



CMS NEWS

The Chicago Medical School Newsletter

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Cover Image: Student leaders from the university's student-led Interprofessional Community Clinic.

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Dean's Message

Greetings from the Dean's Office!



In the spirit of the Thanksgiving holiday we just observed, I'd like to open this message by expressing my sincere gratitude to all the CMS faculty who dedicate their time and talents to teaching and training our students, from our on-site faculty who lead the pre-clerkship portion of the curriculum, to our many clinical faculty who impart to our students the vital skills, knowledge, and expertise needed to practice compassionate patient care. I would also like

to acknowledge the tremendous work of our dedicated staff who ensure the smooth operation of the medical school, and provide our faculty and students the support they need.

We recently had the chance to show our appreciation for all our wonderful faculty during the annual CMS Faculty and Friends Recognition Dinner, which we held in Northbrook in October. Please join me in congratulating the faculty who were honored during the ceremony: Drs. Arthur S. Levine (Class of '64) and Kaleem A. Malik (Class of '96) received the CMS Honor Medallion; Dr. Lise Eliot received the Distinguished Faculty Award; Drs. Zahra Sara Afshari, Mitali Roy, and Elizabeth Henschen received the Excellence in Clinical Education Award; Dr. Regina de Leon Gomez received the Excellence in Educational Innovation Award; Dr. Holly Hunsberger received the Junior Faculty Investigator Award; Drs. Michael P. Melnick (Class of '87) and Natalie Sgarlata received the Clinical Preceptor Award; Dr. Varsha Chandramouli received the Outstanding Faculty Community Service Award; and Drs. Brenda Affinati, Michael Ellison, and David Everly received the Dean's Special Recognition Award. In addition to the individual awards, two of our clinical partners, Cook County Health and Ascension Illinois, received the Affiliate Site Award.

I had the opportunity to meet more of our clinical faculty during a site visit to Northwestern Medicine McHenry last month. Accompanied by additional CMS leadership, we had conversations with site leadership and sat down with internal medicine residents from our Northwestern Medicine program to hear about their experiences. Site visits like this are critical to making sure that the needs of our learners and our clinical partners are being met, and CMS leadership will continue to foster ongoing communication with all our affiliate sites.

We've had several successful events on campus since I last wrote to you. The CMS Office of Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion (OEDI) held its annual Race and Medicine Symposium, featuring a panel of experts discussing the important topic of maternal mortality in Illinois. We welcomed speakers from the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Lake County Health Department, Evanston NorthShore Hospital, and Aetna Better Health of Illinois to talk about the racial disparities associated with maternal health and what can be done to address this issue, with Dr. Kimberly Darey, Class of '04, serving as moderator. This is a topic that cannot be covered by just one event, so the OEDI is developing an ongoing project addressing maternal mortality in the local area, working in conjunction with the university's Women of Color Employee Resource Group.

In October, we welcomed many of our alumni back to campus for a CMS Reunion. We were especially celebrating members of the Class of 1973, who reunited for their 50th anniversary. It was wonderful to see so many of our illustrious alumni in one place, and I enjoyed catching up with them and watching them catch up with each other. Additional alumni returned to campus for other events, including Dr. Arthur S. Levine (Class of '64), whom I had a chance to meet with, and Dr. Bradley Hersh (Class of '80), who shared his experiences working with the World Health Organization and the CDC during a special medical grand rounds presentation on "Lessons Learned from the COVID-19 Pandemic."

I was also able to meet with several additional alumni during my own travels. In the last three months, I've taken trips to the East and West coasts to meet with alumni in Philadelphia, Boston, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Los Angeles. I met with them and their families while sharing news about all the exciting things going on at CMS. Our alumni network has always been an important resource for our current students, and it was delightful to spend time with some of the alumni who are engaged with our institution and willing to share their knowledge and experience with our students.

I'll close this message by extending a warm welcome to Dr. Antwione Haywood, who joined the CMS administration earlier this month as our new Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Dr. Haywood comes to us from Indiana University School of Medicine, where he served as Assistant Dean of Medical Student Affairs, Chief Diversity Officer of the university's Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center, and Assistant Professor of Clinical Radiation Oncology. In his role in the Office of Student Affairs, he will be responsible for all aspects of the student experience including orientation, academic and career advising, progression through medical school, student well-being and professional development, the residency match, and graduation. Dr. Haywood is dedicated to student success in all its forms, and we are glad to have him on campus working to make our students' time here as fruitful as possible.

As the end of the year approaches, we reflect on everything we've accomplished this year and look forward to what 2024 will bring. We have several events to look forward to in the coming months, including a visit from Dr. Julie Ann Sosa, from the University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine. We will be hosting Dr. Sosa on campus as part of the AAMC Council of Deans Fellowship Program, and I will share more information about her visit in my next message.

I look forward to seeing some of you at the CMS Holiday Party on December 5th, and I wish all our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends Happy Holidays and a joyful, healthy, and safe New Year.

Sincerely,



Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD
Dean, Chicago Medical School
Vice President for Medical Affairs, RFUMS

Celebrating 10 Years of Community Care

Since it was founded by CMS students in 2013, the Interprofessional Community Clinic has provided care to uninsured and underserved populations in Lake County. The student-led free clinic also provides valuable educational opportunities to medical students.

This fall, Rosalind Franklin University celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Interprofessional Community Clinic (ICC), the university's student-led free clinic that provides care to low-income and underserved residents. The ICC was founded in September 2023 by four Chicago Medical School students from the Class of 2016. The purpose of the clinic was manifold: vulnerable populations who lacked access to care would have a place to seek affordable, quality health services; students would have new opportunities for clinical encounters; and students would get experience working on interprofessional healthcare teams alongside their peers from RFU's various schools and colleges.

Today, volunteer students working under the guidance and oversight of faculty advisors provide primary care, podiatry, ophthalmology, dermatology, behavioral health, and physical therapy services to the surrounding population. The ICC also partners

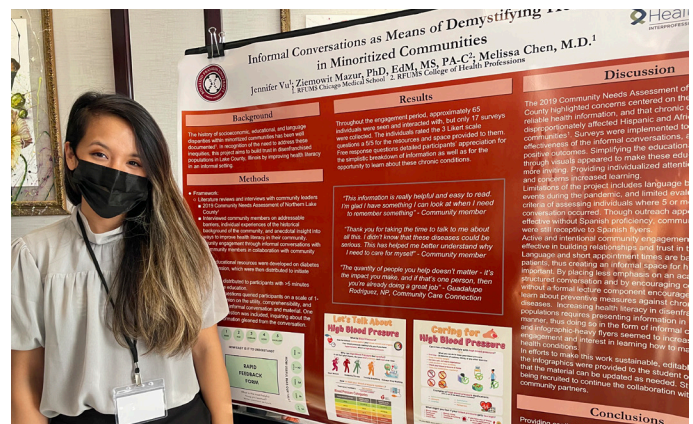
with local organizations like PADS Lake County, North Chicago ThinkTank, and Mano a Mano Family Resource Center to provide educational programs and other resources to the community (*see page 15*). All the while, students are learning important lessons about the structural and systemic causes of



The ICC now offers dermatology screenings, an initiative led by Keana Khodadad, CMS '26 (front row, in black) with the support of CMS alumna Dr. Cynthia Abban (back row, in navy).



The ICC provided free flu shots to patients during clinics held in November and December 2021.



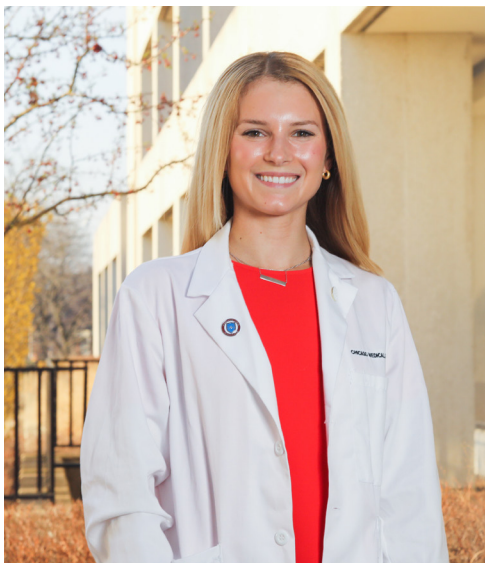
Jennifer Vu, CMS '24, with her poster at the National Society of Student-Run Free Clinics Conference in 2022.

health disparities and how best to serve a community with respect, dignity, inclusion, and equity.

"As the county's largest free clinic, the ICC is an invaluable source for health services for the uninsured," said **Melissa Chen**, MD, the ICC's medical director. "Addressing health disparities starts on this individual patient care level: advocating for our patients and addressing their very real barriers one by one."

The ICC is dedicated to meeting the community's healthcare needs — even the unexpected ones. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when it became difficult for people across the country to access nonemergency health care, students in the ICC

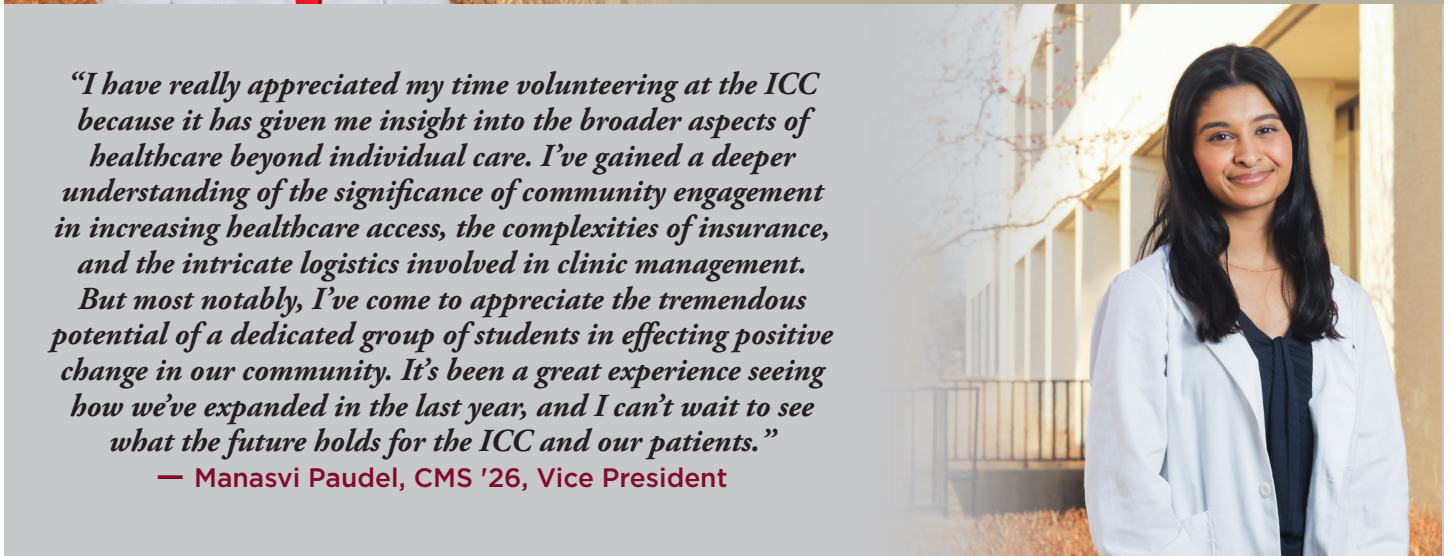
led the effort to transition the clinic to virtual care. **Lauren Gard**, MD '23, who at the time was a second-year medical student and president of the ICC, led a team of committees with over 100 students to design and implement an interprofessional telehealth clinic to serve the Lake County population. Then in 2021, students implemented a project to send "vitals boxes" to patients. During telehealth visits with their patients, the ICC care team was unable to track patients' vital signs over time. To provide this aspect of care to the community, ICC students obtained a grant from the American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation to purchase and mail kits containing blood pressure cuffs, pulse oximeters, glucometers, and scales to patients who could then



"One of my favorite things about the ICC is the dedication of our student volunteers to both our weekly clinics (medicine, physical therapy, podiatry, and behavioral health), and to the expansion of our services. Over the past year, students from CMS have led initiatives to meet the needs of the community through the establishment of specialty services like ophthalmology, dermatology, and pain services, a no-questions-asked food pantry, and partnerships with local organizations like PADS Lake County to expand access to care. Students are really able to take ownership of their experience at the ICC and gain valuable pre-clinical experiences while serving our community in an impactful way." — **Caroline Madigan, CMS '26, ICC President**

"I have really appreciated my time volunteering at the ICC because it has given me insight into the broader aspects of healthcare beyond individual care. I've gained a deeper understanding of the significance of community engagement in increasing healthcare access, the complexities of insurance, and the intricate logistics involved in clinic management. But most notably, I've come to appreciate the tremendous potential of a dedicated group of students in effecting positive change in our community. It's been a great experience seeing how we've expanded in the last year, and I can't wait to see what the future holds for the ICC and our patients."

— **Manasvi Paudel, CMS '26, Vice President**

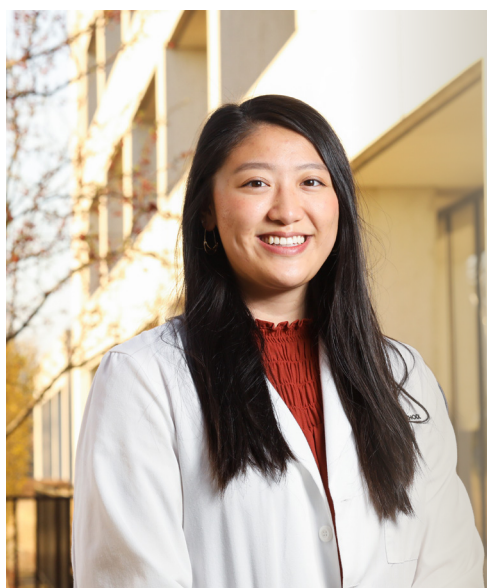


track their vitals at home and report this data during telehealth visits. Finally, when the COVID-19 vaccine became available, ICC students worked with the Lake County Health Department to help patients learn about and register for the vaccine.

The ICC continues to adapt as needed, including expanding its services to address unmet healthcare needs in the community. In the past year, thanks in part to grants from the IDPH/IAFCC, the ICC has added an ophthalmology clinic, a dermatology clinic, and an interprofessional pain service to its offerings, and anticipates the opening of Pelvic Health and Psychiatry in December. The ICC Ophthalmology

Clinic began serving patients in May, operating out of Medical Eye Services in Gurnee with Dr. Lisa Thompson, the ophthalmology residency program director at John H. Stroger Hospital of Cook County. The clinic provides comprehensive eye exams to patients in need of vision care, especially those with diabetes and hypertension who are at higher risk of cataracts and blindness. The Dermatology Clinic was launched in July, offering dermatology screenings and and biopsies, with the support of CMS alumna **Cynthia Abban**, MD '12, PhD '10.

Being actively engaged in all these avenues of care, and working with faculty mentors to develop



“Volunteering at the ICC as a medical student has been an invaluable part of my education and personal development. It's not only an opportunity to expand my clinical and leadership skills; it's also a chance to understand the real impact of healthcare on the lives of those who need it most. Specifically in my role as EO of patient education, I've participated in health education initiatives and led the ICC food pantry. These experiences have given me a deeper understanding of the social determinants of health and the importance of addressing them in healthcare practice. As I reflect on my time at the ICC, I am deeply grateful for the perspectives I've gained and the connections I've made with my peers, faculty, and community members. I look forward to seeing how much the ICC will continue to grow!” — **Wenting Hu, CMS '26, Executive Officer of Patient Education & Pediatrics Panel Lead**

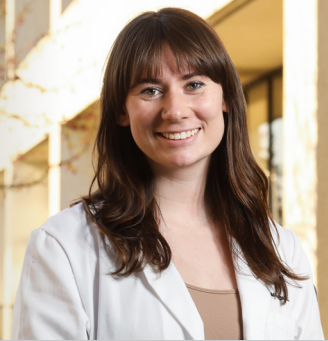
“Volunteering with the ICC has helped me stay connected to why I wanted to pursue medicine in the first place: patient care. The ICC has given me the chance to put the lessons I've learned from class into action and to see the real-world impact that medical professionals can have on patients' lives. The experience has not only been reinvigorating because of the patients we've had the pleasure of treating, but also due to the students and clinicians involved at the ICC. Everyone is passionate and driven to maintain a high standard of care, while also remaining dedicated to teaching and learning. These interactions have been formative to the way I'd like to practice medicine in the future, and I know that I am very fortunate to learn from this community. The growth our clinic has seen in the past year is astounding. I'm excited to see where the RFU community takes the ICC to next.” — **Aayush Gupta, CMS '26, Executive Officer of Telehealth & Psychiatry Panel Lead**



new programs and services, creates invaluable educational experiences for students which will serve them in their future careers. RFU students have presented almost 100 posters, presentations, and publications at national conferences, detailing their work at the ICC. CMS students in the first-year Clinical Foundations of Medicine course conduct observerships at the ICC, and CMS internal medicine residents from the Northwestern Medicine McHenry program participate in the ICC's medicine service. Elective credit is earned by M2s and M4s enrolled in a global health elective focusing on health care in low-resource areas, and M2 leaders can also earn credit in an Interprofessional Leadership elective.

For the last decade, and continuing into the future, the ICC provides care and education to meet the needs of patients and students alike, while serving as a truly innovative interprofessional model for patient care. In order to continue this work and to support future expansion, the ICC is in great need of clinicians. The clinic is especially seeking clinicians with expertise in primary care, PM&R, trans health, and pediatrics, with telehealth options available in some cases. Please email ICC@rosalindfranklin.edu if you are interested in helping students serve our community. ■

"My time volunteering with the ICC has been incredibly meaningful to me. I have so enjoyed getting involved with the ICC on a deeper level as it has allowed me to learn so much about everything that goes into operating a clinic... Working as the Executive Officer of Public Relations and learning how to plan and execute events that translate into funding our clinic for the year has been such a beneficial learning experience for me and I can genuinely say my first two years here at RFU would not be the same without it." — Angela Kein, CMS '26, Executive Officer of Public Relations



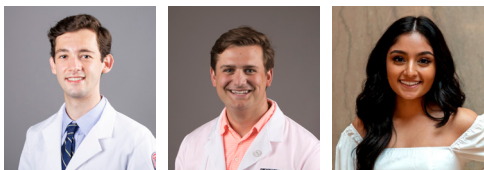
"Volunteering with the ICC has been an incredibly enriching experience for me as a medical student. Throughout my time here, I've not only had the opportunity to expand my clinical knowledge, bolster my leadership skills, and gain invaluable patient interactions, but also serve the local Lake County community while working interprofessionally across a variety of core and specialty clinics. Being a part of the ICC means that you get the privilege of working with peers and current professionals to care for underserved patients, in a way that broadens your education beyond the didactic years... Through the ICC, students are able to put into practice the abilities and information we learn every single day, making us stronger and better equipped as future healthcare professionals."

— Zachary Cherian, CMS '26, Radiology Panel Lead

"Volunteering with the ICC has been a highly rewarding experience for me as I pursue a career in healthcare. Through my involvement with ICC, I have had the opportunity to develop and refine my leadership skills that will benefit me as a future physician... As the Executive Officer of Scheduling and Training, I oversee staffing of our numerous clinics and the training of all student volunteers. It is rewarding to be a part of a clinic that is directly benefiting our community, while also providing a positive learning experience for students. Over the past year, my time with ICC has been a profound learning experience, and I look forward to the promising future of the ICC and the possibilities it holds."

— Alayna Dieter, CMS '26, Executive Officer of Scheduling and Training





Updates from the AAMC Organization of Student Representatives (OSR)

Greetings from the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Organization of Student Representatives (OSR) Representatives at the Chicago Medical School,

This is a new column in the CMS newsletter aimed at providing updates from the AAMC OSR. The OSR is the student branch of the AAMC aimed at providing medical students with a voice at the national and local level. In this column, our goal is to provide information and updates from the field of academic medicine. This information is pertinent for all stages of medical education and is especially relevant given the recent changes to the United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®) and the Electronic Residency Application Service® (ERAS®). We hope that you will find this information useful as you progress through your undergraduate medical education.

In November 2023, OSR Representatives and members of the CMS Administration joined over 4,600 attendees at Learn Serve Lead 2023: The AAMC Annual Meeting in Seattle, Washington. Shared themes during the meeting highlighted the importance of listening to others to find common ground and the importance of teamwork to overcome the challenges facing academic medicine. These challenges include opposition to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the medical profession, and implications of new technologies on health equity among other concerns.

As fourth year medical students are acutely aware, ERAS has implemented several updates in the current residency application season. These include a limit on the number of listed experiences, the implementation of geographic preferences, and the use of signals for programs. In the context of these changes, preliminary data from the 2024 ERAS Residency Season Opening demonstrated a drop in the overall average number

of applications per applicant for the first time in more than a decade.

Per information provided at the annual meeting, ERAS will continue to implement changes to the residency application process. Planned changes include allowing residency applicants to indicate the top 3 publications that are most representative of their scholarly work. There will also be the implementation of a new AAMC Fee Assistance Program starting with the 2025 ERAS season. This benefit includes a 60% discount for the first 50 applications and will be available for residency applicants who were approved for AAMC fee assistance prior to entering medical school. For more information, please refer to the link listed in the sources section.

Please do not hesitate to reach out regarding any questions or comments you may have regarding the information provided, ideas for projects to advance medical education, and suggestions for the AAMC OSR Representatives to best serve the Chicago Medical School.

We hope you found this information useful and wish you all the best as you progress through your undergraduate medical education.

Sincerely,

Eric Mettetal, Class of 2024

George Peek, Class of 2026

Jigisha Gohel, Class of 2027

Sources

- <https://www.aamc.org/news/aamc-leaders-academic-medicine-we-must-work-together-solve-biggest-problems-health-care>
- https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-residencies-eras/eras-news-and-announcements#2024_Data_Highlight
- <https://students-residents.aamc.org/fee-assistance-program/aamc-fee-assistance-program-expanding-60-eras-application-discount> ■



RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT:

Student Research Opportunities at Sinai Urban Health Institute

This spotlight highlights a research opportunity for CMS students: participating in Sinai Urban Health Institute's summer internship program. Applications are due March 1, 2024.

Through Chicago Medical School's partnership with Sinai Urban Health Institute (SUHI), CMS students have the opportunity to participate in the 8-week **SUHI-CMS Summer Internship Program**. The purpose of these internships is to allow CMS students to become more familiar with the fields of public health, population health, and epidemiological research.

The internship begins with the Sinai Population Health Institute, a five-day program of workshops, lectures, movies, and discussions that help students learn practical knowledge and best practices for increasing health equity and serving marginalized populations. Then each student is paired with a SUHI team member to assist with a research or evaluation project for the remainder of the internship. Types of projects that students may work on include epidemiological studies, population health projects, and community-based intervention projects.

Students participating in the program will have the opportunity to attend seminars and workshops on public health and research topics, such as health inequities, social determinants of health, health literacy, research methods, cultural humility, health policy, and the community health worker model. The program also offers additional educational opportunities through book clubs, film and podcast discussions, and optional field trips to get to know some of the Chicago community areas.

Since the program's launch in 2012, over 100 CMS students have participated and have contributed to

24 peer-reviewed publications. Below is some of the feedback from students who have completed the summer internship program:

- "My time at SUHI remains one of my most influential experiences during medical school."
- "It is the type of education and experience I hope all medical students can undergo at one point."
- "I have learned so much throughout this internship. I also am more confident moving into the future now equipped with more knowledge about health equity."

The (tentative) dates for the 2024 summer internship are June 3 – July 26, 2024. Much of the work can be done remotely. There are 20 spots open, and the application window is Feb. 1 – March 1, 2024. For more information on the SUHI-CMS Summer Internship Program and how to apply, contact Anna Forte (pophealthtraining@Sinai.org) or Dr. Robert Marr (robert.marr@rosalindfranklin.edu). ■



Shannon Gu and Alexander Elyin, both CMS '25, presenting a poster on research they conducted at SUHI.



Dr. Cecilia Sorensen during her keynote presentation.

WiSH Symposium

The university hosted its 8th Annual Women in Science and Healthcare (WiSH) Symposium on September 14, with speakers and panelists considering the topic “Mother/Earth Under the Microscope: Climate Change and Women’s Health.” This year’s program examined how the growing climate crisis impacts women’s health, and how healthcare providers and educators can address both climate change and its disparities.

Cecilia Sorensen, MD, director of the Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education at Columbia University and associate professor of environmental health sciences at Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, gave the symposium’s keynote address, titled “Re-Thinking Women’s Health in a Changing Climate.” Dr. Sorensen, whose recent work has focused on domestic as well as international emergent health issues related to

climate change, talked about the importance of framing climate change as the health crisis that it is. The impacts of climate change include extreme heat, degraded air and water quality, extreme weather events, and emerging infectious diseases, all of which pose significant threats to public health.

Dr. Sorensen drew on her experience as an emergency medicine physician to describe how the earth’s changing climate has disproportionately affected women and marginalized communities. “Climate change is worsening health inequities,” she said. “We know that everybody has their health impacted by climate change, but those who are socially or economically marginalized are feeling the impacts first, and they are feeling them worst.” For example, pregnant women are particularly vulnerable to extreme heat and air pollution; heat exposure and poor air quality both increase



Neha Basti, CMS '25, during the symposium's panel.



CMS faculty member Dr. Regina de Leon Gomez moderated the panel. Dr. Gomez is a climate activist who helped to establish the Illinois Clinicians for Climate Action to encourage other healthcare professionals to use their voice to protect the environment and the health of the community.

the risk of preterm births, low birth weight, and still birth. And according to the World Health Organization, women are more likely than men to die in hurricanes or flooding events. Women are also disproportionately affected by climate-driven ecological disasters: 80 percent of refugees worldwide are women, many of whom have been displaced by earthquakes, droughts, floods, wildfires, hurricanes, tropical storms, or extreme temperatures.

Despite the weighty topic, Dr. Sorensen ended her presentation on a positive note, focusing on the potential for change and innovation. As healthcare professionals, she said, “we deal with bad prognoses often. But we never give up hope. We never say there’s no treatment options. We always have some type of way forward.” In the case of climate change and its related health disparities, the way forward involves emphasizing climate and health education, both to currently practicing healthcare professionals and to the medical students who will become the next generation of physicians.

The second half of the symposium featured a panel discussion titled “Is Climate Change a Gender Issue?” Joining Dr. Sorensen on the panel were Christopher “Todd” Beer, PhD, MA, BFA, associate professor of sociology and anthropology at Lake Forest College; Jim Burgess, director of sustainability at Medline Industries; medical student **Neha Basti**, CMS '25; and panel moderator **Regina de Leon Gomez**, MD, FACOG, LSSGB, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology and Clinical Foundations of Medicine course director, CMS. The panelists talked about what inspired their work in the area of climate advocacy and brainstormed ways to help leadership within the U.S. healthcare

system understand the importance of improving climate health for the benefit of patients.

For Neha, her experience with climate advocacy began in middle school, when she and her friends went to the school administrators to advocate for a recycling program. She went on to study neuroscience and sociology at Northwestern University and graduated in 2020 as a Brady Scholar in Ethics and Civic Life. She brought her commitment

to climate advocacy to CMS, where she became the founding co-director of the CMS chapter of the Planetary Health Report Card (PHRC), alongside classmate **Allison Monie**, CMS '25. "The projects that I've been interested in in medical school stem from the belief that my generation of future physicians and healthcare professionals really need training on this topic in order to care for our future patients," Neha said.

The PHRC is an international initiative that was created by medical students in 2019 and continues to be led by students in medical schools spanning 15 nations. It's a metric-based tool that helps health professional schools evaluate themselves on components like community outreach, campus sustainability, and the presence of climate-related topics in the curriculum. This evaluation process helps institutions identify opportunities for improvement and start important conversations with faculty and administration to bring a greater focus on climate change to medical education.

At CMS, Neha and Allison led a team of 22 medical students in completing the inaugural report on planetary health within CMS education. "It was really special to find community amongst students," Neha said during the panel. "I'm just so humbled by students who are able to bring their time and energy to this topic while also being medical students. That's not a small undertaking. So I'm really grateful for all the students that I've gotten to work with."

This year's WiSH Symposium comes at a time when Chicago Medical School has been making an increased effort to incorporate environmental best practices and climate knowledge into its curriculum, due in part to the influence of students like Neha. "We've had an overwhelmingly positive response from faculty and administrators who have encouraged us to present our findings at meetings and shared personally why this topic means something to them," she said. "That sense of community has made me feel like there's a potential for change. There's purpose, and people care." ■



From left to right: Panel members Dr. Cecilia Sorensen, Ms. Neha Basti, Dr. Christopher "Todd" Beer, and Mr. Jim Burgess, with panel moderator Dr. Regina de Leon Gomez.

Skills Workshop: *Beginner's Suture Clinic*

Several CMS student groups organized a beginner's suture clinic for students looking to hone their skills. The event was the result of a combined effort from the **Orthopaedic Surgery Interest Group**, the **Emergency Medicine Interest Group**, the **ENT Interest Group**, and the **Association of Women Surgeons**.

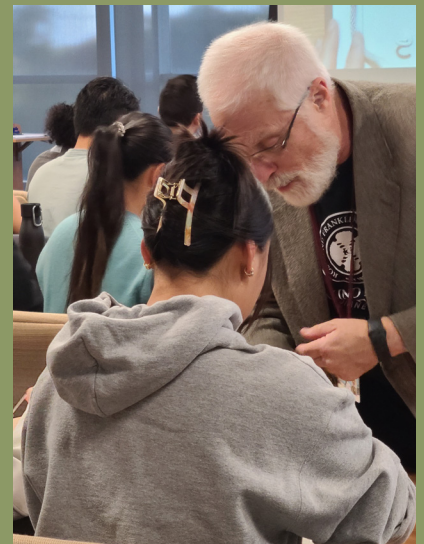
The student participants were given suture kits and practiced various sutures, led by **Michael Zdon**, MD, FACS, professor, discipline chair, and assistant education director for surgery, and **Bruce Goldberg**, MD, learning community mentor and assistant professor of medicine. Almost 100 students participated in the suture clinic, across two sessions held on October 17. ■



Each participant was provided with a suture kit.



Dr. Michael Zdon's movements were projected on a screen using a document camera.



Dr. Bruce Goldberg assisted students with their suture techniques.



About 100 students attended the two clinic sessions.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

Student National Medical Association (SNMA)

The Chicago Medical School's Student National Medical Association (SNMA) recently supported the sickle cell disease community by actively participating in and fundraising for the 49th annual "Walk-Jog-Bike-A-Thon for a Cure" event, organized by the Sickle Cell Disease Association of Illinois. Participants travelled a path along the shores of Lake Michigan in an effort to raise awareness, funding, education, and advocacy for the sickle cell community. SNMA contributed to the collective efforts of successfully raising over \$10,000.

"As advocates committed to fostering awareness and improving outcomes for medically underserved populations, we take great pride in the significant impact we have made," said a student representative from the SNMA Executive Board. "We are honored to contribute to the cause and remain steadfast in our dedication to creating positive change." ■



Community Outreach: Climate and Health

CMS students participated in a community outreach and health education event to talk about the impact of climate change on health.

On August 19, the **Interprofessional Clinic Initiative (ICI)** Community Outreach and Advocacy Committee took part in the Mano a Mano Back to School Fair at Mundelein High School, offering important health-related educational information to attendees. Students engaged with over 200 families, addressing the vital topic of climate change's impact on health. Their aim was to provide individuals with information and tools to confront climate-related health challenges and inspire action.

Climate change can impact asthma, allergies, heart health, and (by impacting food supply and availability) nutrition. The students talked to families about these subjects, and they distributed 100 packs of native seeds, generously donated by the League of Women Voters, to promote eco-friendly practices and a personal connection to the earth. Students also handed out energy-efficiency light

bulbs and reusable produce bags and water bottles to encourage immediate eco-conscious measures. Attendees raised further questions and were able to use QR codes to access Climate for Health resources.

"We were thrilled by the enthusiastic response we received," said **Martha Smith**, CMS '26, one of the students who organized the effort. "We are looking forward to reaching more community members at our next community event." ■



In foreground from left to right: Sergio Sosa, SCPM '26; Carolynn Boatfield, CHP '24; Martha Smith, CMS '26; and Regina de Leon Gomez, MD, FACOG, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology. Back row: Roberto Iglesias, CMS '26.



Martha Smith, CMS '26; Maggie Rice, Interprofessional Community Clinic volunteer; Jeffrey Damaschke, PT, DPT, PhD, director of ICC clinical and community care; and Carolynn Boatfield, CHP '24.

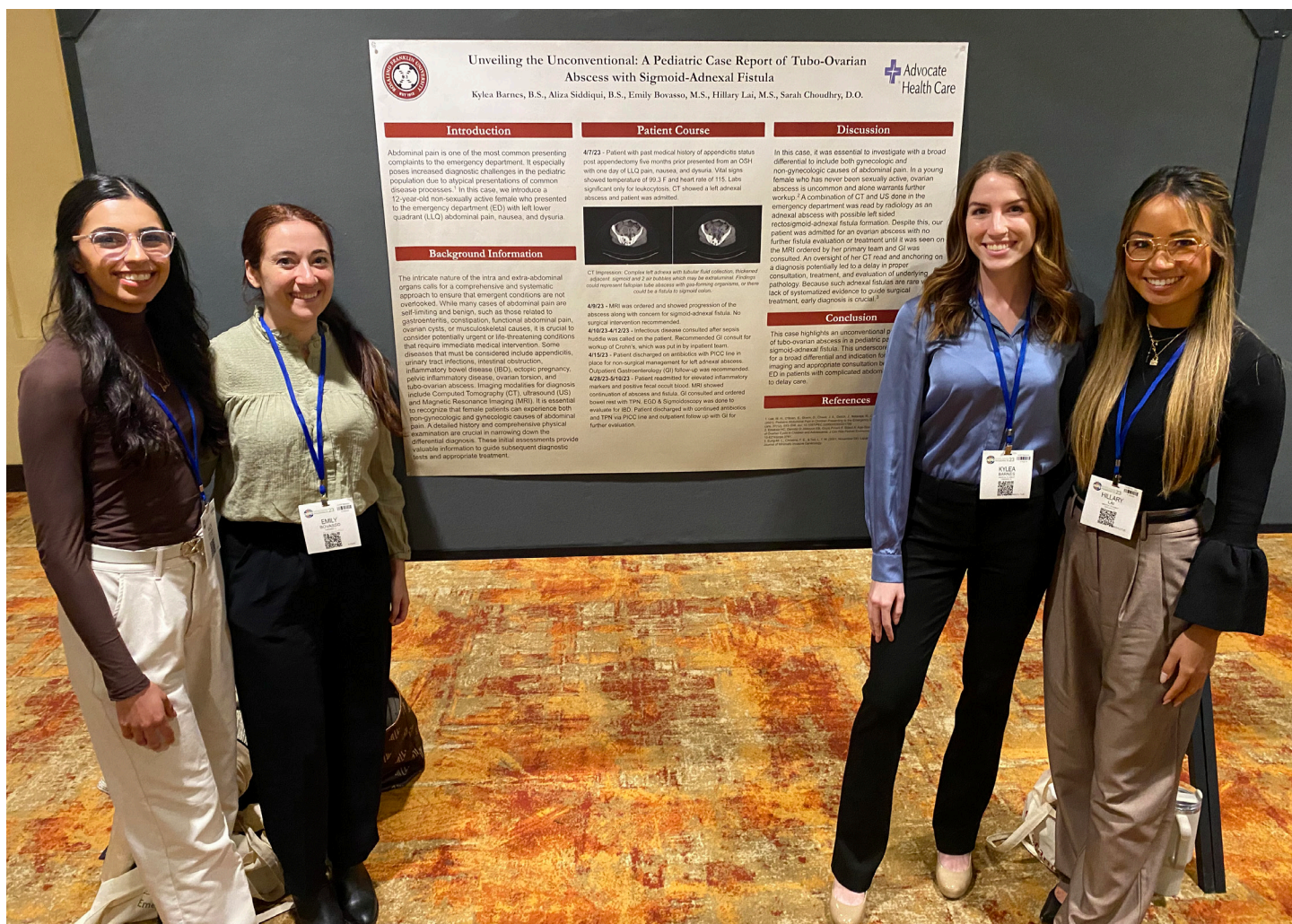
CMS Students Win Second Place in EMRA Case-Con

Kylea Barnes, Aliza Siddiqui, Emily Bovasso, and Hillary Lai, all CMS '24, received a prize for a poster they presented at the 2023 American College of Emergency Physicians Scientific Assembly Case-Con, hosted by the Emergency Medicine Residents' Association (EMRA). The EMRA Case-Con is a research presentation competition where medical students and residents are invited to present posters on interesting or notable emergency medicine cases. Each competing team is given five minutes to present their poster, followed by two minutes of group discussion. The case presentations are

judged by a panel of emergency medicine residents and faculty.

The group of CMS students presented a poster titled "Unveiling the Unconventional: A Pediatric Case Report of Tubo-Ovarian Abscess with Sigmoid-Adnexal Fistula." They won second place overall in the medical student category.

Congratulations to Kylea, Aliza, Emily, and Hillary for this accomplishment! ■



From left to right: Aliza Siddiqui, Emily Bovasso, Kylea Barnes, and Hillary Lai with their poster.

SYNAPSES

A Creative Journal of the Chicago Medical School



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Welcoming Dr. Antwione Haywood to CMS

Earlier this month, Chicago Medical School welcomed **Antwione Haywood**, PhD, to the administration as our new Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

Dr. Haywood comes to us from Indiana University School of Medicine, where he served as Assistant Dean of Medical Student Affairs, Chief Diversity Officer of the university's Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center, and assistant professor of clinical radiation oncology. He has previously served as Director of the Academic Success Center at Purdue University and Assistant Director of Residential Living at Drexel University.

Dr. Haywood is dedicated to fostering holistic growth in medical students, helping them navigate not just their educational path, but all aspects of

their lives. A national thought leader on student success and interventions to close equity gaps, he is committed to fostering racial and gender diversity and helping students overcome imposter syndrome. He is supportive, empathetic, and deeply invested in student success.

"He advocates for student desires and cares in administrative meetings, provides new insight and developments in medical education, assessments, diversity, equity and inclusion, and leadership arenas, and continues to model what being successful and compassionate means," wrote one of Dr. Haywood's former colleagues at Indiana University. "He is the definition of commitment to excellence in a more holistic understanding than I believe I've ever seen from a faculty or staff member."

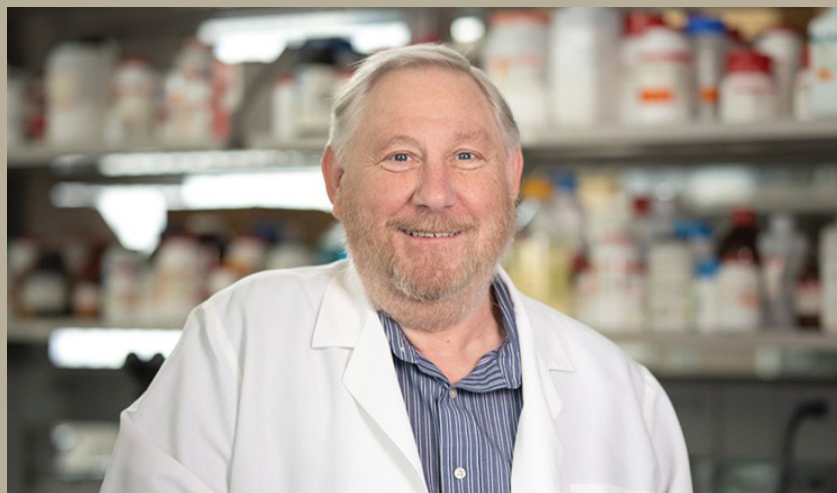
Dr. Haywood brings a wealth of knowledge, passion, and experience to his role at CMS, as well as expertise in mindfulness-based stress reduction through the Mind Body Medicine program. This program, dedicated to transforming trauma through a public health approach, helps communities create resources for relieving trauma and building resilience. During his time at Indiana University School of Medicine, Dr. Haywood taught Mind Body Medicine, helped develop the school's wellness curriculum, and conducted unconscious bias training for faculty and students to help improve the institution's learning environment.

He has built a record of progressive administrative responsibility combined with a national reputation in diversity and student success, and he has 19 years of service in increasingly complex senior-level administrative positions. In his roles at Indiana University, Dr. Haywood's responsibilities spanned recruitment, curriculum development, programming, student support, and implementation of a plan to enhance racial and gender diversity in the workforce.

Dr. Haywood received his PhD in Higher Education and Student Affairs from Indiana University, and his MEd degree in Higher Education Administration from the University of Kansas.

In his role as CMS Associate Dean for Students Affairs, Dr. Haywood will be responsible for all aspects of the student experience including orientation, academic and career

advising, progression through medical school, student well-being and professional development, the residency match, and graduation. We are glad to have him as part of our CMS community! ■



Dr. Neil Bradbury Embraces New Faculty Engagement Role

Another administrative change effective this fall is that **Neil Bradbury**, PhD, professor of physiology and biophysics, has joined the medical school's Office of Faculty Affairs as the Director of Senior Faculty Engagement. In this role, Dr. Bradbury will oversee the Senior Faculty Engagement Program.

The Senior Faculty Engagement Program is designed to revitalize and empower experienced faculty members by refocusing and retraining them to align with best practices and emerging trends in medical education. This program aims to enhance the quality of education within the institution. Faculty engagement benefits individual faculty members and the institution they are part of. It leads to professional growth, improved teaching and research, increased job satisfaction, and ultimately contributes to the institution's academic excellence, reputation, and long-term success.

Dr. Bradbury has been a faculty member since September 2005. A prominent researcher in the Cystic Fibrosis field, he also has tremendous experience in teaching and course direction across several schools at RFU. He has chaired numerous committees at RFU and is president of the Master Teacher Guild. ■



Dr. Heinz Steiner with members of the CMS Class of 2026 in the Health Sciences Building, Room 2.710, where he has taught each M2 class over the years.

Celebrating Dr. Heinz Steiner

Faculty and second-year students surprised **Heinz Steiner**, PhD, with a cake at the end of his last lecture for the M2 class. Dr. Steiner, a professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology who has been on the CMS faculty since 2000, will retire at the end of the academic year. Although he will teach the M1s again before his retirement, October marked the end of his time with the Class of 2026. ■



Dr. Heinz Steiner with faculty and staff from the cellular and molecular pharmacology discipline: Crystal Gutierrez; Amiel Rosenkranz, PhD; Judy Potashkin, PhD; Heinz Steiner, PhD; Roxane Rohani, PharmD; Mitchell Beales; and James O'Donnell III, PhD.



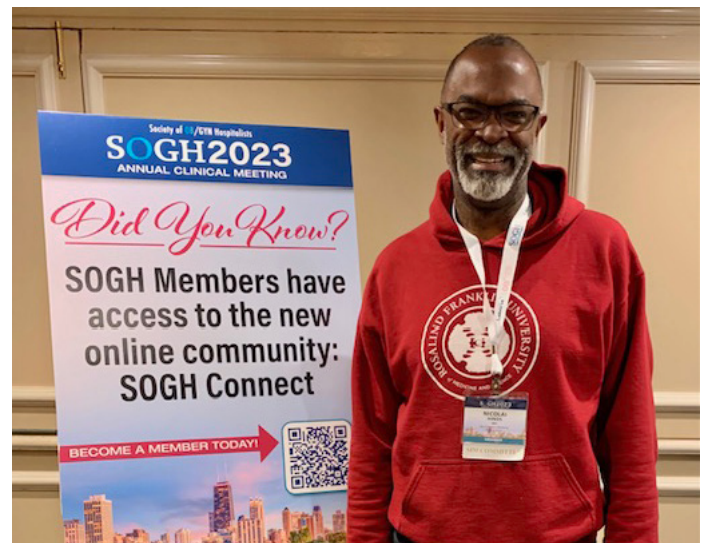
Dr. Amiel Rosenkranz; John Buolamwini, PhD; Dr. Heinz Steiner; Dr. Judy Potashkin; Dr. Roxane Rohani; and Dr. James O'Donnell III.

CMS Faculty Represented at an OB/GYN Conference

Nicolai Hinds, MD, FACOG, a preceptor in CMS's Department of Foundational Sciences and Humanities, recently spoke at a national medical conference. The Society of OB/GYN Hospitalists (SOGH) met in downtown Chicago in early September for their Annual Clinical Meeting. This event is the largest meeting of the year for the SOGH, and it's an opportunity for clinicians and educators involved in inpatient OB/GYN care to discuss advocacy, review topics related to educating the next generation of OB/GYN hospitalists, and share the latest scientific advances and best practices in their discipline.

Dr. Hinds taught a simulation course, held over two days, entitled "Peripartum Cardiomyopathy Leading to Maternal Cardiac Arrest." As a part of the course, fellow OB/GYN physicians were given the opportunity to work with a high-fidelity mannequin and simulate how to respond when a patient experiences cardiac arrest while still pregnant. Dr. Hinds also assisted in the Obstetric Skills Lab later on in the conference, and was assisted by **Neha Basti**, CMS '25.

The conference was well attended and OB/GYN physicians from all over the country enjoyed their time at the historic Drake Hotel, and also found time to enjoy all that Chicago has to offer. Dr. Hinds stated: "I really enjoy these SOGH conferences because it provides me with an opportunity to connect with friends and colleagues from all over the country, as well as the chance to meet new students and reconnect with former students." ■

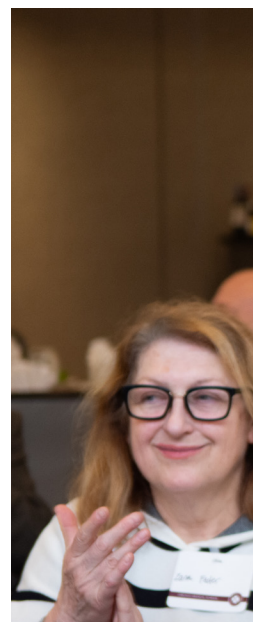




Dr. Arthur S. Levine



Dr. Elizabeth Henschen with Dr. Frank Maldonado



CMS Faculty and Friends Recognition Dinner

Chicago Medical School hosted its annual Faculty and Friends Recognition Dinner on October 25 in Northbrook, IL, to celebrate and express appreciation for the school's faculty and partners, including the many volunteer faculty members who dedicate their time and effort to CMS. The ceremony recognized the excellence in teaching, research, service, and patient care demonstrated by CMS faculty, staff, students, and affiliate partners.

Congratulations to all the faculty, alumni, and clinical partners who received awards, as well as everyone who was nominated! We thank you for everything you do for our school, our students, and our community.

Arthur S. Levine, MD '64, and **Kaleem A. Malik**, MD '96, MS '92, received the **CMS Honor Medallion**, an award bestowed upon a faculty, staff member, student, or alumnus for novel and/or extraordinary accomplishments that have brought honor and prestige to the school through the delivery of novel healthcare methods, healthcare education, leadership, groundbreaking research, or exceptional acts of humanitarianism. Dr. Levine received this honor for his work in Alzheimer's disease research,

while Dr. Malik was honored for his humanitarian work.

Lise Eliot, PhD, professor of neuroscience, received the **CMS Distinguished Faculty Award**, awarded to a faculty member who brings honor and prestige to CMS through their outstanding commitment to the school and sustained contribution to teaching, service, research, and/or patient care. This is the highest honor that Chicago Medical School bestows upon its faculty.

Zahra Sara Afshari, MD, associate professor of neurology; **Mitali Roy**, MD, lecturer of internal medicine; and **Elizabeth Henschen**, DO, FAAP, clinical instructor and assistant educator director of pediatrics, received the **CMS Excellence in Clinical Education Award**, awarded to educators who demonstrate empathy and respect for students, create a culture that encourages student expression of ideas, act as an exemplary role model, and exhibit professional values and standards.

Two of our clinical partners, **Cook County Health** and **Ascension Illinois**, received the **CMS Affiliate Site Award**, granted in recognition of everything



Dr. Varsha Chandramouli



Ascension Illinois faculty with Dr. Brenda Affinati



Dr. Zahra Sara Afshari

the site and its faculty, staff, and administration do to provide a rigorous and beneficial clinical teaching environment for CMS students, sharing their wisdom, expertise, and passion for medical education with the next generation of physicians.

Regina de Leon Gomez, MD, FACOG, LSSGB, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology and Clinical Foundations of Medicine (CFoM) course director, received the **CMS Excellence in Educational Innovation Award** for her work with the CFoM course. This award is given to an individual who demonstrates innovation in teaching and learning approaches, focusing on significant accomplishments in curriculum and instructional development.

Holly Hunsberger, PhD, assistant professor of foundational sciences and humanities, received the **CMS Junior Faculty Investigator Award** for her research on sex differences in Alzheimer's disease. This award recognizes a promising researcher for their significant contributions to their field.

Michael P. Melnick, MD '87, lecturer of family medicine, and **Natalie Sgarlata**, MD, assistant professor of pediatrics, received the **CMS Clinical Preceptor Award**, in recognition of their outstanding

efforts to supervise and train CMS students during clinical rotations.

Varsha Chandramouli, MD, FAAFP, received the **CMS Outstanding Faculty Community Service Award**, which acknowledges an individual who is committed to serving the underserved population at CMS, its communities, and its clinical affiliates.

Brenda Affinati, MD, FACP, associate dean for clinical affairs; **Michael Ellison**, EdD, associate dean for admissions; and **David Everly**, PhD, executive chair of foundational sciences and humanities, received the **Dean's Special Recognition Award**, which recognizes individuals who have gone above and beyond in their hard work and dedication to CMS. This award was also given to the members of the Academic Assembly Bylaws Revision Task Force, who worked to revise and update the CMS Faculty Bylaws: **Daniel Peterson**, PhD, task force chair; **Dima Arbach**, MD; **Norman Lee**, MD; **David Mueller**, PhD; **Bharathi Swaminathan**, MD; **Nutan Vaidya**, MD; and **Ning Wang**, MD.

We take this opportunity to once again express our appreciation for the many outstanding people who give their time, effort, and talent to teach and train our students. ■



Student Dean Corner

Each quarter, student dean Donia Momen will give updates on the projects she will be working on throughout the year.

To my classmates and colleagues,

With 2023 coming to an end, I hope that everyone has been doing well and enjoying the sunshine as much as possible before the winter months. That being said, I am so excited to update you all on some of the things that I have been working on.

One of my primary goals is to foster a supportive and inclusive environment where every student feels valued and respected. It is important to me that each and every one of you has equal access to resources, opportunities, and support systems that will contribute to your personal and academic success. In order to make our student experience richer and more fulfilling, I am excited to announce that we will be launching several exciting initiatives throughout the year. These will include social events, mentorship programs, and community service opportunities. I encourage you all to get involved and make the most of what our school has to offer.

As you may have already read in our emails, we have successfully advocated for and secured access to a new student lounge as well as several study rooms on campus available specifically for CMS students. These new spaces have been created to provide dedicated areas where you can study, relax, and engage with classmates.

One of my main undertakings as Student Dean this year will be to develop a compilation of resources specifically working with our large Alumni network. By connecting with alumni who have successfully matched and navigated their medical careers, we can gain valuable insights, guidance, and mentorship that will assist us in our journey towards becoming physicians. The Google spreadsheet will serve as a centralized platform where students can explore various specialties, connect with alumni, and seek advice on residency programs, research opportunities, and overall experiences in the medical field. This initiative will foster a strong network between our current students and alumni that will contribute to our growth and success. In the coming months, I am looking forward to continuing working on this project and keeping everyone updated along the way.

As an update for a possible CMS dance, I am excited to explore the possibility of organizing a memorable and fun-filled event. This event would provide us with a chance to come together as a community and celebrate our hard work and achievements, both academically and personally. I want to thank everyone that responded to my poll I sent out at the beginning of the quarter and want you all to know that I have gone through each response and am working to move forward based

on the responses that I have received. Stay tuned for more updates on that!

I would also like to reiterate that I am always available if anyone has any questions or concerns. I want everyone's voices to be heard and if you would like to reach out to me please don't hesitate to send me an email.

Goodluck to everyone and happy holidays!

Sincerely,



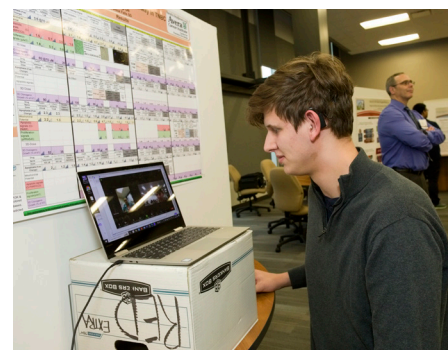
Donia Momen
Chicago Medical School Student Dean
Chicago Medical School Class of 2025

student.deancms@rfums.org
donia.momen@my.rfums.org ■

CMS Research Fair

Chicago Medical School held its annual Research Fair on October 13 as a way for CMS students to learn about the various research opportunities available to them from the medical school's clinical partners and affiliates. CMS faculty presented posters detailing their clinical, translational, and health research, and students were able to interact with research faculty while learning about their work.

Presenters included researchers from the Advocate Aurora Research Institute, the Sinai Urban Health Institute, the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center, and the Lake County Health Department, as well as the university's Center for Health Equity Research, Resuscitation Institute, and Interprofessional Community Clinic. ■



Race and Medicine Symposium

A panel of experts discussed maternal health disparities and solutions.

Chicago Medical School held its annual Race and Medicine Symposium on September 20, organized by the CMS Office of Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion. The medical school holds this educational symposium each year to focus community attention on an aspect of the U.S. healthcare system that negatively impacts the health of marginalized populations, with the goal of equipping our faculty, students, and community partners with the knowledge needed to work toward health equity. The theme of this year's symposium was "Maternal Mortality: A Nation in Crisis," and the event provided a forum and dialogue on the staggering statistics regarding U.S. women, especially women of color, who die while pregnant or postpartum. A panel of experts — including representatives from the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Lake County

Health Department — examined how the social determinants of health negatively impact Black maternal outcomes across Illinois, with a special focus on Lake County.

The World Health Organization defines maternal mortality as the annual number of deaths from any cause related to or aggravated by pregnancy or its management during pregnancy and childbirth or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, not including accidental deaths. When it comes to maternal health, the U.S. ranks last among similarly wealthy nations, with the rate of U.S. maternal mortality rising in recent years. And there are clear race-based disparities in maternal outcomes: in 2021, non-Hispanic Black women had the highest rate of maternal mortality in the U.S., with Black mothers



Myrtis Sullivan, MD, MPH, CMS assistant dean for diversity, equity, and inclusion with the symposium panelists: Ms. Damaris Montano, Dr. Cara Jane Bergo, Dr. Kimberly Darey, Dr. Lakshmi Emory, Dr. Ann Borders, and Ms. Brenda Reyes.

dying at more than two and a half times the rate of non-Hispanic white women.

Speakers included **Ann Borders**, MD, MSc, MPH, maternal-fetal medicine specialist at Evanston NorthShore Hospital and executive director and obstetric lead for the Illinois Perinatal Quality Collaborative; **Lakshmi Emory**, MD MPH, chief medical officer at Aetna Better Health of Illinois; **Cara Jane Bergo**, PhD, MPH, maternal mortality epidemiologist for the Illinois Department of Public Health; **Brenda Reyes**, RN, CLC, vice president of training and curriculum at HealthConnect One; and **Damaris Montano**, MPH, BSN, RN, program coordinator for maternal-child health services at the Lake County Health Department. **Kimberly Darey**, MD '04, CPE, president of Elmhurst Hospital, moderated the panel discussion.

As with previous symposia from the Race and Medicine series, this event emphasized the importance of listening to community voices in order to better understand and address the issues faced by marginalized populations. The symposium began with a short video sharing the experience of Dr. Sharon Irving, who died several weeks postpartum, after her symptoms were ignored despite multiple doctor visits.

Dr. Cara Jane Bergo, whose work for the Illinois Department of Public Health involves coordinating the two statewide Maternal Mortality Review Committees that review all pregnancy associated

deaths in Illinois, began her portion of the symposium with a focus on patient voices. “I want to really make note of how truly important it is to center this conversation on stories like Sharon’s,” she said. “Sadly, there are many more out there — women, moms, daughters who lost their lives to this crisis of maternal mortality.”

The panelists looked at the topic of maternal health from historical, medical, clinical, social, and advocacy perspectives. They considered some of the social determinants of health that contribute to maternal health disparities, and also discussed opportunities for prevention, such as improving access to care and continuity of care. Dr. Lakshmi Emory, who is responsible for the clinical operations, strategies, and programs of Aetna’s largest Medicaid health plan, spoke about the importance of advocacy, explaining that advocating for housing, transportation, and nutrition programs can help improve maternal health outcomes.

All the panelists agreed that cooperation and communication were key to addressing this crucial issue. “It’s going to take a team effort,” said Ms. Brenda Reyes. “It’s going to take all of us coming to the table and following the lead of the people who are mostly impacted by the inequities — being humble, listening to the community who is mostly impacted by the issues because they’re the experts. We have expertise, too, but you need to really ask and listen.” ■



During the event, Dr. Cara Jane Bergo explained how the Illinois Department of Public Health tracks maternal health outcomes.



CMS alumna Dr. Kimberly Darey, CMS Class of 2004, served as symposium moderator.

Clinical Site Visits

CMS leadership regularly visit our clinical affiliates to meet with site directors, program directors, and volunteer clinical faculty, as well as Chicago Medical School students and residents who are currently learning and training at those sites. The purpose of these visits is to foster communication and give faculty, students, and residents an opportunity to share their perspective and feedback on their experiences.

In October, **Archana Chatterjee**, MD, PhD, dean of CMS, **Brenda Affinati**, MD, associate dean for clinical affairs, and other CMS leadership visited Northwestern Medicine McHenry Hospital and Northwestern Neurology to meet with site faculty, CMS residents, and alumni. ■

Top: CMS clinical education leadership met with two CMS alumna at Northwestern Neurology in Libertyville. Pictured from left to right: Dr. Frank Maldonado; Dr. Brenda Affinati; Andrea Dellaria, MD '13; Syema Sheikh, MD '13; and Dr. Michael Allswede.

Middle: Internal medicine residents at Northwestern Medicine McHenry Hospital shared their experiences.

Bottom: Dean Chatterjee met with internal medicine residents at Northwestern Medicine McHenry Hospital.





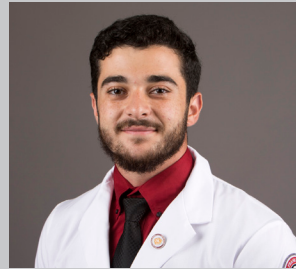
Simulation Event for Emergency Medicine Residents

On October 24, second-year residents from Ascension Resurrection's emergency medicine program participated in a simulation event held at Northwestern Medicine Huntley Hospital's Center for Advanced Simulation in Healthcare. RFU faculty

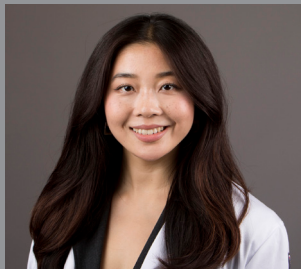
and staff working at the Huntley simulation center hosted an OSCE Day for residents so they could practice the emergency station of the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE). ■

Introducing the M1 Class Council

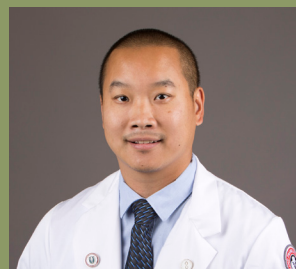
The CMS Class of 2027 has elected its student council members. Congratulations to all the new student leaders!



President
Ahmad Hussein
Mustafa



Vice President
Calis Lim



Treasurer
Rudy Chiu



Secretary
Divya Abbaraju



OSR
Representative
Jigisha Gohel



Executive
Student Council
Representative
Michael Letz



Executive
Student Council
Representative
Adian Keserovic



Honor Council
Representative
Madison Gil



Honor Council
Representative
Peter Pham

Celebrating 75 Years of CMS Accreditation

This fall marked the 75th anniversary of the day Chicago Medical School was first granted accreditation! On November 9, 1948, at a joint meeting of the American Medical Association (AMA) and the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the school was granted full AMA approval and membership in the AAMC. This accomplishment was due in large part to the tireless efforts and outstanding leadership of **Dr. John J. Sheinin**, who joined the CMS faculty as a professor of anatomy in 1932, became Dean of the medical school in 1935, and served as President of the school from 1950 until his retirement in 1966.

As an independent medical school, unaffiliated with any university or hospital, Chicago Medical School faced an uphill battle to attain accreditation. In the years following Abraham Flexner's 1910 report on "Medical Education in the United States and Canada" (known as the Flexner Report), the number of medical colleges in the country decreased from 161 in 1906 to only 79 in 1929, with many non-approved schools either closing or merging with already accredited institutions.

Determined not to allow CMS to succumb to the same fate, Dr. Sheinin worked to increase financial support for the school and improve the school's faculty, in part by arranging for the appointment of refugee doctors (many of them highly distinguished in their fields) who were fleeing from Nazi Germany and other war-torn areas of Europe. He also formed an affiliation with Mount Sinai Hospital — in addition to the school's already existing affiliation with Cook County Hospital — creating more clinical opportunities for students and bringing many talented doctors to the faculty. When CMS was granted full AMA approval and accreditation in 1948, it was reported to be the only unapproved medical school in medical history to accomplish this feat, with some 90 other unapproved medical schools being forced to close or merge with other institutions.

On November 9, 2023, we remembered Dr. Sheinin's legacy and celebrated his vision of excellence in teaching and research — a vision that continues at Chicago Medical School to this day. ■



Dr. John J. Sheinin (center left, shaking the hand of the man holding a hat) is congratulated by students on the steps of Chicago Medical School's former building at 710 South Wolcott Street, after returning from the joint AMA/AAMC meeting where full accreditation was granted to CMS.

Graduate Medical Education (GME) News

Mini Golf Wellness Gathering

In September, all available CMS residents and fellows gathered for a cross-program wellness event. Despite some rain, our psychiatry and internal medicine residents and fellows enjoyed lunch together and then spent the afternoon playing mini-golf at Par-King in Lincolnshire. ■



Graduate Medical Education (GME) News

Residents Receive Golden Apple Award



Congratulations to our two residents in the CMS/Northwestern Medicine McHenry internal medicine program who received the Golden Apple Award. **Hyder Ali**, MD, and **Mariam Khabsa**, MD, both third-year residents, received this award for their excellence in teaching. ■

Left: Dr. Hyder Ali with Ted Lorenc, MD, director of medical education at Northwestern Medicine McHenry Hospital: Dr. Lorenc with Dr. Mariam Khabsa.

Below: From left to right: Erin Davis-Delay, MD assistant professor of medicine; Farah Zahra, MD, assistant professor of medicine; Dr. Mariam Khabsa; Dr. Hyder Ali; and Yuliana Petryshyn, MD, internist.



Other GME News



Dr. Bilal Al Kalaji

Bilal Al Kalaji, MD, an internal medicine resident from our Northwestern Medicine McHenry program, was voted Outstanding Resident of the Year by the Illinois chapter of the American College of Physicians (ACP). As part of the award, Dr. Al Kalaji will have the opportunity to participate in Leadership Day 2024, the ACP's annual two-day advocacy event in Washington, DC that enables members from across the country to bring issues of concern to U.S. lawmakers.



Dr. Harumi Tokashiki

Harumi Tokashiki, MD, a fellow in the CMS pulmonary fellowship program, received a HeRO (High Reliability Organization) Award for her work at the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC). This awards program recognizes initiatives that improve the Military Health System. Dr. Tokashiki was selected for her display of High Reliability Organization principles and values in action at the FHCC. ■

Alumni News

Bradley Hersh, MD '80, Presents Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic



Dr. Bradley Hersh with several students from the global health interest group.

Bradley Hersh, MD '80, MPH, came to campus on September 26 for a special medical grand rounds presentation on the topic “Lessons Learned from the COVID-19 Pandemic.” All RFU faculty, staff, and students were invited to attend this event, which was hosted by the university’s Division of Institutional Advancement.

Dr. Hersh, who received the CMS Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2015, has spent the majority of his career working as a medical epidemiologist for the CDC, the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). In 1987, he joined the Epidemic Intelligence Service of the CDC, where he investigated measles outbreaks. During his time with the CDC and WHO, Dr. Hersh traveled around the world, dedicating his

expertise to the battle against HIV/AIDS, as well as vaccine-preventable diseases like measles and polio.

After his retirement from the CDC, Dr. Hersh split his time between Chicago and Switzerland, working as a voluntary attending physician at Rush Medical College and serving on various committees at the WHO headquarters in Geneva. But during the COVID-19 pandemic, he returned from retirement to serve as the CDC Liaison Officer to WHO for COVID-19, working to strengthen communication and enhance collaboration between the CDC and WHO in the global response to COVID-19 and other health emergencies.

“His career is a testament to the power of dedication, innovation, and compassion in the realm

Alumni News

of public health,” **Frank Maldonado**, MD, executive chair of clinical sciences, said when introducing Dr. Hersh. “His unwavering commitment to saving lives and shaping global health policy makes him an inspiration to all of us.”

For his part, Dr. Hersh thanked his teachers and mentors at CMS. “I remain eternally grateful to this university, Chicago Medical School, my professors, and my mentors, because a lot of what I’m doing now is based on what I learned at CMS,” he said. “I would not be where I’m at now without the mentors I’ve had at CMS.”

During his presentation, Dr. Hersh shared his personal lessons learned from the pandemic that has changed many people’s lives. He presented a framework for understanding the epidemiology

of the COVID-19 pandemic, including topics such as how COVID-19 differed from the 2003 SARS outbreak, why the “zero-COVID” tactic attempted in Hong Kong during the 2022 outbreak of the Omicron variant was not an effective long-term control strategy, and how host vulnerability played a factor in the relatively high cumulative COVID-19 mortality rate in the U.S. compared to other high-income countries.

Dr. Hersh emphasized the importance of learning from the COVID-19 pandemic so that the U.S. healthcare system can be ready for the next public health emergency. “The bottom line is, we need to prepare for the next pandemic, because it’s coming,” he said. “I can’t tell when it’s coming, but it’s coming.” ■

Other Alumni News

Joel Sorosky, MD '76, was appointed chief of the division of gynecologic oncology and professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Penn State Health in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Thomas Casale, MD '77, received a University of South Florida Outstanding Research Achievement Award for distinguished contributions to the field of medicine, especially in allergy and immunology research, and demonstration of the utility of biologic therapies for the treatment of allergic and respiratory diseases.

Andrew Siegel, MD '81, released the second edition of his book titled *Prostate Cancer 20/20: A Practical Guide to Understanding Management Options for Patients and Their Families*.

David Bazzo, MD '90, received the 2023 Family Physician of the Year Award from the California Academy of Family Physicians.

John Rogers, MD '90, was elected chair of the department of medicine at Scripps Clinic in La Jolla, California.

Nounou Taleghani, MD '95, PhD '94, MS '91, was appointed associate dean of academic advising at Stanford School of Medicine. She is also founder and director of Stanford’s Center for Specialty Career Advising.

Joseph H. Schwab, MD '99, MS '99, was named director of Spine Oncology for Orthopaedic Surgery

Alumni News

and director of the Center for Surgical Technology and AI Research at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles.

Andrew Chi, MD '02, PhD '00, was named chief medical officer of Alterome Therapeutics in San Diego.

Kevin T. Gioia, MD '08, was named to a three-year term on the The State University of New York College of Optometry Foundation's board of trustees.

Jordan Newman, MD '21, MS '17, a third-year neurology resident at Michigan Medicine, received the University of Michigan's annual Bronze Beeper Award for Excellence in Clinical Education. The award is voted on by M3 and M4 students and recognizes approximately a dozen resident physicians (out of 1,400 eligible house officers) across all specialties who exemplify excellence in clinical teaching, leadership, and patient care. ■

Alumni Moments



Mildred MG Olivier, MD '88 and former CMS assistant dean for diversity and inclusion, reunited with Dean Emeritus Ted Booden, PhD at our recent CMS Reunion dinner. Dr. Booden served on the faculty of the medical school during Dr. Olivier's time as a student at CMS.



Jason Naderi, MD '22, was recently named Intern of the Year at Olive View-UCLA Medical Center. Dr. Naderi is now a second-year internal medicine resident, and he received this Outstanding Categorical Intern award for his work during the 2022-2023 year.

STAFF CORNER

Get to know the people who make CMS a great place to study and work!



Lesly Rivera

Administrative Coordinator, Curricular Resources

CMS Office of Medical Education

Time at CMS: About 1 year

Lesly Rivera joined CMS in August 2022 as the administrative coordinator of curricular resources. In this role, she coordinates multi-level administrative support to the CMS Curriculum Committee and its associated sub-committees.

Lesly graduated from Northeastern Illinois University with a double major in Psychology and Human Resource Development. She has previous experience working in the education field: prior to coming to RFU, she worked as a paraprofessional at Connections Academy East in Lake Forest. “Education

has always been a rewarding experience for me, and combining it with the field of medicine seemed like a natural fit,” Leslie said. “I’m eager to gain new knowledge and help others learn.”

In her role in the Office of Medical Education, Lesly coordinates support for several aspects of the Chicago Medical School curriculum. She helps advise faculty chairs on the Curriculum Committee and its sub-committees to determine and prioritize committee business and strategies for discussion and approval. She also facilitates the production of curricular resources including individual course syllabi, individual course competency maps, course reviews, the CMS Master Competency Map, and the CMS Curriculum Guide.

“There are no amount of words that could ever do justice to Lesly and the wonderful impact she has made at CMS,” said Lesly’s supervisor. “In a short period of time, she has become incredibly knowledgeable in her role and is a truly indispensable member of the OME team and the medical school as a whole. Lesly has an unparalleled work ethic, always going above and beyond what is expected, and is particularly skilled at independently identifying and addressing needs. Most importantly she is an absolute delight to work with, as she exudes kindness and positivity and creates a warm and welcoming community at CMS. I could not be happier to have Lesly on our team!”

“I value the opportunity to contribute directly to the development and enhancement of medical curriculum, thereby influencing the future generation of healthcare professionals,” Lesly said when asked to name her favorite thing about working at CMS. “Working here challenges me intellectually, offers me continuous learning, and provides opportunities for personal and professional development.”

Outside of work, Lesly likes to stay busy! She is currently studying for a Masters in Healthcare Administration at the University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley. Her expected graduation is Spring 2024. When she’s not consumed with school work, Lesly loves to travel, go on hikes, try new restaurants, and dive into a good book. ■

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Awards & Accomplishments



Robert Bridges, PhD, professor of physiology and biophysics and director of cystic fibrosis research, Center for Genetic Diseases, received the Dorothy Andersen and Paul di Sant'Agnese Distinguished Scientific Achievement Award

at the North American Cystic Fibrosis annual conference, held November 2–4 in Phoenix, Arizona. The award — the highest scientific honor awarded by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation — recognizes those who have made significant contributions to the scientific understanding of CF.

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Arvind K. Goyal, MD, MPH, MBA, FAAFP, FACPM, clinical associate professor of family and preventive medicine, received the Vincent D. Keenan Award for Servant Leadership from the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians (IAFP). This award recognizes outstanding Illinois physicians in public health.

Dr. Goyal was nominated for his depth, breadth, and record of service to the people of Illinois in a myriad of roles. As the medical director at the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services since 2012, he is among the longest-serving state Medicaid directors in the United States. In addition, his leadership in the American Association of Public Health Physicians illustrates the family medicine specialty's universal pursuit of optimal physical and mental health. Before moving to large-scale administrative roles, Dr. Goyal worked as a family physician in Rolling Meadows, IL for 30 years. He was the IAFP Family Physician of the Year in 2001 and received a President's Award in 2003 for his advocacy in IAFP's tobacco prevention advocacy,

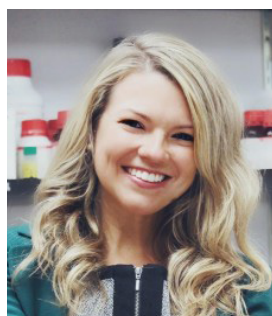
along with his own work in his Rolling Meadows Community and beyond. He has served as the IAFP Foundation's board chair as well.

According to the IAFP: "He is known for innovative approaches to delivery of equitable healthcare to vulnerable populations. He is also a celebrated family doctor, and a tested leader of medical associations, non-profit boards, and community organizations."



Dr. Frank Maldonado, CMS executive chair of clinical sciences; Mr. Vince Keenan, previous long time EVP of IAFP, after whom the Servant Leadership award is named; Ms. Theresa Eagleson, director of the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services; Dr. Arvind Goyal; Mrs. Renu Goyal; Ms. Paula McCombie, mayor of South Barrington; and Dr. Tom Huggett, medical director at Lawndale Christian Health Center.

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Holly Hunsberger, PhD, assistant professor of foundational sciences and humanities, Center for Neurodegenerative Disease and Therapeutics, received an NIH Loan Repayment Grant from the National Institute on Aging for her work on sex-based

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health disparities in Alzheimer's disease. Dr. Hunsberger's research focuses on sex differences in Alzheimer's disease, such as her research study titled "The Sex Specific Impact of Anxiety on Alzheimer's Disease Progression."

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Jacqueline Ivey-Brown, MD, FACP, lecturer of medicine, CMS, was appointed chief medical officer for Advocate Aurora Medical Group's North Illinois area.



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 **Lalita Prasad-Reddy, PharmD, MS**, assistant dean of basic science education, vice chair of foundational sciences and humanities, and associate professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology, received the Shining Star Award from the Illinois Council of Health-System Pharmacists (ICHSP) for committed service, dedication, and initiative in the Council and within pharmacy practice. Dr. Prasad-Reddy received her award certificate during the ICHSP's annual meeting awards banquet, held September 23 in Oakbrook Terrace, IL.

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Amanda Simanek, PhD, MPH, associate professor and director of the Michael Reese Foundation Center for Health Equity Research, was among a group of women who received the Ida B. Wells Public Engagement Award from the Interdisciplinary Association of Population Health Sciences at its annual meeting on October 4th. This award recognizes outstanding accomplishments

by an individual, organization, or partnership for the successful translation of population health scientific research into service of the public good.

The award was given to Those Nerdly Girls (thosenerdygirls.org), a social media-based science communication effort of which Dr. Simanek is a co-founder. The group, an interdisciplinary all-woman team of researchers and clinicians, provided information to the public about emerging COVID-19 science starting in March 2020, and continues to supply practical and factual health information today.



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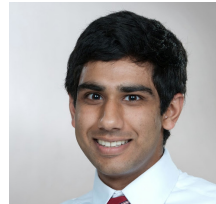
Beth Stutzmann, PhD, professor and discipline chair of neuroscience and director of the Center for Neurodegenerative Disease and Therapeutics, and **Judy Potashkin, PhD**, professor and discipline chair of cellular and molecular pharmacology, were awarded a two-year, \$422,645 multi-PI National Institutes of Health R21 grant titled "Utilizing Gene-Level Biomarkers of AD to Identify Pathophysiological Mechanisms in Human Neurons."

Presentations & Publications

Michael Allswede, DO, FNAP, assistant dean of clinical education and associate professor of emergency medicine, co-authored an article titled "The Criminalisation of Women's Healthcare in the Post-Dobbs

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Era: An Analysis of the Anti-Abortion Trigger Law Statutes,” published in the *European Journal of Contraception & Reproductive Health Care*. Dr. Allswede has been invited to present this work, under the title “The Differing Standards of Reproductive Healthcare in the Post-Dobbs Era: An Analysis of Abortion Bans and the Medical Emergency Clause,” at the Institute for Bioethics & Health Humanities’ Reproductive Ethics Conference, which will be held in January 2024 in Galveston, Texas.



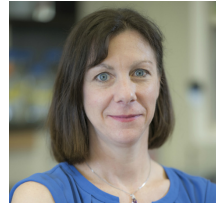
Dr. Ronil Patel



Emily Reisenbigler



Jonathon Yousey



Dr. Beth Stutzmann

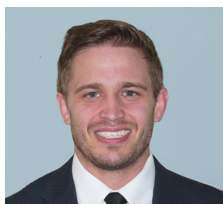


Dr. Robert Marr



Dr. Daniel Peterson

Several CMS alumni, faculty, students, and research staff were co-authors on the article “Engineered Neurogenesis in Naïve Adult Rat Cortex by Ngn2-mediated Neuronal Reprogramming of Resident Oligodendrocyte Progenitor Cells,” published in *Frontiers in Neuroscience*. CMS-affiliated co-authors include: **Stanley F. Bazarek**, MD ’17, PhD ’15; **Patrick King**, CMS ’24; **Amol R. Mehta**, MS ’14, MD ’18; **Ronil Patel**, MD ’18; **Emily Reisenbigler**, senior research specialist; **Jonathon Yousey**, research technician; **Elis A. Miller**, volunteer, Center for Neurodegenerative Disease and Therapeutics; **Beth Stutzmann**, PhD, professor and discipline chair of neuroscience and director of the Center for Neurodegenerative Disease and Therapeutics; **Robert Marr**, PhD, associate professor of neuroscience and assistant dean for research, CMS; and **Daniel Peterson**, PhD, professor of neuroscience and director of the Center for Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine.



Dr. Stanley Bazarek



Patrick King



Dr. Amol Mehta



Jeffrey W. Bulger, PhD, HEC-C, director for bioethics and humanities, gave a presentation hosted by the university’s Master Teacher Guild titled “Questioning: Elevating Faculty-Student Engagement in Large Lectures.”

Dr. Bulger led an interactive discussion about the power of using questions in large-scale teaching to foster a more engaged and reflective learning environment, while deepening student understanding of the subject being taught.

Yvette Castañeda, PhD, MPH, MBA, assistant professor of foundational sciences and humanities and community engagement core lead for the Michael Reese Foundation Center for Health Equity Research, was first author on an article titled “Developing and Implementing Racial Health Equity Plans in Four Large US Cities: A Qualitative Study,” published in the *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*. **Eric Mettetal**, CMS ’24, and **Maureen Benjamins**, PhD, assistant professor of medicine

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at CMS and senior research fellow at the Sinai Urban Health Institute, were co-authors on the publication.



Dr. Yvette
Castañeda



Eric Mettetal



Dr. Maureen
Benjamins

Eugene Dimitrov, MD, PhD, assistant professor of physiology and biophysics, Center for Neurobiology of Stress Resilience and Psychiatric Disorders, presented an invited talk titled “Effects of NPY Signaling in the Medial Prefrontal Cortex on Inflammatory Pain-Like Behavior in Mice” at the 13th International NPY-PYY-PP Research Conference held in Pittsburgh.



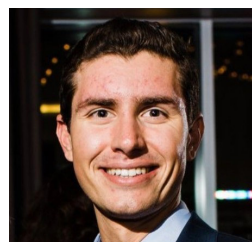
Mirek Dundr, PhD, associate professor of cell biology and anatomy, Center for Cancer Cell Biology, Immunology, and Infection, was invited by the editor of *Nature Cell Biology* to write the “News & Views” article on a manuscript he had reviewed for the journal.

Dr. Dundr wrote the article, titled “Keeping Membraneless Organelles Apart,” with his collaborator Dr. Jeremy Schmit, from Kansas University. Dr. Dundr and Dr. Schmit previously received an R01 grant together from the National Institutes of Health for their research on membraneless organelles.

Lise Eliot, PhD, professor of neuroscience, Stanson Toshok Center for Brain Function and Repair, was lead author on the TechSights article “Why and How to Account for Sex and Gender in Brain and Behavioral Research,” published in the *Journal of Neuroscience*. In this publication, Dr. Eliot and her colleagues outline rationales for considering the influence of sex and gender across taxa, provide technical guidance for strengthening the rigor and reproducibility of such analyses, and recommend approaches for interpreting and communicating sex- and gender-related findings about the brain.



Shannon Gu



Alexander Ellyin



Dr. Maureen
Benjamins

Shannon Gu and **Alexander Ellyin**, both CMS '25, worked with **Maureen Benjamins**, PhD, assistant professor of medicine, and a colleague from the Sinai Urban Health Institute on a study titled “A Review of Community Health Worker Integration in Health Departments,” published in the *Journal of Community Health*. The study explored state-level progress in establishing community health worker (CHW) training and certification policies, and the integration of CHWs in health department workforces. With health departments at all levels becoming increasingly involved in the CHW workforce directly or through partnerships, and most states exploring or establishing CHW certification

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processes, the paper highlights the importance of further investment of CHWs in the public health workforce.



Dr. Holly Hunsberger

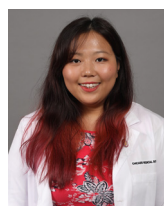
Holly Hunsberger, PhD, assistant professor of foundational sciences and humanities, Center for Neurodegenerative Disease and Therapeutics, along with **Kameron Kaplan**, SGPS '26, a doctoral student and research assistant in Dr. Hunsberger's lab, published a review

article titled "Benzodiazepine-Induced Anterograde Amnesia: Detrimental Side Effect to Novel Study Tool" in *Frontiers in Pharmacology*.

CMS students and faculty gave several presentations at a conference titled "Challenging Norms: Uplifting Anti-Racist Work to Transform the Landscape of Medical Education," held virtually October 13-14 by the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

- **Nahae Kim**, MD '23; **George Duncan**, CMS '24; and **Melissa Chen**, MD, associate professor of medicine and clinical director of the Interprofessional Community Clinic, gave a featured poster talk titled "Antiracist Public Health Week: An Intentional and Intersectional Student-Led Educational Series."
- **Alexander Ellyin**, CMS '25; **Neha Basti**, CMS '25; **Tommi Tsao**, CMS '26, Dr. Nahae Kim, and Dr. Melissa Chen presented "Anti-Racist Discussion Facilitation Training: A Novel Student-Led Theater-Based Workshop."
- **Caroline Madigan**, CMS '26; **Tommi Tsao**; **Aroosha Aamir**, CMS '26; **Nathaniel Ung**, CMS '26; **Lilian Morache**, CMS '26; **James Ansara**, CMS '26; Dr. Nahae Kim; Alexander Ellyin; and Dr. Melissa Chen

presented "The Role of Student-Led Discussions in Health Equity Health Professions Curriculum: A Unique Approach to Challenging Conversations."



Dr. Nahae Kim



George Duncan



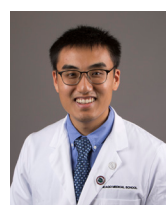
Dr. Melissa Chen



Alexander Ellyin



Neha Basti



Tommi Tsao



Caroline Madigan



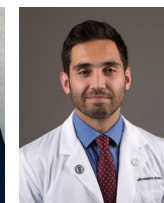
Aroosha Aamir



Nathaniel Ung



Lilian Morache



James Ansara



Judy Potashkin, PhD, professor and discipline chair of cellular and molecular pharmacology, Center for Neurodegenerative Disease and Therapeutics, and colleague Jose Santiago, NeuroHub Analytics, LLC, published

an article titled "Diabetes: A Tipping Point in Neurodegenerative Diseases" in the October 2023 issue of *Trends in Molecular Medicine*. In this comprehensive review, Dr. Potashkin and her co-authors discuss the evidence from molecular, epidemiological, and clinical studies investigating the impact of diabetes on neurodegeneration and highlight shared dysregulated

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pathways between these complex comorbidities. The article also covers promising antidiabetic drugs, molecular diagnostics currently in clinical trials, and outstanding questions and challenges for future studies.



Lalita Prasad-Reddy, PharmD, MS, assistant dean of basic science education, vice chair of foundational sciences and humanities, and associate professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology, served as editor of the *American College*

of *Clinical Pharmacy Ambulatory Care Pharmacist Survival Guide*, 4th Edition. She was also the closing session speaker at the Illinois Council of Health-System Pharmacists (ICHSP) annual meeting, presenting on the topic “The Power of Language: Inclusive Communication within the Pharmacy Profession.”

Hector Rasgado-Flores, PhD, professor of physiology and biophysics, presented on the topic “Assembling a Successful Research Team and Lab for UiM Faculty” at the Mid-Career Minority Faculty Leadership Development Seminar, held by the AAMC in San Juan, Puerto Rico. He also gave a presentation titled “How to Become a Scientist” to high school students from Guadalajara High Schools, Mexico.



Dr. Rasgado-Flores also gave a presentation on October 13 in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month. In his presentation, titled “The Role of Medical Education Offices in Preparing the Physician Workforce to Care

for the LHS+ Population,” Dr. Rasgado-Flores discussed best practices for treating LHS+ (Latino/a, Hispanic, or of Spanish Origin+) patients with a culturally sensitive approach. The event was sponsored by the CMS Office of Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion and the Latino Medical Student Association.

Additionally, Dr. Rasgado-Flores, who is an accomplished pianist, received a commission from the Brushwood Center in Riverwoods, IL, to compose a trio for horn, piano, and violin about the health benefits of walking in nature.



Lawrence Robbins, MD, associate professor of neurology, gave a virtual medical grand rounds presentation on the topic “Combined Neurologic and Psychiatric Disease” on September 27. Dr. Robbins discussed cases

where complex neurological and psychiatric conditions are found in the same patient.

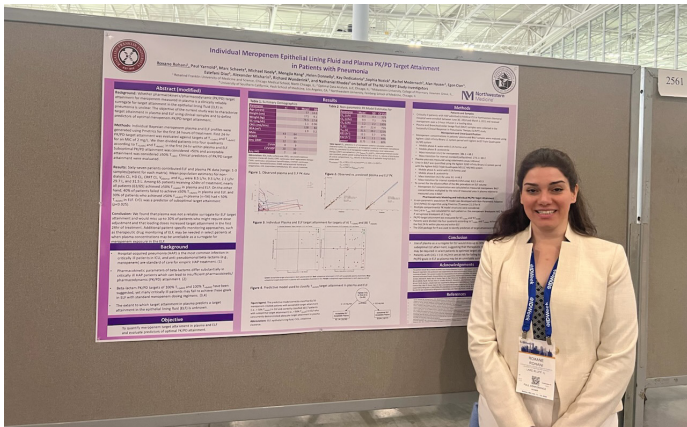
Cole Roblee, CMS '25, was first author on an article titled “Gender Affirmative Surgery: A Collaborative Approach between the Surgeon and Mental Health Professional,” published in the journal *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery*.



Roxane Rohani, PharmD, MSc, BCACP, assistant professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology, co-authored an

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article titled “Flucloxacillin Worsens While Imipenem-Cilastatin Protects Against Vancomycin-Induced Kidney Injury in a Translational Rat Model,” published in the *British Journal of Pharmacology*. Dr. Rohani also presented a poster titled “Individual Meropenem Epithelial Lining Fluid and Plasma PK/PD Target Attainment in Patients with Pneumonia” at the IDWeek conference, held October 11-15 in Boston.



Dr. Roxane Rohani with her poster at the conference.

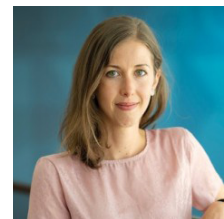
The following faculty and students from the Center for Neurobiology of Stress Resilience and Psychiatric Disorders gave presentations at the Gordon Conference on Amygdala Function in Emotion, Cognition and Disease held in Barcelona, Spain:

- **Amiel Rosenkranz**, PhD, professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology and director of the Brain Science Institute, delivered an invited talk titled “Intersection of Stress and Social Function in the Amygdala.”
- **Nicole Ferrara**, PhD, assistant professor of physiology and biophysics, presented a poster titled “Basomedial Amygdala Maturation and Regulation of Social Interaction.”
- **Joanna Dabrowska**, PhD, PharmD, associate professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology, along with co-authors **Valentina Olivera-Pasilio**,

PhD '23, postdoctoral research associate; **Walter Francesconi**, research associate; **Fulvia Berton**, research specialist; **Susan H. Olson**, lab manager; Lorena Monroy, Lake Forest summer research intern; and Rachel Chudoba, SGPS '24, presented a poster on their work titled “Oxytocin Receptor-Expressing Neurons of the Bed Nucleus of the Stria Terminalis (BNST) are Excited by Both Vasopressin and Oxytocin, and Reduce Fear Generalization in the Fear-Potentiated Startle.”



Dr. Amiel Rosenkranz



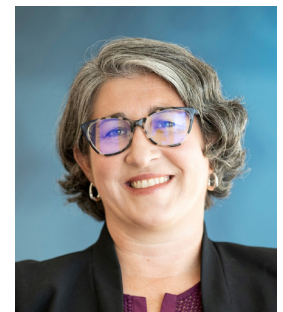
Dr. Nicole Ferrara



Dr. Joanna Dabrowska

Amanda Simanek, PhD, MPH, associate professor and director of the Michael Reese Foundation Center for Health Equity Research, co-authored two publications:

- “What Were the Information Voids?: A Qualitative Analysis of Questions Asked by *Dear Pandemic* Readers between August 2020-August 2021” was published in a special issue of the *Journal of Health Communication* titled “Leaving No One Behind: Opportunities for Improving Future Pandemic Related Communication.”
- “Vaccination against Pneumonia May Provide Genotype-Specific Protection against Alzheimer’s Disease” was published in the *Journal of Alzheimer’s Disease*.



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Dr. Simanek was also interviewed for a piece for AAMC News on the new updated COVID-19 booster recommendations, titled “The New COVID Boosters: What Doctors and Patients Need to Know.” This article included a link to the social media-based science communication effort Those Nerdy Girls, where Dr. Simanek is a contributing writer and had written on this topic recently.

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Heinz Steiner, PhD, professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology, Stanson Toshok Center for Brain Function and Repair, in collaboration with researchers from the Clinical Research Institute on Addictions at the State

University of New York at Buffalo, published a study titled “Chronic Oral Methylphenidate Plus Fluoxetine Treatment in Adolescent Rats Increases Cocaine Self-Administration” in *Addiction Neuroscience*.

Dr. Steiner also co-authored the articles “Fluoxetine Potentiates Methylphenidate-Induced Behavioral Responses: Enhanced Locomotion or Stereotypies and Facilitated Acquisition of Cocaine Self-Administration,” published in *Addiction Neuroscience*, and “Vilazodone, a Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor with Diminished Impact on Methylphenidate-Induced Gene Regulation in the Striatum: Role of 5-HT1A Receptor,” published in *Molecular Neurobiology*. These studies investigated the effects of combination treatment with methylphenidate (Ritalin) plus SSRI antidepressants on addiction-related gene regulation in the brain and subsequent cocaine self-administration in rats (animal model for addiction).

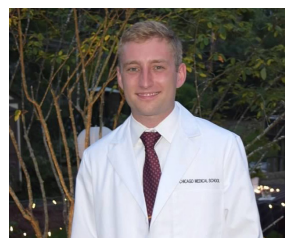
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Janice Urban, PhD, professor of physiology and biophysics and director of the Center for Neurobiology of Stress Resilience and Psychiatric Disorders, chaired the “Substance Abuse, Stress and the Amygdala” session and presented a seminar titled “NPY and the Amygdala: Neural Circuits for Resilience” at the 13th International NPY-PYY-PP Research Conference held in Pittsburgh.

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Alexander Van den Avont, CMS '25, and **Neelam Sharma-Walia**, PhD, associate professor of microbiology and immunology, co-authored an article titled “Anti-Nucleolin Aptamer AS1411: An Advancing Therapeutic,” published in the Molecular Diagnostics and Therapeutics section of *Frontiers in Molecular Biosciences*.



Alexander Van den Avont



Dr. Neelam Sharma-Walia

.....



Justin Whalley, PhD, assistant professor of foundational sciences and humanities, Center for Cancer Cell Biology, Immunology, and Infection, co-authored a paper recently published in *Genome Medicine* titled “SARS-CoV-2 Infection Induces a Long-Lived Pro-Inflammatory Transcriptional Profile.”

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This study highlights an unexpected observation: the gene expression profiles of long-term COVID-19 patients nearly inversely mirror those of type-1 diabetes patients receiving IL-2 anti-inflammatory treatment. This discovery contributes valuable insights into the lesser-explored, long-term effects of COVID-19 infection in patients.

Dr. Whalley also collaborated on another paper published in *BMC Genomics*, titled “Mapping the Epigenomic Landscape of Human Monocytes Following Innate Immune Activation Reveals Context-Specific Mechanisms Driving Endotoxin Tolerance.” This work delves into the epigenetic shifts our innate immune system undergoes when repeatedly exposed to bacterial endotoxins.

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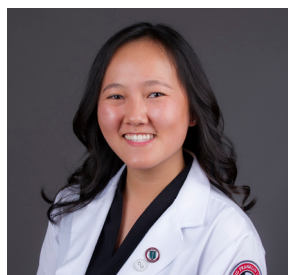
Jacob Wolf and **Aayush Kaul**, both CMS '26, published a literature review on “Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning in Spine Surgery” in *Contemporary Spine Surgery*.



Jacob Wolf



Aayush Kaul



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Angela Yu, CMS '25, contributed to a chapter of the book *Pediatric Psychogastroenterology: A Handbook for Mental Health Professionals* (Routledge, 2023) titled “Chronic Illness

Adjustment and Transition.” This chapter describes psychosocial adjustment considerations that are unique to youth with chronic GI conditions, describes self-management and transition to adult care challenges, and provides evidence-based recommendations to enhance functioning within illness adjustment, treatment adherence, and transition readiness.

Events and Other News

Lise Eliot, PhD, professor of neuroscience, Stanson Toshok Center for Brain Function and Repair, was interviewed on campus by Canadian film production company Kensington Communications for a documentary titled *Fluid* that addresses the



science of gender and sex fluidity. The program will air on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation’s “The Nature of Things” and then on public broadcasters around the world. Dr. Eliot was one of six international scientists interviewed for this documentary.



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Fourth-year CMS students in the **Alpha Omega Alpha** (AOA) Honor Medical Society are hosting a medical education series for the other three CMS classes, with workshops on a variety of topics

being offered throughout the rest of the academic year. In this series, the AOA has already covered topics such as “All Things Research,” “How to Study for M1/M2 Year,” and “CV Assistance.” Future workshops that will be offered in upcoming months include:

- “Aways, VSLO, Audition Rotations, Oh My!” (Dec. 2023)

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- “Step 1 Studying” (Jan. 2024)
- “Step 2 Studying” (Jan. 2024)
- “Finding Mentors and Getting Letters of Recommendation” (Feb. 2024)
- “Surviving ERAS” (March 2024)
- “What Is AOA and Gold Humanism?” (April 2024)
- “Transition to Clinical Rotations” (May 2024)

Student representatives from CMS and the university's Pre-Matriculation Program (PMP) attended the **Latino Medical Student Association's national regional conference**, held September 14-17 in Atlanta, GA.



Pictured from left to right: Iris Siguenza, current PMP student; Ruth Londono, CMS '26; Aldo Perez, CMS '26; Angelica Maria Arzuaga, CMS '26; Juan Medina-Echeverria, CMS '25; Daniela Maciel, CMS '27; Veronica Palma, CMS '27; and Daniel Sanchez, CMS '25.

CMS faculty, staff, and students attended the AAMC's Learn Serve Lead 2023: The AAMC Annual Meeting, held Nov. 3-7 in Seattle, WA. Several CMS administrators gave presentations, including **Archana Chatterjee**, MD, PhD, dean of CMS and vice president for medical affairs for RFU. Dr. Chatterjee's presentation was titled "Succession Planning and Stable Transitions in the C-Suite." She was

also co-author on a poster titled "Median Length of Tenure of U.S. Medical School Deans, July 1959 – June 2019."

Lalita Prasad-Reddy, PharmD, MS, assistant dean of basic science education, vice chair of foundational sciences and humanities, and **Jessica Lewis**, PhD, assistant dean for student affairs, presented a poster titled "The Medical Student: A Consumer or Product of Medical Education" at the Medical Education Learning Specialists Conference (a pre-conference to Learn Serve Lead). They also gave a table top presentation titled "A Framework for Professional Identity Formation in Underrepresented in Medicine Students."

Antwione Haywood, PhD, Chicago Medical School's new associate dean for student affairs, served a moderator of a panel titled "Deeply Personal: Unlikely Paths to Science and Medicine and the Importance of Hope and Mentorship." ■



Dr. Antwione Haywood



Michael Daneshvar, MD '15, took a selfie with fourth-year CMS student Sherry Lu in the Urology OR at the UC Irvine Medical Center. Dr. Daneshvar serves as assistant professor of clinical urology at the University of California, Irvine School of Medicine, where he specializes in urologic oncology.

We want to hear from you!

**To submit information or news for upcoming issues, contact
Candice Kosanke at candice.kosanke@rosalindfranklin.edu.**



**ROSA LIND FRANKLIN
UNIVERSITY**
of MEDICINE AND SCIENCE

CHICAGO MEDICAL SCHOOL