

Photos courtesy of Thomas Jefferson University Archives

Leah Lowenstein, MD

Nation's first female dean of a co-ed medical school

1981

Though last to admit female students, JMC was the first co-educational medical school to appoint a woman as dean. Leah Lowenstein, MD, came from Boston, where she built a reputation as a gifted teacher, clinician and researcher in renal and metabolic diseases. She arrived at JMC in July 1982 but resigned for health reasons 18 months later. She died from cancer within a year. In 2008, JMC unveiled her portrait, and it hangs in the Office of the Dean today.



1980s

A rumor with no basis in fact begins to circulate that JMC was under a court order to accept female students in 1961. No order was ever issued.

In 1988, the Board of Trustees initiates adding a member from recent alumni; Patricia M. Curtin, class of 1988, becomes the first such trustee.

1989

Jefferson
MEDICAL COLLEGE



ALUMNI BULLETIN Fall 1989

The JMC Alumni Association elects its first female president, Nancy Szwec Czarniecki, MD '65, who was also Jefferson's first female student.

1998

Women comprise 50 percent of the entering class for the first time. With a few exceptions, JMC continues to match or surpass the national average of female-to-male student ratio to the present day.

2002



Marion J. Siegman, PhD of physiology becomes JMC's first female chair in basic sciences.

2002



Vijay M. Rao, MD, PG '78 of radiology becomes Jefferson's first female chair in a clinical department.

1824	1847	1891	1910	1950	1961	1970	1981	1998	TODAY
Jefferson Medical College is founded.	First woman earns a medical degree in the U.S.	Jefferson creates School of Nursing.	Report urges consolidation of minority medical schools with larger institutions.	First female professorship at JMC.	JMC begins admitting female students.	Percentage of female students at JMC surpasses national average.	JMC appoints the nation's first female dean.	JMC student gender ratio reaches 50/50.	50 and forward...

