

## Twenty-six compelling conversations

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### Conversations with Giants in Medicine

I continue to believe I have the best job in science. Since May 2012, I've been the Editor at Large for the JCI, and in this capacity, I've been the chief interviewer of those chosen for the series Conversations with Giants in Medicine. We've aired twenty-six interviews with twenty-eight notable scientists in the 2.5 years that this series has been part of the JCI (Figure 1). In that time, I've heard some amazing stories, the kind that are often better — and stranger — than fiction. In the highlight reel to accompany the October 2014 issue (posted online at <http://www.jci.org/videos/cgms>), I've chosen some of the most memorable vignettes from the twenty-six Conversations. These stories give life to the life sciences. Want to hear Francis Collins talk about competition with Craig Venter to get the human genome sequenced? It's in there. Also included are Mike Brown and Bob Lefkowitz teasing Joe Goldstein. There are uplifting and hilarious stories about Roy Vagelos almost getting court-martialed and the experiment that led Gene Braunwald to define hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. Don Seldin tells a story about arriving at UT Southwestern to a collection of shacks and garbage and transforming it into the powerhouse it is today. Their collective stories about the thrill of discovery and sometimes the delight in seeing work at the bench hold true [...]

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**Figure 1. Scientists interviewed for the series *Conversations with Giants in Medicine*.** From top: Harold Varmus, Robert Lefkowitz, Joseph Goldstein, and Michael Brown. Second row: Bonnie Bassler, Bruce Beutler, Eugene Braunwald, Aaron Ciechanover, Francis Collins. Third row: Tony Fauci, Marc Feldmann, Napoleone Ferrara, Jeffrey Friedman, Donald Ganem. Fourth row: Paul Greengard, Paul Marks, John Oates, Stephen O’Rahilly, John Potts, Fifth row: Christine Seidman, Donald Seldin, Lloyd Hollingsworth Smith Jr., Bruce Spiegelman, Thomas Starzl. Bottom row: Thomas Südhof, Roy Vagelos, Jean Wilson, Tadataka Yamada.

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The *Conversations* series will continue next month and through the coming years, and I hope that we can add to the current collection of interviews with two Knight Bachelors, eight Howard Hughes Medical Investigators, ten winners of Lasker Awards, eight Nobel Laureates, twenty-five members of the Institute of Medicine, and twenty-four members of the National Academy of Sciences. Their stories are personal, courageous, insightful, and oftentimes rather entertaining.

This video is also timed to appear on the birthday of the *JCI*. Ninety years ago, in October 1924, one of the greatest biomedical journals was born. There are numerous excellent stories told in the pages of the *JCI*, and here’s to hoping for another ninety years.

Ushma S. Neill