



## COVID-19: An Unprecedented Threat, a Historic Response

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2020, the year of COVID-19, has been one of historic dimension, the pandemic having strained societal capacities across the globe. As a disease process, in contrast to a natural disaster, its immediate consequences center on health, concentrating the efforts of healthcare systems writ large. As an early epicenter of the disease, New York City was profoundly impacted, and its hospitals converted within days to institutions devoted to the care of patients suffering from the manifestations of a single disease. Anticipating the tremendous strain that would be placed on the city's healthcare facilities, Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) suspended its usual operations in mid-March and converted to the care of patients with COVID-19. In this special issue of *HSS Journal*, clinicians at HSS, across the country, and around the world chronicle their extraordinary experiences and document their research.

That COVID-19 has proven indelible is underscored by the outpouring of contributions to this issue, an unprecedented response from those whose research, stories, and perspectives should be told. Indeed, in the months since

we put forth our first call for manuscripts, we received dozens of worthy submissions; the issue you are reading is double the journal's usual size. Interest was generated in virtually every clinical domain of musculoskeletal care, and in other relevant areas including the impact of the pandemic on the adoption of telehealth, palliative care, information technology, and the unique challenges confronting the bioethics community. We also include an oral history from HSS leadership and key personnel.

This COVID-19 issue chronicles a historic moment, presenting a comprehensive statement concerning the response of the musculoskeletal community to the pandemic—from HSS and other institutions in the USA and abroad—during this unprecedented time.

Of the many who contributed to this effort, one individual stands tall among us. Hector Hodge (Fig. 1), a respiratory therapist at HSS, succumbed to COVID-19 on April 19, 2020, the only staff fatality at our institution. We present this issue in his memory.

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**Fig. 1.** Hector Hodge, April 20, 1948–April 19, 2020

### **Compliance with Ethical Standards**

**Conflict of Interest:** C. Ronald MacKenzie, MD, declares that he has no conflicts of interest.

**Human/Animal Rights:** N/A

**Informed Consent:** N/A

**Required Author Forms** Disclosure forms provided by the author are available with the online version of this article.