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Jefferson Awards Gala Celebrates a Dedicated Faculty Member

On October 22, 2009, the Jefferson community celebrated the contributions of Herbert E. Cohn, MD, FACS, at the Seventh Annual Jefferson Awards Gala. Dr. Cohn, a Jefferson Medical College alumnus, distinguished member of the Department of Surgery faculty, teacher and administrative leader, received the Achievement Award in Medicine, recognizing his career in thoracic and endocrine surgery.

More than 500 guests attended the event which raised close to $600,000 for Jefferson. Among the many alumni, faculty and friends who generously supported the Gala was Mrs. Irmine Pilmes, a longtime patient of Dr. Cohn’s. Dr. Cohn cared for both she and her husband, Alexander Bondaretz, over many years and earned their deep appreciation. When Mrs. Pilmes learned of the Gala, she decided to make a significant contribution to Jefferson in Dr. Cohn’s honor. For Mrs. Pilmes, the best vehicle for such a gift was through her estate. She worked with the Jefferson Foundation and her attorney to develop language in her will that would direct $100,000 to the Department of Surgery in support of thoracic and endocrine surgery education and research.

The most common form of a planned gift is a simple bequest through a will. Bequests of cash, securities, real property or other assets to Jefferson entitle one’s estate to a charitable deduction that can reduce or eliminate estate tax liability. Sadly, Mrs. Pilmes was unable to attend the Gala in the fall. She passed away during the summer, but was recognized at the event for her tremendous generosity as a Platinum Sponsor. Dr. Cohn, who is currently the Vice Chair of Quality, humbly recalls, “I have received many gifts from grateful patients over the years from bottles of scotch to bequests in their wills and I’m always taken aback – I’m just doing my job.” At the same time, he is very appreciative. “It is fitting that Jefferson received this gift. This is where I trained and practiced my entire career. Mrs. Pilmes’ generous gift will help ensure that Jefferson continues to produce top-notch surgeons and push our research forward.”

For additional information about planned giving, or to make a contribution to the Department of Surgery, please contact Lara Goldstein in the Jefferson Foundation at 215-955-8797 or lara.goldstein@jefferson.edu.

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Philadelphia is a competitive community for kidney transplantation. Jefferson has adopted a ‘paired-kidney donation’ protocol, which will help patients with potential living donors who are incompatible for usual kidney transplantation. By collaborating with the Paired Donation Network, we hope to find a compatible donor-recipient pair that will make transplant possible for most of these recipients. This surgery is identical to a standard living donor kidney transplant, but there are additional considerations. Those patients without a compatible donor will have to wait on the deceased donor transplant list, which currently exceeds 85,000 patients nationwide, with a median wait time of four years. To facilitate living kidney donor exchanges, Jefferson has adopted a ‘paired-kidney donation’ protocol, which will help patients with potential living donors who are incompatible for usual kidney transplantation. By collaborating with the Paired Donation Network, we hope to find a compatible donor-recipient pair that will make transplant possible for most of these recipients. This surgery is identical to a standard living donor kidney transplant, but there are additional considerations. Those patients without a compatible donor will have to wait on the deceased donor transplant list, which currently exceeds 85,000 patients nationwide, with a median wait time of four years.

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