Celebrating the Achievements of Michael Abecassis, MD, MBA

After 27 years of leadership, Michael Abecassis, MD, MBA, J. Roscoe Miller Distinguished Professor of Surgery and Microbiology-Immunology, will be stepping down as the Founding Director of the Comprehensive Transplant Center (CTC) and the Chief of the Division of Transplant Surgery to accept the position as Dean of the University of Arizona College of Medicine – Tucson.

Dr. Abecassis was recruited by Dr. Frank Stuart to join the NM Transplant program in 1992 as the Director of the Liver Transplant Program. He became the Chief of the Division of Transplant Surgery in 2004, when Dr. Stuart retired, and the Founding Director of the CTC in 2009. He helped pioneer several innovative surgical procedures and approaches to the care of transplant patients and has trained more than 50 transplant surgery fellows. Dr. Abecassis has received continuous funding from the National Institutes of Health for more than 20 years, serving as principal investigator of research grants and clinical studies. Under his leadership, the transplant program has reached numerous milestones, including:

- 5,000 adult kidney transplants
- 2,000 adult liver transplants
- 3,000 live donor procedures
- 750 adult pancreas transplants

“We are incredibly grateful for Dr. Abecassis’ leadership in building one of the country’s leading academic transplant centers,” says Dean M. Harrison, president and chief executive officer, Northwestern Memorial HealthCare. “His dedication to providing innovative treatment options to our patients resulted in breakthrough therapies that benefitted transplant patients here and beyond.”

“Leaving Northwestern Medicine was a very difficult professional and personal decision, but I am comforted by the fact that the Northwestern Medicine transplant program is extremely well positioned to continue providing patients with world-class clinical care, as well as advancing the science of transplantation for years to come,” says Dr. Abecassis.

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Abecassis as he turns the page to begin an exciting new chapter in his professional life. We thank him for his contributions and all that he helped our program and the field of transplant medicine accomplish.

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As the division of transplant surgery and the CTC undergo recruitment for new leadership, we have installed the following interim leadership team who will be accountable for the various responsibilities Dr. Abecassis held.

Division Chief: Joseph Leventhal, MD, PhD
CTC Director: Daniela Ladner, MD MPH
Transplant Clinic Medical Director: Derrick Christopher, MD, MBA
UNOS Primary Liver Surgeon: Juan Carlos Caicedo, MD
UNOS Secondary Living Donor Liver Surgeon: Nitin Katariya, MD
11 East Medical Director: Dinee Simpson, MD
UNOS Region 7 Representative: Daniel Borja, MD