

*People and programs
that keep the school
healthy and vibrant*



and even for giving patients' families his own money to buy groceries. "He just never hesitated to help people out," says Sara McIntire, associate professor of pediatrics.

One patient, whom we'll call Joey, first came to see Londino when he was about 5. When Londino learned that Joey had never had a birthday party, he arranged for one in the nurses' station. After Londino's death, hospital staff continued to hold birthday parties for Joey, as Londino had requested.

Coworkers could sometimes hear Londino coughing from down the hall; cystic fibrosis, a hereditary, terminal condition, produces thick mucus in the lungs. Once, when he had pneumonia, Londino went about his work with an IV needle in his arm, pausing between patient visits to reconnect to his IV bag of antibiotics and other fluids. He counseled his patients' parents never to discourage their kids from doing as much as they were able and inclined to. Londino fought off the fatigue associated with his illness for years. He stopped working six months before he died in December 2000 at the age of 48.

In Londino's 15 years at Children's Hospital, he was the only pediatric rheumatologist in Western Pennsylvania. (Pediatric rheumatologists are scarce—there are only a few hundred in the United States.) By 2001, Pitt was ready to support a major recruiting effort in this field. Raphael Hirsch, the new head of pediatric rheumatology, has quickly developed one of the top pediatric rheumatology programs in the country, with six faculty members and one fellow thus far. Collaborating with Carnegie Mellon University researchers, Hirsch is developing novel methods for measuring inflammation in arthritis patients. This year, Children's created, and awarded to Hirsch, the Aldo V. Londino Jr., MD, Endowed Chair in Pediatrics. ■

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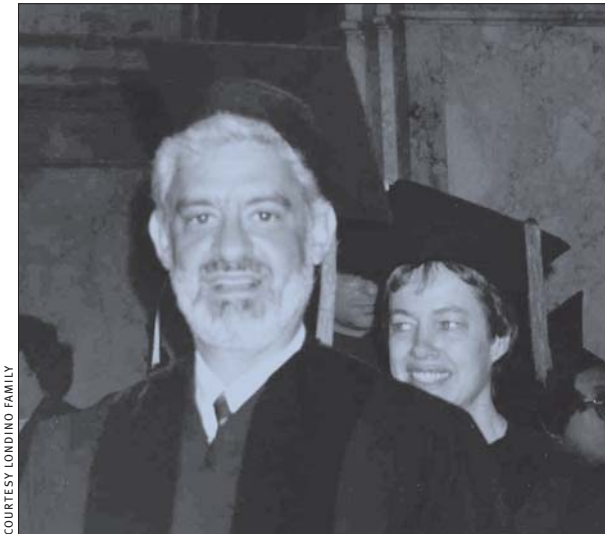
PEDIATRIC RHEUMATOLOGIST HONORED

BY COREY BALLANTYNE

Aldo "Vinny" Londino was a bearded and jovial figure, and the similarities with Santa Claus didn't stop there. Every holiday season, the late pediatric rheumatologist and associate professor of pediatrics and medicine used to arrive at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh with shopping bags full of gifts for his patients. He selected the neediest patients, and his wife, JoAnne Londino, shopped for the gifts with help from their two sons.

Londino knew many of his patients and their families well, because rheumatoid diseases like arthritis and fibromyalgia are chronic. Growing children with these conditions came to see him regularly for help in controlling the joint and muscle swelling, stiffness, and pain that could dramatically limit their abilities. Londino talked with them about the physical and social challenges that came with their diseases. As one who suffered from cystic fibrosis, and therefore lived for years with chronic pulmonary disease, Londino knew about overcoming physical limitations.

People remember Londino for playing with Barbies to keep a little girl calm, for bringing his own sons to play Nintendo with another patient during his weekend rounds,



COURTESY LONDINO FAMILY

Londino was once the only pediatric rheumatologist in Western Pennsylvania. He treated patients even when he had pneumonia.

BOOSTER SHOTS

For almost three years, **Andrea Katz McCutcheon** suffered flashes of excruciating facial pain. She had been diagnosed with trigeminal neuralgia, a disorder of the fifth cranial nerve, but treatments failed to bring relief. Then, doctors in Pitt's pain medicine program implanted a pump to deliver medicine directly to the receptors in her spinal cord. It relieved her pain. McCutcheon, who says she'll wear the pump for the rest of her life, recently donated \$50,000 to establish an educational endowment for Pitt's pain medicine fellows.

Gregory Davies, the tall and charismatic president and CEO of Wabtec Corporation, was credited with steering his company through an economic downturn while others in the rail industry went bankrupt. Those in the company were stunned last year when Davies, at 57 years old, was diagnosed with a brain tumor in March and then died at home four months later. Wabtec has created an endowed fund for brain tumor research and physician education in Davies' name through the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute. The company and its directors contributed \$300,000 and will match its employees' contributions toward a goal of \$1.5 million. —*Chuck Staresinic*

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