one of a select few who knows how to tie bow ties.



“We’re taking a limo,... We’re going in style.”
Chris Kirk

The Chariot...

What you wear to Prom is almost as important as how you get there. Pediatrics has its own version of a stretch limo: it seats four, possibly five, can go in elevators, and is the perfect place for an afternoon nap. And did we mention it’s for kids only? The highly anticipated Prom Limo is a definite must for all kids looking to ride to Prom in style.

Party...

The excitement of pre-Prom activities carried over to the big dance, which was held in the West Dining Room of the MSKCC cafeteria. Guests entered prom through arches of balloons and scoped out their favorite staff members and friends movin' and groovin' on the dance floor. Thanks to MC Dana and his crew of DJs and dancers from Party King Entertainment for once again spinning the music and energizing the crowd.

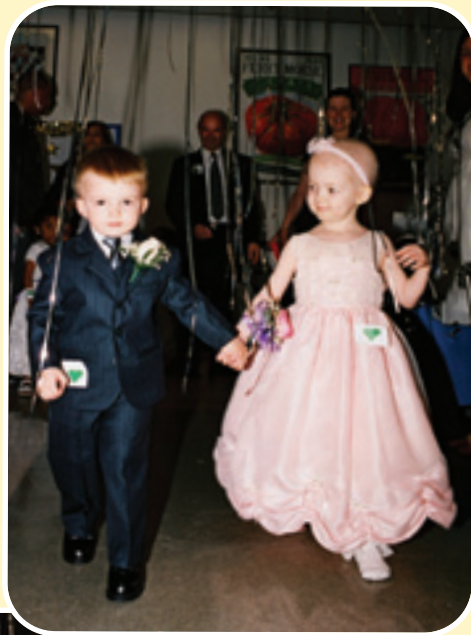
MSKCC's Food and Nutrition Services provided delectable kid-friendly treats like dinosaur chicken nuggets, finger sandwiches, and a special sherbet punch. Thanks also to Kelly Johnston from the Society for providing the much-anticipated cakes for the event.

With all the joy, dancing, glitter of dresses, music, and special friends, Prom was a special occasion that will be remembered for years to come. Particular thanks to MSKCC's Departments of Food and Nutrition Services, Volunteers, Media Services, Public Affairs, Medical Graphics and Photography, Environmental Services, Facilities Management, and Security for everything they did to make Prom 2008 a total success.

For Prom highlights and ABC World News coverage of the big event, go to www.mskcc.org/mskcc/html/77081.cfm.



A mother-daughter team pose on our royal Prom thrones.



Glamour abounded at the 2008 Pediatric Prom.



In between dance moves, guests enjoyed an ice cream sundae buffet.



This dapper couple makes a grand entrance into Prom.

There is such a thing as too much party.



Doctors LaQuaglia and Khakoo were crowned staff Prom King and Queen.

Convocation...

Our second annual Convocation recognized 55 former or current patients graduating from high school or earning their GED in 2008. This outstanding group of students represented eight states and 51 high schools, and had a variety of interests ranging from golf, singing, and drama, to tennis, basketball, and foreign languages. They were involved in many organizations and community services including Amnesty International, Future Farmers of America, Student Council, Happiness Is Camping, Poetry Group, Computer Club, Model UN, and 4H.

The 16 students from the class of 2008 able to join us were greeted warmly by staff members and old friends. Fitted for their caps and gowns, they were helped with their corsages by MSKCC's teaching staff. A professional photographer was on hand to take photos of the grads and their families.

The ceremony began with a processional, as the graduates entered the Recreation Center to Pachelbel's Canon in D Major — and a standing ovation from their families and the MSKCC community.

Once the graduates were assembled on stage, Dr. Paul A. Meyers, Vice Chair of the Department of Pediatrics, welcomed everyone to the event and acted as officiator of the ceremony.

Dr. Richard J. O'Reilly, Chair of Pediatrics, gave the keynote address, while special graduate addresses were given by Marie M., Julie R., and Shaquana R.

Closing the ceremony was Dr. Robert E. Wittes, MSKCC's Physician-in-Chief. He congratulated this amazing class on their accomplishments, calling them, in a word, "spectacular!"



Waiting for the ceremony to begin, grads and family members got a sneak peak at the Convocation program.



Dr. Meyers



Dr. O'Reilly



Matthew A. got a high five from his doctor, Kim Kramer, as he stepped onto the stage.



The Awards...

The graduates at convocation were honored with a series of awards from MSKCC and The New York City Department of Education. Pediatrics handed out certificates of achievement to each graduate in recognition of their hard work and dedication to their studies. Mary Maher, the principal of hospital schools for the New York City Department of Education presented awards in science, physical education, outstanding leadership, and academic excellence on behalf of the Department of Education.

The Department of Pediatrics also paid homage to two former physicians who made significant contributions to the treatment of pediatric cancers. Honoring their memories and achievements, we created special awards in their names. Dr. M. Lois Murphy was a pioneer in the treatment of childhood cancer, inspiring generations of physicians who followed her lead in improving the success in treating cancer in the young. Dr. Charlotte T.C. Tan was an innovator in the development of effective therapies for children and young adults with Hodgkin's Disease. She pioneered several new chemotherapies, taking them from the laboratory to the bedside, helping to advance care for pediatric patients.

Dr. Meyers presents the Dr. Charlotte Tan award to Min Soo.



Principal Mary Maher handed out special awards granted by the New York City Department of Education.



During the luncheon following Convocation, grads showed off their grade-A smiles!

**“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.”
Ralph Waldo Emerson**



Staff members check out this year's graduates on a poster in the waiting area.



The Convocation cake was designed to look like the graduates' certificates of achievement.



Special Thanks...

Pediatrics would like to specially thank our excellent teaching staff – Mary Ellen Fitzsimons, Ross Cohen, Rosemarie Vasti, and Anne Marie Cicciu – as well as Mary Maher and all the teachers, home instructors, tutors, school counselors, social workers and principals who helped our students pursue their academic goals. Because of them, and because of the dedicated families and staff members who are committed to the highest standards of education, this very special Convocation was made possible.



The Writers Workshop...

Shaquanna...

“When I first started [treatment], I thought, ‘I just want to give up.’ I would ask myself ‘why me?’ – not wishing this on anyone, but still, ‘why me?’ But after waking up from my first and only surgery, I knew that I could beat this. I turned to the side and saw my brother’s smiling face. He said, ‘I’m proud of you.’ I was relieved, and from that moment on there was no doubt in my mind that I could get through this.”



Marie...

“We graduates all have something in common – we spent many weeks, months, or even years here at Sloan-Kettering receiving the best possible care in the world. As each of us faced our own individual diagnoses, we were never alone. We had the experience, the compassion, the love of every single person here at the hospital. Although we may have initially been frightened, our fear was quickly replaced with the hope and encouragement of everyone here...”



“And so, as I look out in the audience at my fellow graduates, I feel a collective sense of accomplishment by all of us. We have each faced a tremendous challenge early in our lives and we have come through with flying colors. I think this experience has given us an inner strength that cannot be seen, but burns deeply inside each one of us.”

For highlights of our 2008 Convocation and interviews with the graduates, visit www.mskcc.org/mskcc/html/2954.cfm

Julie...

“I was trying to keep up with my AP English class while undergoing chemo during my junior year. Dr. Paul Meyers, one of the most renowned pediatric oncologists in the world, came into my room one day, followed by a long trail of residents and interns. Instead of talking about my white blood cell count, or lack thereof, he saw that I was reading *The Grapes of Wrath* and asked me what I thought the turtle in chapter three symbolized. Although I didn’t know at that point what the turtle symbolized, I knew that I was going to be okay. Otherwise, how could Dr. Meyers have been so casual? It was only later, when I read about the turtle overcoming great obstacles in a resilient and persistent manner, that I understood the relevance of the reference and realized Dr. Meyers had not been casual at all...”



“We are here today. At most graduations, that phrase introduces the cause for celebration. For example, ‘we are here today to mark an important milestone in our lives.’ But here at Memorial Sloan-Kettering, that phrase is a cause for celebration. We are here today.”

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Class of 2008...



*Amalia R.
New York, New York*



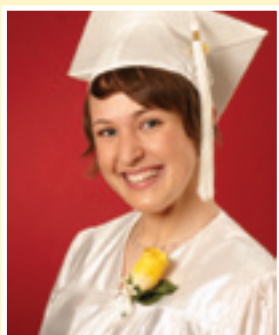
*Christopher C.
Fairfield, Connecticut*



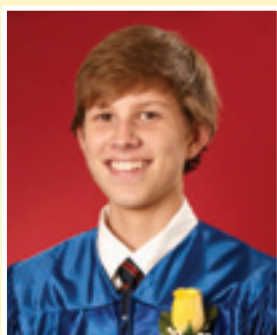
*Daniel R.
Staten Island, New York*



*Josue G.
Ho-Ho-Kus, New Jersey*



*Julie R.
Brooklyn, New York*



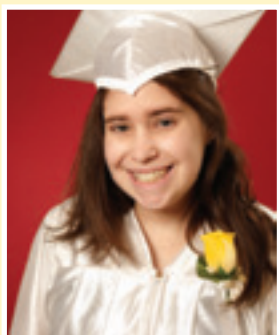
*Keith H.
Manassas, Virginia*



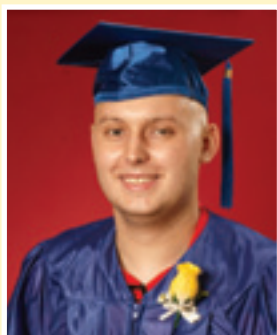
*Laura Anne P.
Bayville, New Jersey*



*Lorenzo D.
Berkeley Heights, New Jersey*



*Madeline R.
Scarsdale, New York*



*Marek S.
Middle Village, New York*



*Marie M.
New York, New York*



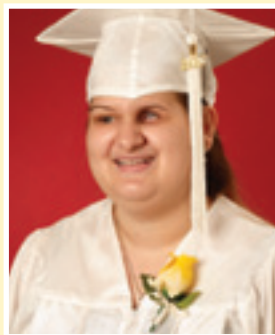
*Matthew A.
Briarcliff Manor, New York*



*Mia X.
Freehold, New Jersey*



*Min Soo K.
Franklin Square, New York*



*Selma S.
Bronx, New York*

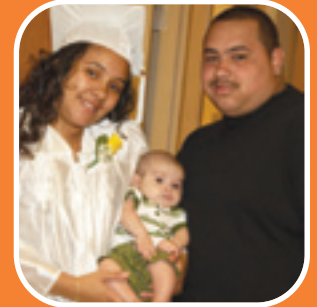


*Shaquana R.
Brooklyn, New York*



We asked the Graduates...

and here are the top 10 lessons they've learned...



10

"Surviving has taught me to live life to the fullest. Do what you love – you never know what will happen tomorrow!" Marie

9

"Be sure to stick with a good group of friends and embrace your dreams." Daniel

8

"Never allow your disease to take precedence in defining who you are." Sile

7

"Anyone can make a plan, but it's those who stick with the plan who succeed in life." Bruce

6

"Never give up." Mia

5

"The kindness and compassion of the staff inspired me to see the positive energy here every day in the face of tremendous adversity." Julie

4

"Life is a journey, not a race." Chris

3

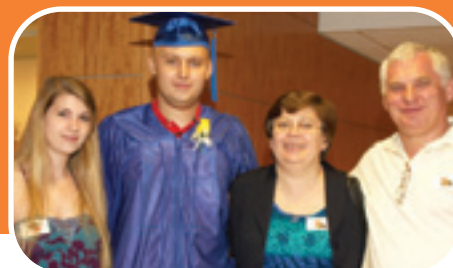
"I learned that life is one big surprise. You never know what will happen the next day." Marek

2

"Fight this disease, don't let it fight you." Shaquana

1

"I've learned that so many people think and care about you all the time no matter what you do, or who you are." Min Soo



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