

THE ELOY BROTHERS

Med School of Brotherly Love



Jean Anderson Eloy (l) and Jean Daniel Eloy (r)

BY EVE JACOBS

Philadelphia was founded on a concept of brotherly love, but New Jersey Medical School can boast the real thing. Two brothers, both highly esteemed NJMS faculty members and alumni, credit their deep brotherly connection with bolstering them through years of rigorous training and challenges on their way to becoming highly respected physicians in their adopted country.

Jean Daniel Eloy, MD, a 2004 graduate of

NJMS and the older of the two, actually followed in the footsteps of his younger brother, Jean Anderson Eloy, who earned his MD from NJMS in 2002; and he states that fact proudly. His warm smile and self-effacing manner are not exactly what you might expect from an anesthesiologist who spends long hours in the operating room. But it is precisely these traits, and, of course, his hard-won knowledge and skills, that help defuse the anxiety of patients facing surgery—and residents learning the skills of their trade.

When he came to this country from Haiti in 1995, Jean Daniel was 24 years old. His parents, Bertin and Roselle Eloy, immigrated to the United States in the '80s to earn a better living with the end goal of quickly relocating their five children—two boys and three girls—to New Jersey. The children all went to private schools in Haiti and Jean Daniel says they were well cared for by their grandmother in Croix-des-Bouquets, just north of Port-au-Prince. Unfortunately, financial realities dictated a far longer separation for the Eloy family than what they had planned. It was not until 1993 that the three youngest children were reunited with their parents; and the two oldest were not able to join their siblings in the U.S. until 1996. “That was a time of great political instability in Haiti,” says Jean Daniel.

He spoke French and Creole, but little English, when he came to this country and entered Bloomfield College to begin his undergraduate studies in the basic sciences. “I studied chemistry and biochemistry,” he says. Obviously he excelled since he was hand-picked to become a teaching assistant in chemistry, physics, and math after just one year at the school.

A summer spent at NJMS between his junior and senior years convinced Jean Daniel that doctoring would be his profession of choice. And although he was accepted at several, there was a magnetic pull to the Newark-based medical school. Not only would he be following in the footsteps of his only and well-respected brother, but he had established a strong connection with Lonnie Wright, then-director of admissions, and Maria Soto-Greene, MD, vice dean of NJMS and a noted advocate for recruiting minority students into medical school and mentoring them along this difficult path.

Family ties are important to Jean Daniel. “My entire family was living in Bloomfield by then, and if I went to NJMS, I could live at home,” he says. “Also, Dr. Soto-Greene made a promise to mentor me, which meant a great deal.” And, once again, his talents and hard work did not go unnoticed. After just one year at NJMS, this up-and-coming physician

was chosen as a teaching assistant in anatomy and physiology, and excelled at his teaching.

Jean Daniel thought he was headed into a career in surgery (just like his brother), but after one year of residency at NJMS, he decided to switch. “I got married after my first year as a resident and I thought anesthesiology would be a better fit,” he says. “I have no regrets.”

The NJMS faculty took notice of this rising star and he had multiple mentors in the Department of Anesthesiology through his resident years. At the end, he was invited to join the faculty—and accepted the offer. After a two-year stint (2008 to 2010), Jean Daniel decided to do a fellowship at Pittsburgh University in acute pain management in order to launch that specialty at NJMS and University Hospital, its principal teaching hospital. In 2011, he returned to Newark, “working every day, every weekend, every holiday” to establish the new service. Although he initially managed the service solo, it now includes four other physicians.

But teaching has always factored in the life of Jean Daniel. When he returned to Newark, he was named assistant program director for the residency program in anesthesiology, which was quite an honor; and he took over the program as director in 2011. “I love teaching,” he says simply, and it’s evident that not only do the residents love him, but he is a highly successful educator.

Under his watch, the residency program has grown. In 2011, there were 27 residents; in 2015, 33 residents; and next year the program will accept a total of 36. And as a testament to his teaching skills, “there’s been a 100 percent pass rate on the licensing exam since 2011,” he states. Add to that the honors that have been bestowed by residents and faculty of the medical school: In 2012, the Golden Apple award for excellence in teaching; in 2013, the subspecialty Golden Apple award, given by the NJMS Student Council; and in 2015, the New Jersey Health Foundation Excellence in Teaching Award.

Although 60 percent of his time is devoted to patient care, the other 40 percent is all about teaching. “I am in charge of these

residents’ education,” he says. “I oversee their didactic curriculum, prepare them for their anesthesiology boards, review them clinically and academically, and make sure this program is in compliance with accreditation standards. My job is to figure out what the residents need and to set them up to succeed.”



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NJMS has become a second home for Jean Daniel—a place he finds “very comfortable. People here have invested greatly in my success. I trust them and they trust me,” he says. “They care about my growth and that’s invaluable. I would never have gotten that by moving away.”

You might think that Jean Daniel could

not possibly find time for even one more professional commitment, especially with a 3-year-old son and a wife, and his lifelong hobbies of playing soccer (currently with a league in Sparta) and devoting time to classical piano, which he has enjoyed since he was a young child. But each year, he carves out about 10 days to volunteer his services abroad with a surgical team traveling to Haiti. In 2010, eight days following the devastating earthquake, he traveled with five colleagues from NJMS and University Hospital on a trip organized by the International Surgical Health Initiative (ISHI), which is headed up by Ziad Sifri, MD (see article, page 20). Volunteering is very important to him.

“We did back-to-back surgeries for five days in three different operating rooms,” he remembers. “But teaching is an important part of these trips. We teach locals different ways to do the surgeries, how to better use the equipment they have, and how to better organize their equipment. We also teach our residents that they can do a lot with minimal equipment.”

Trust and success are bywords of the entire Eloy family. All five siblings are standouts in their chosen careers; four are involved in health care professions and one in teaching. Jean Anderson Eloy—a highly reputed head and neck surgeon—is now the vice chair of the NJMS Department of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery and director of rhinology and sinus surgery.

For both brothers, the medical school has played—and continues to play—a leading role in their lives. Jean Daniel sees the medical school as a unique institution whose singular characteristics—most importantly the creation of an environment of trust and caring and focus on each individual patient, student and resident—should be preserved in a rapidly changing health care world. He would like to be among those who continue to build and support NJMS, which has given him and his brother “so much for so many years.” ●

Dr. Jean Daniel Eloy • eloyje@njms.rutgers.edu
Dr. Jean Anderson Eloy • eloyj1@njms.rutgers.edu