



BROWN

M E D I C I N E

FALL 2004

VOLUME 9 - NUMBER 2

WHAT ARE THEY HIDING?

**This Brown Med professor
is pulling back the curtain
on clinical drug trials**

Alumni Album

Alumni Profile | MANUEL S. ROSE MD'86

Stand-Up Radiologist

"ONLY A DENTIST CAN EMPLOY A DENTIST. ONLY AN OPTOMETRIST can employ an optometrist. But a high school dropout can hire a doctor and start a medical practice." Manuel Rose MD'86 pauses to let his words sink in. "Isn't something wrong with that? Business people who don't care anything about patients are legally allowed to run medical clinics."

Rose knows all too well. After a successful eight-year stint practicing medicine in the military, Rose took a radiology position in a hospital and a private clinic in Florida, and found himself working in a system that was not designed in the best interests of patients. In the hospital setting, control of imaging technology—and patient care—was in the hands of administrators; in the clinic, owners without any medical training put profit motives first. "I had responsibility to my patients but no control," he says. "I felt like the captain of a ship that was being steered by a private. I wanted to get out of medicine."

Instead, Rose decided he would take control by opening his own radiology practice. Embracing huge financial risk and an extremely competitive market, he found financial backing from other physicians, friends, and family members, and he opened Rose Radiology in 2001. In just three years, the practice has grown to include four thriving offices in the Tampa Bay area.

The key to his success was investing in the most advanced technology and educating the public about its benefits. "There are probably seven to 10 MRIs in two square miles down here," he notes. "Everybody is vying for the same business, so I needed something new, something different, something better." His first purchase

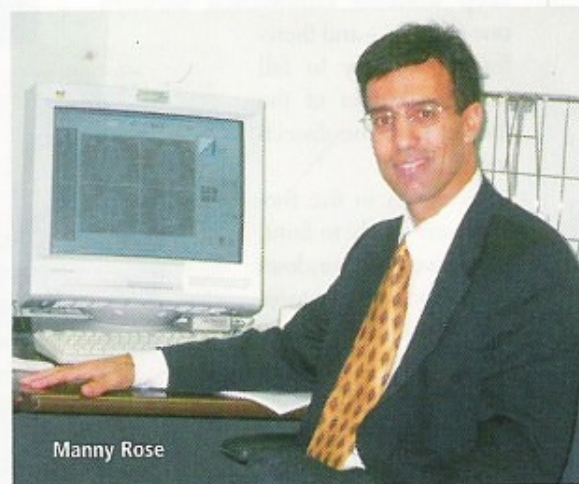
was an open MRI scanner that was more patient-friendly than others in the area. Since then, he has added new technology, including three high field stand-up MRIs, an ultra-fast cardiovascular MRI, and a 16-slice CAT scanner. That combination makes Rose Radiology one of the most sophisticated centers of its kind in the world, attracting a steady stream of patients from as far away as New England, and occasionally farther. "I continue to invest in the most advanced equipment because I want to produce the best results for patients," he says. "That's the perspective I have because I'm a physician-owner, and it has turned out to be a very successful approach."

Rose has become a leading proponent of stand-up MRI technology in particular because of its power as a diagnostic tool. Unlike recumbent MRI machines, stand-up technology can allow patients to be scanned in the positions that are causing them pain. In an informal study based on over 8,000 scans, Rose claims that as many as 20 percent of all lumbar spine MRIs performed with recumbent scanners miss significant abnormalities or pathology that can be revealed when imaged in another position on a stand-up MRI. Rose is also pleased with his new high field cardiovascular MRI, installed in

2003. The machine's speed allows it to image the coronary artery and even the cardiac chambers with extremely high resolution.

Not only does top-notch technology keep the referrals coming, but it has allowed Rose to become a better radiologist, fulfilling the hopes he held out when he started his practice. "With this technology, I am learning every day," he says. "In fact, it amazes me to think about the equipment I trained on even 10 years ago. The CAT scan equipment I used in 1992 is ancient, third world medicine now. Medical school—even residency—was just a basic foundation for what I am doing these days."

Rose is quick to point out that running a private practice is not for everybody. "I am very glad to be doing this, but it's not recommended for people who aren't willing to make an ultra-commitment. It's like a marriage."



Part radiologist and part entrepreneur, he works long hours and always has something on his mind. But he's come to embrace his dual identity, even enjoy it. "I guess I'm a little bit of a rebel," says Rose. "And in the process I am actually providing better medical care for my patients. Now I am practicing radiology the right way." — ANDREW BARKER □

Andrew Barker is a freelance writer based in Burlington, VT.