

The Lawrence M. Weiner Award, established in 1979, honors the outstanding contributions made by individuals who are not M.D. alumni of the School of Medicine. This award is based on exceptional performance of their teaching, research and/or administrative duties. The individuals who receive the award have met the high standards established by Dr. Lawrence Weiner's outstanding record of service to the school. Previous Recipients of the Lawrence M. Weiner Award

Nominee:

Nina Mehta and Ketan Mehta

Email:

nina@neilmed.com

Graduation Year:

Nina Mehta, P.T. '86

Ketan Mehta, M.D., Res. '85, Fel. '87

Specialty:

Physical Therapy (Nina) and Internal Medicine (Ketan)

Nominator:

Ho-Sheng Lin, M.D.

Email:

hlin@med.wayne.edu

Graduation Year:

N/A

Specialty:

Otolaryngology

Covering Letter:

It is my distinct pleasure to nominate two esteemed business leaders and passionate advocates of the Wayne State University School of Medicine for the Lawrence M. Weiner Award. I came to know Ms. Nina Mehta and Dr. Ketan Mehta because of their ongoing interest in otolaryngology and the research and treatment of sinus disease. The Mehta family, through their business and personal interests, have invested countless hours in the development of simple, safe, effective and affordable solutions to help alleviate common nasal and sinus problems.

A two-time alumnus of the School of Medicine, Dr. Mehta completed his residency in Internal Medicine and then returned for a fellowship in Pulmonary and Critical Care. Ms. Mehta received a degree in Physical Therapy from the Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.

Together, Ms. Mehta and Dr. Mehta founded NeilMed Pharmaceuticals in January 2000. And while their business is primarily focused on the manufacturing and distribution of saline nasal irrigation systems, they also have a clear mission of service: to improve quality of life for all those afflicted with nasal and sinus conditions.

Their accomplishments in the field of rhinology are numerous, including:

- Establishment of a multinational corporation dedicated to creating positive change for those who suffer from nasal and sinus problems
- Provision of NeilMed products to various organizations for use in medical education, training and patient care at no cost.
- In 2012, NeilMed donated 200,000 nasal gel and sinus rinse products to U.S. military troops stationed in Afghanistan, Iraq and countries in the Middle East.
- Supporting medical research dedicated to rhinology and sinus care

Alongside their rich investments in rhinology and otolaryngology, the Mehta family is committed to the School of Medicine at the highest level. In 2017, they created the *NeilMed Endowed Support Fund in the Department of Otolaryngology*, which will stand in perpetuity to support department operations, including research, resident training and medical student education in the field of rhinology

Dr. Ketan Mehta is also a practicing physician who specializes in pulmonary and critical care medicine. He diagnoses and treats patients who suffer from respiratory or breathing problems such as asthma and COPD in Santa Rosa, California.

Once again, I am honored to nominate Ms. Nina Mehta and Dr. Ketan Mehta for the Weiner Award. They are both dedicated medical professionals, innovators and entrepreneurs, as well as tireless supporters of medical research at Wayne State and around the world.



Pioneers in nasal and sinus care give back to the School of Medicine

May 31, 2018



Ms. Nina Mehta



Dr. Ketan Mehta

Global medical leaders, Ketan Mehta, M.D., Res. '85, Fel. '87 and Nina Mehta '86 have revolutionized the at-home nasal and sinus care paradigm through their company, NeilMed Pharmaceuticals Inc. Dr. Mehta and Ms. Nina Mehta founded the company in 2000, and today their flagship products—the NeilMed SINUS RINSE and NeilMed Neti Pot—are among their 40 products sold all over the world. Both Dr. Mehta and Ms. Mehta are Wayne State University alumni, and they credit the university for part of their success.

"Wayne State provided a great learning experience for both of us. I think that we took away a sense of determination from the rigorous coursework and training we experienced at the university," Ms. Mehta said.

A two-time alumnus of the School of Medicine, Dr. Mehta completed his residency in Internal Medicine and then returned for a fellowship in Pulmonary and Critical Care. Ms. Mehta received a degree in Physical Therapy from the Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences while Dr. Mehta was completing his specialty training.

"Going through the anatomy coursework and taking other courses related to the medical field really gave me a sense of how to talk to physicians when we first started NeilMed," Ms. Mehta recalled. "Both Dr. Mehta and I are proud of the education we received at Wayne State."

Such pride for the Wayne State University School of Medicine inspired Dr. Mehta and Ms. Mehta to establish the *NeilMed Endowed Support Fund in the Department of Otolaryngology*.

"As president of NeilMed, it has been extremely rewarding for me to see how our products have influenced millions of people nationwide and globally. Being so tied to Wayne State, we hope that our support will further the Otolaryngology Department's research in rhinology and provide new opportunities for residents," Ms. Mehta said.

Although NeilMed is now a successful, global enterprise, the company started in the back of Dr. Mehta's office.

"Dr. Mehta was practicing full time back then, and he was using nasal irrigation for his patients with respiratory problems. He saw success with this method, but at the time there was no effective device for this kind of sinus rinse. He came up with an idea: design a nozzle so that it fits the nose without actually going into it," Ms. Mehta explained. "The product worked. At first we supplied our products to small pharmacies and physicians, and after we had a compelling amount of evidence that the device worked, and it worked well, we took it to the retailers."

Since then, NeilMed has expanded to an international market, with offices in more than 10 countries and global distribution to more than 25.

"NeilMed shifted the paradigm of rhinitis and sinusitis, and it has changed the entire post-operative procedure for medical care in these areas," Dr. Mehta said.

A Family Legacy

The inspiration for the company's name came from their son, Neil, who was seven when the business was founded. A true namesake for NeilMed Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Neil is a medical student at the WSU School of Medicine, and he aspires to enter into the field of Rhinology. He joins his sister, Alisha, who is going into her third year of medical school also at Wayne State. With two of their three children at the School of Medicine, Dr. and Ms. Mehta have made frequent trips back to Detroit to visit.

"Many memories of Wayne State were revived when we came back for our daughter's white coat ceremony," Dr. Mehta said. "I am a very proud alum."

Dr. Mehta and Ms. Mehta are proud of their strong ties to the Wayne State University School of Medicine. They hope that their philanthropy will bolster the school's leading-edge research initiatives and encourage others to do the same. To learn more about how to give to the School of Medicine, contact Lori Robitaille at 313-993-4070 or lrobitai@med.wayne.edu (<mailto:lrobitai@med.wayne.edu>).

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