On Thursday, October 25, 2007, more than 200 alumni, faculty, friends and family gathered from across the nation to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the founding of the New York University Department of Physical Therapy and to honor the Department’s own Drs. Andrew McDonough and Marilyn Moffat during a gala event held at NYU’s Rosenthal Pavilion overlooking Washington Square Park. “The celebration was everything we could have hoped for,” said Dr. Wen Ling, Chair of the Department of Physical Therapy. “It was a thrill to see so many of my former classmates and students as well as some of the pioneers of our profession. I had the opportunity to sit next to two graduates from the class of 1949, Ruth & Julian Levy, and listen to them talk about their practice and the historical names in the physical therapy profession with whom they had interacted over the years. It was a real treat!”

To begin the evening, guests were treated to a cocktail hour complete with an array of hors d’oeuvres, an open wine bar and live piano music. Alumni representing nearly 60 years of NYU Physical Therapy history mingled with colleagues, rekindled friendships and swapped stories of career, family and NYU nostalgia while enjoying a stunning view of the sun setting in downtown Manhattan. “You could see just how happy people were to see each other,” said Dr. Ling. “Take two graduates from the 1954 class, Dr. Arthur Nelson and Betty Latham. Betty has been living in Virginia since she graduated. She’s married with 3 daughters...all PTs...and hasn’t seen Dr. Nelson for more than 30 years. But the way they were laughing and talking...it was like they never left school!”

Also during the cocktail hour, guests had the opportunity to receive signed copies of texts authored by Department of Physical Therapy faculty members including Dr. Marilyn Moffat (Age Defying Fitness: Making the Most of Your Body for the Rest of Your Life, amongst others), Dr. Mitchell Batavia (Contraindications in Physical Rehabilitation: Doing No Harm, amongst others) and Dr. Tsega Mehreteab (Integrating Physical Agents in Rehabilitation), and browse a table housing some extraordinary photographs taken by the night’s primary honoree, Dr. Andrew McDonough.

As the night darkened, immersing the room in a deep purple hue combined with the
twinkling city lights from outside the Pavilion’s numerous windows, guests dined on mixed greens topped with beets, goat cheese and an apple cider vinaigrette and an entrée of grilled salmon with beans and red cabbage apple slaw. Dr. McDonough sat at a table surrounded by his wife, Nancy, his daughter, Amanda, and his in-laws, all on hand to witness what he would later call an “astounding” night. At another table, Dr. Moffat conversed with a group including Art Nelson (class of 1954) and Steve Wirth (class of 1973) and his daughter, Keri (class of 1999).

At around 8:00, Dr. Ling took to the podium to address the audience and kick off the tribute portion of the night. After a brief speech of welcome and gratitude (see page 4 for a full transcription), Dr. Ling introduced Mary Brabeck, Dean of the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development who spoke of the importance of having such a prestigious program and such a strong and dedicated alumni body as that of the NYU Department of Physical Therapy. Once Dean Brabeck had concluded, Dr. Ling returned to the podium and asked the audience to watch a short film clip highlighting the long and legendary career of Dr. Andrew McDonough.

Entitled “Andrew McDonough: The Man, The Myth, The Legend,” the 5-plus minute short delved into Dr. McDonough’s extraordinary teaching methods (such as being able to draw complete anatomical diagrams from memory), artistic approach to both work and life, and, using his daughter as a conduit of truth, the many, many rumors and myths that cropped up during his rich 30-year career at NYU. Such myths ranged from the embarrassing and revealing (it was confirmed that Dr. McDonough once worked as a fashion model) to the absurd (it was exposed that Dr. McDonough was never drafted by a professional football team). As his on-screen colleagues expressed their admiration and wished him well in his post-NYU life (Dr. McDonough will be retiring in Spring 2008), the normally stoic professor dabbed tears from his eyes while radiating a smile of pure astonishment and appreciation.

At the end of the video, Dr. McDonough was introduced to a rau- cous standing ovation. He took to the podium, his words catching in his throat and spoke of how moved he was by the video tribute and the adulation emanating from the room. “This will probably be the most you’ll ever hear me speak,” Dr. McDonough quipped before telling the story of his hiring and discussing his post-retirement plans of further exploring his love of photography, and traveling and teaching overseas with his wife. After being presented with a gift from Dr. Ling and Dean Brabeck on behalf of the School, Dr. McDonough ceded the podium once more to Dr. Ling who introduced a video detailing the night’s second honoree, Dr. Marilyn Moffat.

While most expected the video to focus on Dr. Moffat’s many accomplishments, including her recent election as President of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy, its actual content was an amusing investigation into the mystery of whether or not Dr. Moffat sleeps. The video included interviews with physical therapy faculty and students who put forth their own theories on the issue at hand. One faculty member went so far as to provide neurological proof that Dr. Moffat’s brain works differently from that of the average American. In the end, two of Dr. Moffat’s long-time colleagues and friends, Drs. Elaine Rosen and Sandra Rusnak-Smith, confirmed that Dr. Moffat does indeed sleep, though she tends to set up situations in which she can sleep while her friends act as “chauffeurs.” Upon the end of the video, a grinning Dr. Moffat received a standing ovation, took to the podium and announced, “It’s all true!” She then graciously deferred the evening’s accolades to Dr. McDonough, thanked everyone for their continuing support for and appreciation of the physical therapy field and the NYU Department of Physical Therapy, and was presented with a gift from
Dr. Ling and Dean Brabeck on behalf of the School.

With the evening’s festivities winding down, guests were treated to a delectable dessert of an apple tart with cinnamon gelato as well as coffee and tea, and spent the remainder of the celebration mingling, talking of old times and the future of physical therapy, and congratulating Drs. McDonough and Moffat. “It was a lovely evening,” said 2004 graduate, Laurie Kilmartin, “with an amazing collection of brilliant & talented people and two really deserving guests of honor.”

In all, the 80th Anniversary celebration and Alumni Reunion was a joyous and memorable evening filled with friends and family, colleagues old and new, good food, hearty laughter, and even a few surprises. A proud Dr. Ling summed it up best, “To watch graduates from the 1940s through the 2000s coming together…I felt like I was literally seeing the torch pass from one generation to the next…like I was seeing the Department’s legacy in action.”

Images from the 80th Anniversary Celebration
Dr. Wen Ling’s 80th Anniversary Address

Good evening everyone and welcome to the 80th anniversary of the founding of the New York University Physical Therapy Program.

Our anniversary celebrations and alumni reunions are always exciting times for me. I greatly enjoy witnessing the interaction between our current faculty and their former students, between our elder, experienced alumni and our promising recent graduates. I thank you all for being here, from Julian and Ruth Levy of the class of 1949 to Paul Samuel, Gisela Figueroa and Elaine Borja-Jaffe of the class of 2007, and all classes in between.

Being that anniversaries are times of reflection, I was inclined to research the representative gift associated with 80th anniversaries. We all know that paper represents 1 year and that diamonds represent 75 years. But what represents 80 years? Apparently, the modern symbolic gifts for 80th anniversaries are diamonds and pearls, objects that are certainly worthy of such grand occasions. But the traditional gift is much more interesting and, in my opinion, much more representative of our NYU physical therapy family. The traditional gift is oak, a tree that signifies wisdom, strength and endurance.

In the beginning, the NYU Physical Therapy program was nothing but a tiny acorn, a seed with the enormous potential to grow into something incredible, and after 80 years we have matured into a mighty oak, one whose faculty branches out into all aspects of physical therapy, one that annually produces seeds that will develop into our field’s newest leaders, practitioners and educators. Our graduates practice throughout the world, turning our once solitary oak into a thriving forest, thus helping us sustain our distinction as the foremost physical therapy program in the country.

I would like to thank everyone who assisted in making this celebration possible and who continually helps make our department a leader in physical therapy education. Thank you to Dean Mary Brabeck, everyone at the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, our faculty, our adjunct faculty, our master clinicians and guest speakers, and our students and ever-generous alumni. I would also like to particularly thank our administrative staff including Anne Seaton, Marie McLaughlin, Julie Chin and Lorne Jaffe as well as our graduate assistants Steven Yen and YenWei Chen, who all worked tirelessly in putting this event together. Our department is lucky to have such dedicated and creative people.

I wish you all a very enjoyable evening and now, it is my pleasure to introduce Dean Mary Brabeck...

Dr. Ann Goerdts Heads Disability Council

In 2005, Ann Goerdt, Director of the DPT for Practicing Physical Therapists Program at NYU, started a university-wide discussion of disability issues. Initially, faculty members from four schools came together, but the number grew and in May 2007, when nine schools were represented, Provost David McLaughlin designated the group the Council for the Study of Disability. The aims of the new council are to identify priorities and potential partnerships for research on issues that will address the concerns of people with disabilities in New York City, nationally and internationally; to apply the research in teaching within relevant programs and courses; and to also increase disability awareness at NYU. Recent events sponsored by the council indicate the variety of input that comes from its members. These include the screening of the film, *Body and Soul: Diana and Kathy*, and a presentation of New Research: Disability and Sexuality. The film, a documentary by award-winning filmmaker, Alice Elliott (Tisch, NYU), follows the lives of two women with disabilities, one in the role of caretaker for the other, and both of whom are disability activists. The new research will be conducted by Don Kulick (Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality/Department of Anthropology, NYU) in Sweden and Denmark and by Randolph Mowry (Applied Psychology, NYU) in a New York City shelter for people with disabilities who have been abused.
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To celebrate February 2007 as National Physical Therapy Month, NYU professors and DPT students visited NBC, ABC and CBS morning shows to raise awareness for the field they love. On the left, Dr. Marilyn Moffat and NYU DPT students pose with Meredith Vieira outside “The Today Show” studios. On the right, NYU DPT students line up outside the studios for “Good Morning America”

NYU DPT students volunteer at the 2007 Avon Walk for Breast Cancer held October 6-7, 2007 in NYC

Dr. Marilyn Moffat accepts the American Physical Therapy Association’s 2007 Minority Initiatives Award from APTA President, Scott Ward, on behalf of the NYU Department of Physical Therapy. NYU shared the award with Alabama State University

Commencement 2007
Congratulations to the Class of 2007!

2007 Physical Therapy Department Award Recipients:

*Elizabeth C. Addoms Award*  
For Excellence in Academic and Clinical Performance  
*Rose Cabornero*  
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Become a Master Clinician and Clinical Affiliate!

We are looking for interested clinicians and sites to serve as Master Clinicians and clinical affiliates. Clinical education is an important aspect of the Doctor of Physical Therapy curriculum and we are continuously looking for experienced clinicians to serve in these capacities. As an NYU graduate, your connection with the PT Department gives you a unique opportunity to serve as a mentor and assist current DPT students in their educational experience. By serving as a Master Clinician or clinical affiliate, you will also earn tuition credits at NYU that can be used to further your own education free of charge.

As part of NYU’s dedication to its students, the Physical Therapy Department is continuously looking to expand its network of clinical sites nationwide. Please contact our Director of Clinical Education, Elaine Becker, PT, DPT, PCS, at (212) 998-9407 or e-mail at eb2@nyu.edu to request more information.

2008 ANNUAL PHYSICAL THERAPY RECRUITMENT FAIR
April 13, 2008 (Sunday)

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Registration deadline: March 7, 2008. Space is limited. Registration after this date will be accepted on a space available basis.

For more information about The Campaign for the Marilyn Moffat Chair in Physical Therapy, please contact Dr. Wen Ling at 212-998-9415 or write to wkls1@nyu.edu

Join us for NYU’s Alumni Weekend on May 17, 2008. For further information, please contact Anne Seaton at 212-998-9414 or write to mas2@nyu.edu