The Arizona senator explained the wisdom he acquired over three and a half years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam. "I really learned the meaning of friendship and camaraderie," he said.

McCain spent three years in solitary confinement and said that he and his fellow prisoners had to develop a system of tapping to communicate with each other. Their teamwork, he said, encouraged them to persevere.

At one point in his talk, McCain sang the Columbia fight song, Row, Row, Row your boat, word-for-word. He added that he was required to learn each opponent’s fight song when he attended the U.S. Naval Academy.

Head Football Coach Bob Shoop arranged the address with a call to the senator, whose daughter was a sophomore at Columbia.

"If I can help disadvantaged students to experience the sense of a common enterprise and shared dreams that I knew as an undergraduate, then everything we accomplish will be more worthwhile," said Young. "[Kluge's] willingness to invest in human potential, that commitment to leveling the economic and racial playing field, helped me reach my goals and lies at the very core of who I am as an activist, teacher and researcher."

One cannot apply for an undergraduate Kluge scholarship; admissions officers choose Kluge Scholars after the incoming class has been selected. The merit-based award is offered to select students from underrepresented populations who the admissions officers deem most able to benefit from being part of the community of scholars and who will in turn uniquely contribute to their cohorts' experience at Columbia.

Born in 1914 in Chemnitz, Germany, Kluge came to this country at 8, grew up in Detroit and won a scholarship that allowed him to attend the College. After graduation, he worked in a printing company, served in the Army during World War II and then became a broadcasting entrepreneur. He gradually acquired media outlets, starting with a single radio station, WGAY, in Maryland, and then acquired other radio stations, independent television stations and syndicated rights to television shows and movies. Metromedia, the company he built, grew into the largest independent television business in the United States and diversified into many other areas, including telecommunications.

In 1986, Kluge sold his television interests to Rupert Murdoch and became more involved with philanthropy. In addition to endowing the Kluge Scholars Program, Kluge has contributed generously to the Library of Congress, where he formed the James Madison Council, a private sector advisory board. He also founded the Kluge Center, which supports scholars, and helped fund the National Digital Library project, which brings the library's educational resources to remote locations.

"To me, philanthropy comes naturally because I know that when you pass out of this picture, you don't take anything with you," Kluge says. "With the sands of time, we make very little difference, but what difference we can make we should try to make."

The Kluge Scholars Program provides 40–60 four-year scholars to students in need in each incoming class, but “access to Columbia is just part of what the Kluge program provides,” noted Austin Quigley, Dean of the College. The program also enables extensive programming aimed at achieving goals of intellectual growth, leadership development and global awareness.

"Columbia would not be the great institution it is today were it not for John Kluge," said President Lee C. Bollinger. "Like their name sake, Kluge Scholars are making dreams that I knew as an undergraduate come true."

"I don't think medical errors can be eliminated entirely because there is always some human error, but there is a number of severity of mistakes can be reduced," Patel says. "We study the whole picture or process, which is messy but real. Then we do a deep analysis of the data and reason ways to prevent mistakes that I knew as an undergraduate come true."

One who came back to honor his benefactor was Cynthia Young, CC'91, who graduated magna cum laude and is an assistant professor of English and American studies and ethnicity at the University of Southern California. ‘I had not received a Kluge Scholarship, I would have been just another Cleveland kid working full time and going to community college,’ said Young. ‘[Kluge’s] willingness to invest in human potential, that commitment to leveling the economic and racial playing field, helped me reach my goals and lies at the very core of who I am as an activist, teacher and researcher.’

Many are willing to work long hours, but you have to learn to manage mistakes. "Vimla Patel says. "That approach won't work. But you have to learn to manage mistakes. "You can't simply identify errors and try to reduce them," Patel says. "You can't change anything significantly because you don't necessarily understand the root cause of the mistakes. Mistakes are inevitable, but you have to learn to manage them."

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The researchers want to determine which factors—stress, understaffing, lack of knowledge or overtaxing a critical care setting—and how much anxiety and pressure among others—push health care providers to make mistakes. With identified stressors, the critical care environment could be better managed so that mistakes could be more efficiently and strategically prevented. They could be trained differently or technology could be employed to reduce errors. Doctors, nurses and hospital staff could develop better ways of working together to anticipate and prevent an error or correct it before it adversely affects a patient. The researchers also prove useful in designing medical devices that might prevent a health care worker from giving the wrong medication or dosage to a patient.

"We were quite surprised that physician reports responsible for picking up odor molecules were identified. In 1988, Buck, working on Axel’s lab, started tracking them down.

Several initial attempts failed. "Linda was an extremely creative and tenacious fellow," Axel says. "The solution to this problem took quite a long time, but the thoughtfulness of her approach made me think she would eventual- ly succeed.

In 1991, Axel and Buck broke the field open, when they published a paper describing an enormous family of genes in mice that coded for 1000 different receptors. Later work revealed about 350 functional receptor genes.

"We were quite surprised that up to five percent of the genome was taken up by odor receptors," says Axel, a member of Columbia's Center for Neurobiology and Behavior. "That's a sharp distinction toward reaching an answer. "The researchers want to determine which factors—stress, understaffing, lack of knowledge or overtaxing a critical care setting—and how much anxiety and pressure among others—push health care providers to make mistakes. With identified stressors, the critical care environment could be better managed so that mistakes could be more efficiently and strategically prevented. They could be trained differently or technology could be employed to reduce errors. Doctors, nurses and hospital staff could develop better ways of working together to anticipate and prevent an error or correct it before it adversely affects a patient. The researchers also prove useful in designing medical devices that might prevent a health care worker from giving the wrong medication or dosage to a patient."

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