

Andrew T. Rubin '90

Distinguished Achievement Award



As the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic battered New York City early last spring, Andrew Rubin volunteered to participate in a Phase I vaccine trial. Though sickened for several weeks, Andrew, who is senior vice president of clinical and hospital affairs/ambulatory care at NYU Langone Health, was glad to contribute to the effort. “Just don’t call me ‘a health care hero,’” he insists. “The heroes are the people on the front lines risking their lives to care for sick and dying patients.”

He should know: Andrew manages Langone’s ambulatory network of over 3,300 physicians and its \$2 billion budget. “I’m just a business guy who keeps the wheels turning,” he says. Formerly the youngest dean at the NYU School of Medicine, Andrew is widely regarded as an expert on the U.S. health care system.

He has made it his mission to help the public navigate what is often a complicated and dynamic interplay of physicians and hospitals, HMOs, insurance companies and government agencies. Years of direct experience with the challenges facing physicians and patients, as well as insider knowledge of the insurance industry, have given him a unique and authentic perspective.

He offers free, nonpartisan advice for consumers on his Twitter feed @rubinhealth and on HealthCare Connect, a weekly radio show on SiriusXM. Guests have included U.S. senators, news anchors and industry leaders. A skillful communicator, Andrew has a gift for simplifying complex, jargon-laden concepts into easy-to-understand, straightforward language.

“I have an operational mind — and I love getting people from A to B comfortably and safely,” he reflects. “Helping people get quality health insurance for their families makes me feel good.”

That agile mind was nurtured at Skidmore, where Andrew majored in management and business. He cites faculty from diverse disciplines as significant influences on his life path, including Elaine Rubin, professor of biology, and Margaret Pierce, who taught a course in Chinese history. “How many colleges offer an accounting major the opportunity to study the economic and cultural history of China?” he says.

Colleen Burke, executive in residence in the Management and Business Department, had the greatest impact: “She is a brilliant thinker and her passion for the subject she teaches is infectious.” Andrew has since lectured in a number of Burke’s classes.

Appreciative of his formative Skidmore experiences, Andrew gives back by employing and mentoring recent Skidmore graduates at Langone. Since 1995, he has placed over 20 alumni, many of them international and Opportunity Program students. At present, there are 10 Skiddies on his team. “I find them to be hardworking, smart, dedicated and diverse.”

Currently focused on training the next generation of administrators, he views outpatient, ambulatory and home e-health as “the future of health care.” The pandemic presented Langone with the opportunity to test its telehealth infrastructure during an unprecedented crisis. At the dawn of 2020, virtual visits were nonexistent; by July, they averaged 5,000 a day. Although telehealth will undergo modification, Andrew believes it is here to stay. “It’s a powerful tool that allows us to treat millions of patients.”

When informed that he had been selected to receive this award, Andrew was a bit surprised but nonetheless gratified. “I’m happy to be recognized for my efforts to nurture young Skidmore graduates, just as the College helped me develop professionally and personally. I don’t think of myself as a special person, but the fact that you guys think I am makes me feel really good.”