



CMS NEWS

The Chicago Medical School Newsletter

SPRING 2025 | ISSUE 36

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 2** Dean's Message
- 4** Match Day
- 8** CMS Strength in Adversity Award
- 9** National Case Competition
- 10** CMS Faculty Retreat
- 11** RFU Faculty Awards
- 12** Student Voices: Henry Morrison, CMS '28
- 13** ASRC
- 14** Michael Reese Scholars
- 16** Dean Chatterjee Receives ELAM Impact Award
- 17** M3 Clinical Poster Day
- 18** Minority Health Month
- 20** St. Baldrick's Fundraiser
- 22** Student Dean Corner
- 21** GME News
- 23** Alumni News
- 27** School & Department News

Cover Image: The CMS Class of 2025 celebrated Match Day on March 21.

Contact Information:
Office of the Dean
Chicago Medical School
Rosalind Franklin University
3333 Green Bay Road
North Chicago, IL 60064
www.rosalindfranklin.edu/cms

Dean's Message

Greetings from the Dean's Office!



It's been a busy and exciting time on campus as the academic year draws to a close. Since I last wrote to you, the CMS Class of 2025 celebrated their residency matches, and they are now preparing to graduate and begin the next stage of their careers. It's an exhilarating time for them, and a joyful occasion for the entire CMS community.

We observed Match Day on March 21, celebrating as our seniors discovered where they will be completing their residencies. This was the culmination of many years of hard work, and the CMS community shared in their joy and excitement as they celebrated with family, friends, and mentors. Please join me in congratulating the Class of 2025 for achieving a 97% match rate! I cannot wait to see what this latest crop of physicians will accomplish as they begin their residencies and progress in their careers, fulfilling their calling to serve with compassion and dedication.

The Class of 2025 will experience another rite of passage this month as the University observes its 111th Commencement ceremony. On May 30, we'll gather at the Credit Union 1 Arena in downtown Chicago to celebrate as 206 graduating students receive their medical degrees. In the week leading up to Commencement, we'll have ample opportunities to celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of our graduating class, including our Alpha Omega Alpha inductees, Gold Humanism Honor Society inductees, and others at the second annual CMS Student Awards Ceremony on May 28.

As we prepare to say goodbye to the Class of 2025, we are already looking forward to welcoming the future CMS Class of 2029 to campus. We recently had the pleasure of hosting 85 potential members of our new class during our Admitted Students Visit Weekend on April 11-12. Students and their guests toured campus, learned about academic life at CMS, and engaged with faculty, current students, and alumni. Thank you to the six CMS alumni who participated in this event: Alan Blank, MD Class of '11; Jamie Keen, MD Class of '17; Calvin Clint, MD Class of '18; Leila Patterson, MD Class of '20; Vanessa Rose, MD Class of '20; and Sam Bunting, MD Class of '21.

Another recent event was our annual State of the Medical School address, held on April 15. During the address, we celebrated the past year and planned for the future as CMS leaders highlighted the accomplishments of their departments and offices and identified goals for the coming year. One of the accomplishments that I discussed during this event was the expansion of our clinical affiliate sites, something that we continuously work on to bring the best and most educational clinical opportunities to our students. I would especially like to mention two of our more recent affiliates: City of Hope and Palmdale

Regional Medical Center. We have an agreement with City of Hope's cancer centers in Zion, IL and Duarte, CA, and we'll soon be hosting the chief clinical officer from Zion on campus to follow up on placing our students there. Palmdale is located in Los Angeles county, and our first students will rotate there starting this fall. It is my hope that these new sites will be beneficial for our students, particularly the more than 20% of them who have come to us from California.

The State of the Medical School address coincided with a visit from Dr. Brownsyne Tucker Edmonds, Vice President and Chief Health Equity Officer for Indiana University Health and the Associate Dean for Health Equity Research for Indiana University School of Medicine. Dr. Tucker Edmonds visited our campus as part of the AAMC Council of Deans (COD) Fellowship Program, which is designed to enhance the development of future leaders in academic medicine. This is the fourth year in a row that CMS has been chosen to host a COD fellow, and it is an honor and privilege to serve as a mentor in this program.

The work we do at CMS would not be possible without our exceptional faculty, including our teaching, research, and clinical faculty members. I especially want to recognize the CMS faculty members who were honored for their research, teaching, and service at the University Faculty Awards Ceremony earlier this month. Please join me in congratulating Erin Howe, PhD, PharmD, who received the Board of Trustees Research Award; Anne Lee, MD Class of '08, PhD Class of '07, who received the Rosalind Franklin Award for Excellence in Teaching; and Monique Jones, MD, who received the Deans' Award for Diversity and Inclusion. I thank them — and our entire faculty body — for all they do to teach and train our students and improve healthcare through research.

After many years of distinguished service, we're preparing to say goodbye to three faculty members who are retiring or stepping down from their roles. Michael Zdon, MD, Senior Associate Dean for GME and CME and professor and discipline chair of surgery, is retiring at the end of the academic year after 37 years at CMS. Donghee Kim, PhD, professor and discipline chair of physiology and biophysics, is retiring after 36 years of service. Last but not least, Lucy Hammerberg, MD Class of '82, will step down from her role as Assistant Dean of Career and Specialty Advising to pursue her goal of helping high school and college students learn the

skills they need to be successful medical students. Dr. Hammerberg will keep her faculty position at CMS. We wish all three of them the very best in the next stage of their lives.

When I next write to you, I'll have more news to share about Commencement, the CMS Student Awards Ceremony, and our incoming Class of 2029. Until then, I wish all of you a joyful summer, good health, and much happiness.

Sincerely,



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



CMS leadership, led by Dean Archana Chatterjee, gave the State of the Medical School address in April. Pictured from left to right: Sarah Schuck, Director of the Dean's Office; Carissa Van Ausdall, MPA, Assistant Dean of Business Operations; Antwione Haywood, PhD, Associate Dean for Student Affairs; Melissa Chen, MD, Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD, Dean of Chicago Medical School; Michael Zdon, MD, Senior Associate Dean for GME and CME; David Everly, PhD, Executive Chair of Foundational Sciences and Humanities; Nutan Vaidya, MD, Vice Dean for Faculty Affairs and Equity; Jeanette Morrison, MD, Executive Vice Dean for CMS, Vice Dean for Medical Education; Frank Maldonado, MD, Executive Chair of Clinical Sciences; Michael Ellison, EdD, Associate Dean for Admissions; and Joseph Reynolds, PhD, Interim Vice Dean for Research.



Patryk Labedz, Mohummed Malik, and Adithya Chandrasekaran

MATCH DAY!

Celebrating the Class of 2025 as they placed into residency programs

On March 21, Chicago Medical School celebrated Match Day with the Class of 2025. Family, friends, mentors, and faculty gathered to share in the students' festivities as each student opened the envelope that would reveal where they were going for the next stage of their training.

"I want to recognize and celebrate each of you. Your path has been marked by challenges and triumphs, long nights of study, countless patient encounters, and unwavering commitment to the field of medicine. You have shown remarkable perseverance, and today you take the next step in your careers as physicians," **Archana Chatterjee**, MD, PhD, Dean of CMS, told the Class of 2025. "No matter where the next phase of your training takes you, whether across the country or right here in our own community, you will carry with you the knowledge, skills, and values instilled during your time here."

Match Day represents the culmination of years of hard work and dedication in undergraduate courses, medical school classrooms, and clinical rotations. While students looked back on all the effort that had brought them to the moment of opening their envelopes, they were also looking forward to the next stage of their lives and everything it would bring. "This is more than just a match. It's a transformation," said **Antwione Haywood**, PhD, associate dean for student affairs. "Match Day is not just about where you're going; it's about who you're becoming."

Juan Medina-Echeverria, class president, and **Angela Yu**, class vice president, addressed their classmates in the minutes leading up to 11 A.M. CDT, the synchronized moment when medical students across the country open their envelopes from the National Resident Matching

Program (NRMP). "You've worked hard to be here. You earned it," Juan told his classmates. "You will go on to change lives, advocate for patients, and make a difference in ways you can't imagine yet."

Both class leaders made it clear that the day was about more than just celebrating whatever was written inside each student's envelope: it was also about celebrating all the hard work that had brought them through medical school, and the hard work and sacrifice even before that had led to their arrival at CMS.

"This isn't just about where we match," said Angela, who was awarded the CMS Student Leadership Award during the Match Day celebration. "It's about the years of sacrifice, the long nights in Boxer Library, the endless energy drinks, the missed birthdays, the moments of self-doubt as we pushed through. It's about every patient we've cared for, every lesson we've learned, and every time we've shown up for each other — and we should all be really proud of ourselves."

Chicago Medical School achieved a 97% match rate. Top specialties chosen by the Class of 2025 included internal medicine, emergency medicine, family medicine, anesthesiology, and psychiatry. After graduating on May 30, they will disperse across 30 states, heading to residencies in locations including the University of Chicago Medical Center, Northwestern University/McGaw Medical Center, Cook County Health and Hospital System, Brown University/Rhode Island Hospital, Stanford Health Care, Columbia University Medical Center, Mayo Clinic School of Graduate Medical Education, Boston University Medical Center, UCLA Medical Center, Kaiser Permanente-Los Angeles, Tulane University, and the University of Hawaii.

"Let's celebrate this moment together, because we did it!" Angela told her classmates in the moments before the envelopes were opened, as she and Juan led their classmates and their families in a toast to the Class of 2025. "We're going to be doctors, and the best is yet to come." ■



Rose Wang, Ruxandra Griza, Derek Lee, and Jocelyn To.



Kyrsten Holderby and Sabahat Raees.



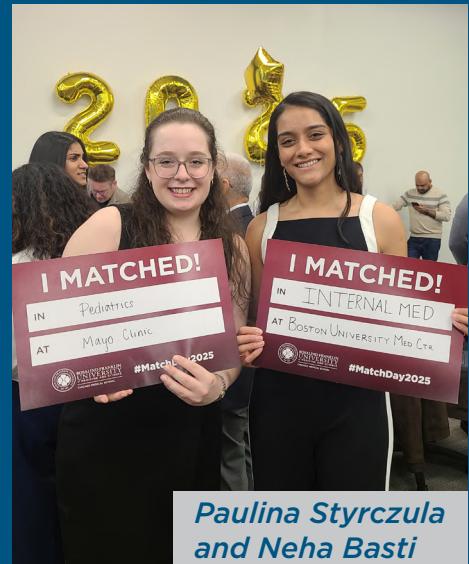
Agnes Park celebrated her early match into ophthalmology at Tufts/New England Eye Center in Boston.



Andrew Zwijack



Kate Fahey



Paulina Styrczula and Neha Basti



Warren Nakazawa, Alvi Renzyl Cortes, Lance Madanguit, and Med Jimenez



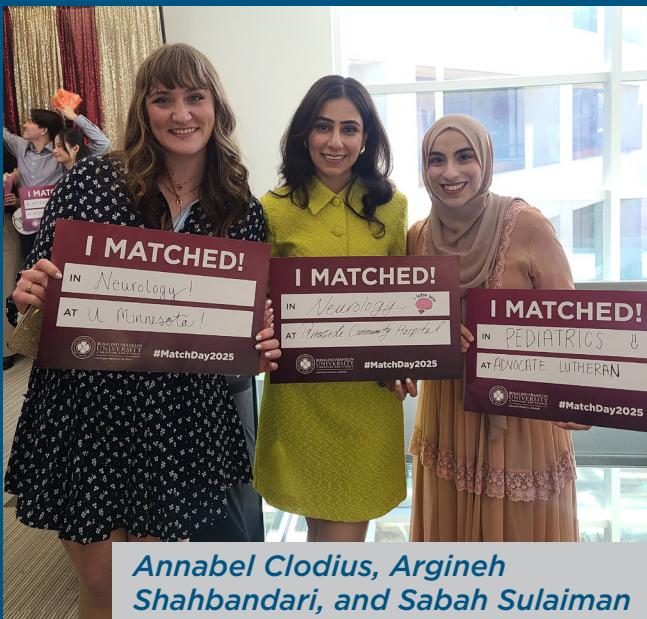
Rebecca Li, celebrating her match with her father, CMS alumnus Leo Li, MD '91.



Jonathan Daniels, MD, Lipshutz learning community mentor for the Class of 2025, preparing to distribute envelopes.



CMS Class Council Vice President Angela Yu and President Juan Medina-Echeverria.



Annabel Clodius, Argineh Shahbandari, and Sabah Sulaiman



Garrett Mamikunian and Ola Kierzkowska, who couples-matched into programs in Texas.



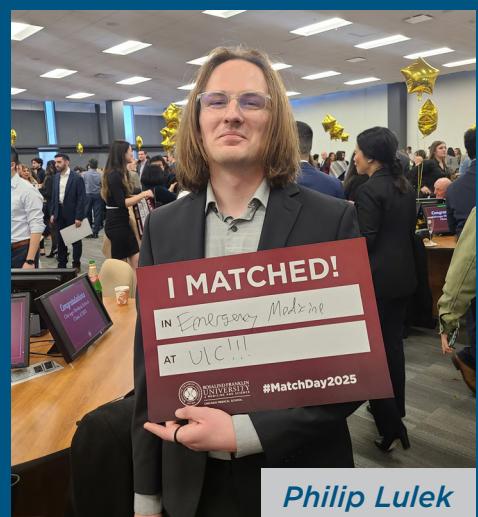
Andrew Trandai, who designed the new match signs



Juan Medina-Echeverria, Dr. Melissa Chen, Dr. Hector Rasgado-Flores, Reema Rashied, Favour Oladipupo, and Faustina Adams



Brian Lilienstein



CMS Students Honored for Their Resilience

Four CMS students received the inaugural CMS Strength in Adversity Award in recognition of their exceptional perseverance and resilience.

The CMS Office of Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion team is proud to announce the recipients of the **CMS Strength in Adversity Award**, a special honor created to recognize students who have demonstrated exceptional perseverance and resilience in the face of significant challenges.

This year's award has been presented to **Murad Alostaz, Qais Dihan, Sai Krupa Rajaramsiva**, all CMS '25; and **Lloyd Sealey**, CMS '26, whose inspiring journeys are a testament to the power of determination, courage, and unwavering commitment to education. Despite facing considerable personal hardship, these students have remained committed to their professional aspirations, and made meaningful contributions to their peers and community.

"The Strength in Adversity Award celebrates students who embody true resilience — those who rise above challenges and continue to move forward with purpose and strength," said **Melissa Chen**, MD, assistant dean of diversity, equity, and inclusion. "We are honored to recognize these students for their incredible perseverance and impact."

In addition to this prestigious recognition, the award includes a modest financial gift to support the recipient's continued academic and professional journey.

The Strength in Adversity Award reflects our school's belief in the importance of recognizing not only achievement, but also the strength it takes to succeed in the face of adversity. All applicants shared powerful stories of perseverance, and we are humbled by their courage and grit.

For more information about the Strength in Adversity Award or to learn how to support this initiative, please contact **CMSDiversity@rosalindfranklin.edu**. ■



Murad Alostaz



Qais Dihan



Sai Krupa Rajaramsiva



Lloyd Sealey

National Case Competition Winners

An RFU team composed of students from CMS, COP, and CON competed and won an award at a national case competition.

An interprofessional team of RFU students from Chicago Medical School, the College of Pharmacy, and College of Nursing won the Health Equity Innovation Award for their presentation “Breathe Easy: Air Quality Resilience Plan” at the Clarion National Case Competition, held April 11-12 at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

Oluwatobi Akinsanya, COP '26; Dyiamond Caples, COP '26; **Michael George**, CMS '25; and Kathy Yun, CON '26, analyzed two cases through multiple lenses, including environmental health, social determinants of health, and health systems science, and developed proposed solutions. Guiding the students through their months-long collaborative analysis were DeWitt C. Baldwin Institute for Interprofessional Education faculty members

Robin Dyer, MD, OTR, CHSE, CMS clinical instructor of medicine, interprofessional education, and clinical simulation, and Abbie Lyden, PharmD, COP associate professor of pharmacy practice.

The student team presented their proposed solutions before a panel of judges as part of the competition that involved teams from twelve other universities.

We're proud of these students for gaining this recognition — a testament to their interprofessionalism, dedication, and commitment to excellence, exemplifying the mission and vision of our university. The student team's win came as RFU was observing National Interprofessional Healthcare Month. ■



CMS Faculty Retreat

Chicago Medical School faculty and administration gathered for a faculty retreat on April 2. Sixty-seven attendees participated in the retreat on the topic “Creating an Environment of Fulfillment, Inclusion, and Flexibility.” ■



RFU Faculty Awards



The RFU community celebrated our wonderful faculty in a ceremony held on May 8, bestowing awards on faculty members in recognition of their teaching, research, and service. Congratulations to the three CMS faculty who were honored for their dedication to the school, its mission, and its students.

Erin Howe, PhD, assistant professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, received the Board of Trustees Research Award, presented to a junior faculty member who has shown promise in research activities, in published work, and grantsmanship.

Anne Lee, MD '08, PhD '07, assistant professor and co-course director of the Clinical Anatomy course, received the Rosalind Franklin Award for Excellence in Teaching, presented to a faculty member to recognize expertise in fostering student learning.

Monique Jones, MD '93, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology, received the Deans' Award for Diversity

and Inclusion, awarded in recognition of outstanding contributions to developing a culture of diversity and inclusion at the university.

We're thankful for all our faculty for everything they do to teach, train, and mentor our students, and for their contributions to research that improves patient care. ■

Above, from left to right:

Dr. Erin Howe received the Board of Trustees Research Award, presented by Dr. Carl Correll and Dr. Marc Glucksman.

Dr. Anne Lee, recipient of the Rosalind Franklin Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Dr. Monique Jones, recipient of the Deans' Award for Diversity and Inclusion.



STUDENT VOICES: A Focus on Climate Change

*Submitted by Henry Morrison,
CMS Class of 2028*

Climate change is really motivating for me because the patients who will be impacted the most are statistically those who have contributed the least towards climate change. This includes impoverished individuals, communities and nations.

Also, attacking the climate crisis will give future generations, like our children, a better world to live in. Since future generations have contributed nothing to the climate crisis, it is aggravating that they will have to deal with its consequences. We will have the privilege of treating these individuals as they grow up. It will be sad to see people suffering decades from now due to something we had an opportunity to handle right now in 2025.

There is a financial component, too. Transitioning to sustainable energy is better economically in the long run, creates more jobs, and doesn't destroy natural areas. Furthermore, we know from IIH [the Infection-Immunology-Hematology block] how dangerous tropical diseases can be. Without colder climates, there will be more diseases and habitat loss, ultimately contributing to

dangerous disease outbreaks. Again, far and away, it will be impoverished patients who will be at risk for these diseases. As physicians, it is our duty to stand against such consequences when we see them approaching.

We should try to be more fluent in climate and environmental literature in order to prevent global warming from getting worse. This will allow us to communicate with patients and peers regarding the right steps forward. Having discussions is one of the most important aspects of treating global warming because it raises awareness. Also, being involved in community projects and keeping up with local elections will be important to changing climate problems at the government level.

Henry is a first-year student at Chicago Medical School who is passionate about climate awareness because it will impact his future patients. Henry spent a lot of time outdoors growing up, which is something he hopes future generations can also experience. ■

All School Research Consortium

The university held its 20th annual All School Research Consortium (ASRC) on March 19, showcasing research from RFU students, postdoctoral fellows, residents, and undergraduate research interns. The program featured research talks, poster presentations, and a keynote address on "Targeting CNS Neuroinflammation in Acute Brain Injury: A Novel Approach to Promote Recovery," delivered by **Saef Izzy**, MD, FNCS, FAAN, associate professor of neurology, Harvard Medical School, and associate neurologist, Brigham and Women's Hospital. The day concluded with the opening of the annual "Art from the Benchtop" exhibit, featuring creative works produced during or inspired by research experiences at RFU.

Congratulations to the CMS students and trainees who received awards for their presentations!



Sonya Grewal won the award for Best CMS Scientific Research Talk, presented by CMS Dean Archana Chatterjee.



Iswarya Vimalan Jeya won the award for Best CMS Research Poster.

Sonya Grewal, CMS '28, received the CMS award for Best Scientific Research Talk for her presentation "The Effectiveness of the ART Brace in Treating Scoliosis Across Varying Skeletal Maturity Stages."

Iswarya Vimalan Jeya, CMS '27, received the CMS award for Best Research Poster for her poster titled "Barriers to Integrating Alcohol Use Disorder Care at a High-Volume Liver Transplant Center."

James Estaver, MD, CMS psychiatry resident, received the Postgraduate Researcher award for Best Research Poster for his poster titled "Crisis Control: Improving Psychiatry Resident Confidence in Agitation Management Through Simulation Training." ■



Dr. James Estaver received the Postgraduate Researcher poster award, presented by Dr. Robert Intine.



The "Art from the Benchtop" exhibit featured works by students and biomedical researchers, including the watercolor painting "Across the Table" by CMS student Jenny Lee, Class of 2027, who has been studying the research gap in dermatology for underserved minorities.

Michael Reese Scholars

Presenting the 2025 recipients of the Michael Reese Research and Education Foundation Scholarship

Chicago Medical School welcomed trustees of the Michael Reese Research and Education Foundation to campus on February 27 to thank them for their renewed support of CMS students. The foundation renewed its support of the Michael Reese Research and Education Foundation Scholars Program, extending funding for three additional years. The foundation will support multi-year, half-tuition scholarships for four Chicago Medical School students, doubling the number of future healthcare professionals receiving assistance. We thank the Michael Reese Foundation for their support of our students and their dedication to research, education, and service, and we congratulate the two latest Michael Reese Scholars, both from the Chicago Medical School Class of 2028.

Daniel Gutierrez is a first-generation medical student born and raised in Salinas, California to Mexican immigrant parents, whom he credits with ingraining in him the values of hard work, compassion, and resiliency.

Daniel is a Stanford University graduate with a BS in human biology. While at Stanford, he had the privilege of being part of a medical project in rural Nepal to offer locals free clinical and health education services. After graduation, Daniel decided to give back to his community and worked as an ER scribe and volunteered at a local Federally Qualified Health Center for three years. All of these experiences ignited his passion for medicine, and made him realize that it is imperative to advocate for health equity for every single patient.

At RFU, Daniel found an environment that aligns with his values of service and collaboration. He is currently actively involved in the student-run Interprofessional Community Clinic (ICC), where he participates in both the Pediatrics and Interpreter Panels, helping uninsured patients in the surrounding communities. He also volunteers with Heart of the City and Roberti Community House in Waukegan, which provide services such as free pediatric physical exams and community

Daniel Gutierrez, Class of 2028



“I was drawn to RFU’s interprofessional approach, its emphasis on service-oriented care, and the multitude of opportunities to grow as both a clinician and a leader.”

diabetes education. Daniel has shared that his participation in Chicago Medical School's Mini Medical School is particularly important to him as he is able to inspire and mentor the next generation of physicians from underrepresented backgrounds.

Daniel's other areas of interest include community medicine, health equity, and global health. During his free time, Daniel enjoys exploring new cuisines, playing chess, and running.

Prianka Belancourt is a first-generation, Haitian-American student from South Florida. She is involved with RFU student organizations that align with her values and medical career goals. Prianka currently serves as the vice president of the Ruth Jackson Ortho Society chapter and is the M1 class representative of the CMS Ortho Interest Group. She is the clinic manager of the Pain Panel at the ICC, a tutor for RFU's Pre-Matriculation Program (PMP) students, treasurer of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA), and a volunteer with Chicago Medical School's Mini Medical School.

In her free time, Prianka loves doing yoga to de-stress from school, reading scientific-fiction novels, and going outside for some fresh air. Prianka's "fun fact" is that she

spent her gap year teaching science to middle and high school students.

"I'm eternally grateful to be a recipient of the Michael Reese Foundation Scholarship," Prianka said. "With this funding, I hope to become more immersed in research on rehabilitation and surgically corrective health. Most importantly, this scholarship has inspired me to give back to others in any way I can." ■



From left to right: Last year's Scholars, Angelica Arzuaga and Kelly Harris, both CMS '27; William Chamberlin, MD, Chairman of the Michael Reese Foundation Board of Directors; CMS Dean Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD; and this year's Scholars, Prianka Belancourt and Daniel Gutierrez, both CMS '28.

Prianka Belancourt, Class of 2028



"I'm really passionate about driving change in the medical field especially by addressing health inequities. I am eager to embrace new challenges, expand my clinical knowledge, and contribute to innovative solutions that enhance patient care."



Dean Chatterjee Receives ELAM Community Impact Award

Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD, Dean of Chicago Medical School and Senior Vice President for Medical Affairs, RFU, received the 2025 Laura Lynch ELAM/ELH Community Impact Award in recognition of the significant and positive impact she has made on the Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine® (ELAM)/Executive Leadership in Health Care (ELH) community. Recipients demonstrate professionalism, commitment, and unwavering dedication to fellows, program alumni, and faculty in the ELAM program, inspiring others to use their talents and energy to make a difference in achieving gender equity in academic medicine.

Dr. Chatterjee was selected for this prestigious award for her unwavering dedication to the ELAM/ELH community through mentorship, leadership, and advocacy that consistently uplifts fellows, alumnae, and faculty while advancing the program's mission. As a nationally recognized leader in academic medicine and gender equity, Dr. Chatterjee has created and led impactful DEI initiatives, served as a trusted advisor to numerous rising leaders, and contributed to institutional and national policy shaping the future of women in medicine. She has been dedicated to the mentorship and sponsorship of

faculty and learners throughout her career. Her influence extends through public speaking, scholarly work, and leadership in organizations such as AAMC and CWAMS, making her a powerful force in promoting equity, professional development, and lasting systemic change.

The ELAM program is a year-long part-time fellowship for faculty in schools of medicine, dentistry, public health, and pharmacy. The program seeks to increase and sustain the number and impact of women in senior leadership positions in the health sciences through mentoring, coaching, and networking. Dr. Chatterjee completed the ELAM program in 2008, and she is honored to have been invited to teach in the ELAM curriculum for over a decade.

Dr. Chatterjee received her award on May 1 during the ELAM 30th Anniversary gala in Philadelphia. ■

Above: Dean Chatterjee (right) receives her award from Nancy D. Spector, MD, Executive Director, Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine® (ELAM) and Executive Leadership in Health Care (ELH).

M3 Clinical Poster Day

CMS held its 10th annual M3 Clinical Poster Day on April 24, giving students from the Class of 2026 a platform to present posters on rare or interesting cases they encountered during their clinical rotations. Students presented a total of 32 posters which were judged by faculty.

Thank you to all the students, staff, faculty, and judges who came to support our third-year students, and congratulations to the following students who received awards for their poster presentations:

First Place: **Isabella Niedermair** and **Rahi Patel** — "A Case of Severe Aplastic Anemia in a 55 y/o F with No Past Medical History"



Second Place: **Jessica Liu** — "A Rare Presentation of Disseminated Tuberculosis Mimicking Crohn's Disease in an Immunocompetent Patient"



Tie for Third Place: **Elizabeth Bruce** and **Gloria Essien** — "Management and Outcome of Sacrococcygeal Teratoma: A Case Study"



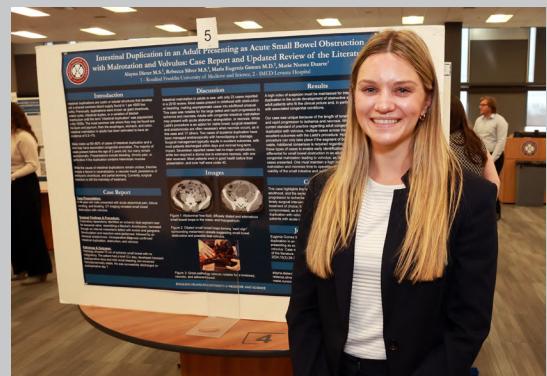
Tie for Third Place: **Maaz Haji** — Pediatric Head and Neck Alveolar Rhabdomyosarcoma with Sinonasal Involvement: A Diagnostic Challenge" ■



Zachary Cherian



Jordyn Greenbaum



Alayna Dieter



Nathaniel Ung



Minority Health Month

Throughout the month of April, RFU observed its third annual Minority Health Month with a series of presentations from students, faculty, and community partners. Each presentation addressed a topic relevant to underserved communities and health care.

On April 4, CMS faculty and alumnus **Elliot Levine**, MD '78, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology, presented "Racial/Ethnic Health Outcome Disparity in Maternal Mortality: Repairing the Problem." The statistics on maternal mortality in the U.S. are well-known in the field of medicine and in the media: the U.S. ranks last in maternal health among similarly wealthy nations, and there are clear race-based disparities in maternal outcomes, with Black mothers dying at more than two and a half times the rate of non-Hispanic white women. In his presentation, Dr. Levine examined this phenomenon in further detail and discussed possible solutions and lessons that can be learned.

Lainey Toennies, a research technician in **Dr. Holly Hunsberger's** lab in the Center for Neurodegenerative Diseases and Therapeutics, presented "Stop the Clot. Spread the Word" on April 11, discussing the racial

disparities in outcomes for patients experiencing blood clots. Although blood clots can affect people of any age, race, or gender, Black patients have higher blood clot mortality rates than any other racial group, with up to 60% higher rates of life-threatening venous blood clots compared to white patients. One of the most important things anyone can do to prevent blood clots, Lainey said, is to know if they are at risk. Blood clots are preventable and can be safely treated. Her presentation helped raise awareness on this important health issue.

Several weeks earlier, on March 25, Lainey also took her advocacy efforts to Washington, DC, participating in Capitol Hill Day with the National Blood Clot Alliance. Lainey and her peers met with congresspeople to advocate for appropriations that would allow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to develop a national blood clot education and awareness program.

Monique Jones, MD '93, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology and director of URiM student success, continued the Minority Health Month lineup on April 15 with her presentation titled "Menopause Matters: The

Bridge Across All Cultures.” The event addressed the needs of the 6,000+ women who enter perimenopause or menopause each day. In an interactive session designed to educate, empower, and support women through this stage of life, Dr. Jones helped participants learn about menopause symptoms, treatment options, and cultural considerations while connecting with other women in a supportive environment.

About 30 women actively engaged in discussions about their experiences with perimenopause and menopause. “Thank you to everyone who participated and contributed to making this event a success,” said Dr. Jones. “Together, we continue to promote health equity and support women’s health throughout our community.”

The month concluded with several presentations from faculty and students working in the university’s Michael Reese Foundation Center for Health Equity Research. On April 23, **Saira Hussain**, an MPH student from the University of Illinois Chicago, presented a talk titled “Addressing Long COVID Disparities in Lake County’s LatinX Community: Bridging Gaps in Access, Care, and Policy.” The presentation was based on a project mentored by **Yvette Castañeda**, PhD, MPH, MBA, CMS research assistant professor and community engagement core lead of the Center for Health Equity Research.

On April 28, **Ali Panahikarvand**, CMS ’27; **Amanda Simanek**, PhD, MPH, director of the Center for Health Equity Research; and **Namhee Kim**, PhD, senior biostatistician and data core lead, presented “Ripple Effects: Association between Race/Ethnic Composition,

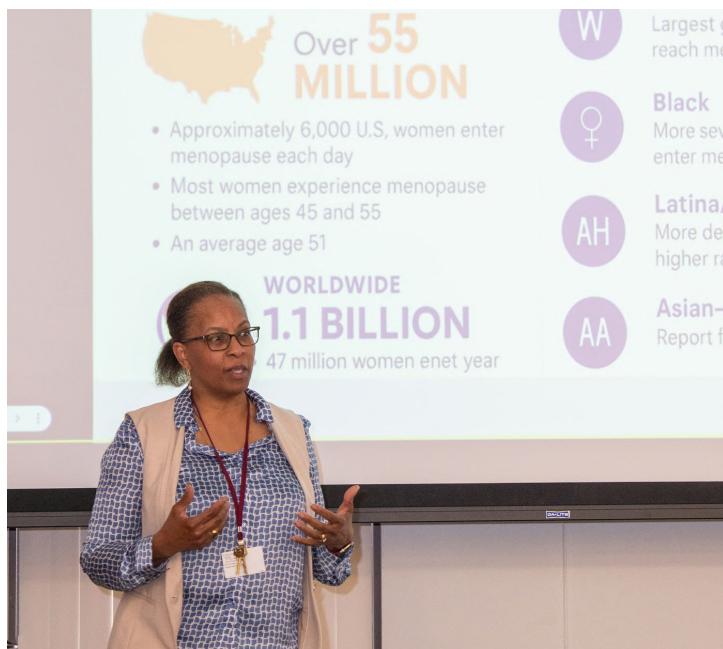
Water Contaminants, and Chronic Disease Prevalence Across Census Tracts in Lake County, IL.” During this event, Ali reported findings from a research study he had conducted in summer 2024 under the mentorship of Dr. Simanek and Dr. Kim, studying the role of water contaminant levels in explaining race/ethnic inequities in the prevalence of numerous chronic health conditions in Lake County.

Dr. Amanda Simanek, **Dr. Namhee Kim**, and **Aditi Kumar**, CMS ’27, delivered the final presentation of the month, titled “Mediators and Modifiers of Race/Ethnic Inequities in Ease of Access to Healthcare.” During the virtual presentation, the speakers reported results from a study using data from the AAMC CHARGE Investigates survey, using response from over 6,700 U.S adults to examine 1) the association between race/ethnicity and ease of healthcare access, 2) the extent to which socioeconomic factors (e.g. cost or transportation) or interpersonal (e.g. disrespect by providers) and institutional (e.g. trust of medical settings) racism explain these relationships, and 3) whether associations vary across region and community type.

The Minority Health Month presentation series was hosted by the RFU Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the Employee Diversity and Inclusion Committee. ■

Below, from left to right: Dr. Monique Jones during her “Menopause Matters” presentation. Ali Panahikarvand, CMS ’27, who presented a study on how water contaminants in Lake County disproportionately affect minority populations. Aditi Kumar, CMS ’27, who participated in a discussion on mediators of racial and ethnic healthcare inequities.

Opposite page: Lainey Toennies (center) is pictured with U.S. Representative Bryan Steil (R-WI) and Tarin Patrikis, Deputy Director of the National Blood Clot Alliance during Capitol Hill Day in Washington, DC. Lainey later talked about blood clot awareness during RFU’s Minority Health Month speaker series.





St. Baldrick's Fundraiser

RFU held its annual St. Baldrick's fundraiser on campus on March 10, hosted by students in the **Oncology Interest Group**, the **Pediatrics Interest Group**, and **NMDP** (formerly the National Marrow Donor Program and Be the Match). During the fundraiser for childhood cancer research, members of the RFU community were invited to shave their heads as a show of solidarity for those fighting cancer. There were plenty of other ways to get involved as well: students, faculty, and staff could donate a portion of their hair (at least 8 inches) to Children With Hair Loss, make cards for pediatric cancer patients, sign up for the National Marrow Donor Program, or simply cheer on those who had volunteered to shave (or shorten) their hair.

This year's shavees and other contributors raised more than \$10,000 for St. Baldrick's Foundation, a nonprofit organization that funds grants for pediatric cancer research. St. Baldrick's is the largest charity funder of childhood cancer research grants.

We thank everyone who came together to help raise funds and awareness for this important cause. For more information or to make a donation, visit <https://www.stbaldricks.org/events/rfums25>. ■





Psychiatry Residency Poster Competition

CMS psychiatry residents presented their research at the 18th Annual Psychiatry Residency Poster Competition on April 10, showcasing their research projects, case presentations, and quality improvement projects. The top three winners will be announced during the upcoming psychiatry graduation ceremony on June 6. ■



Front row: Andrew Nunez, MD, PGY-1; Connor Haszto, MD, PGY-2; Jeremy Wolfe, MD, PGY-3; and Nithin Edara, MD, PGY-3.

Back row: Brandon Fleres, MD, PGY-1, and Ryan Shu, MD, PGY-2.

Right, clockwise from top: Shaman Bhullar, MD, PGY-1, and Omar Ruyyashi, MD, PGY-2. Michael Luo, MD, PGY-2, presenting his poster to faculty judge Dr. Jeffrey Damaschke. Eugene Vvedenskiy, MD, and Allison Fassett, MD, both PGY-4. Ji In Choi, MD, PGY-2, presenting her poster to Dr. Robert Marr.



Thank a Resident Day

We're thankful for our residents! On February 28, the faculty and staff of the CMS internal medicine residency program at the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC) celebrated the FHCC residents in

honor of "Thank a Resident Day." Our hard-working residents enjoyed pizza, refreshments, flowers, and balloons provided in appreciation of everything they do for patients. ■



Spring Wellness Event

On April 24, internal medicine residents, psychiatry residents, and internal medicine fellows gathered at Color Me Mine in Glenview for an evening of painting and

relaxation! Twice a year, Chicago Medical School organizes wellness events for all available residents and fellows for a fun event together. ■





Martin Lanoff, MD '85, Volunteers in Ghana

In March, **Martin Lanoff**, MD '85, traveled to Kumasi, Ghana to volunteer and teach in a clinic at the Komfo Ankyte Teaching Hospital (KATH). This temporary teaching position included both lecturing and seeing patients in clinic. This volunteer opportunity was in affiliation with Health Volunteers Overseas, a nonprofit organization placing medical educators in areas with global health needs.

When he's not volunteering abroad, Dr. Lanoff also teaches closer to home. He has a faculty position at

Chicago Medical School as an associate professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation. He chairs an elective for second-year medical students titled "Introduction to Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation," and he teaches first- and second-year students in the Essentials of Clinical Reasoning (ECR) course, where he lectures on musculoskeletal physical examination. He also makes himself available for an M4 clinical rotation, offering fourth-year students the opportunity to shadow him at his practice. ■



Dr. Lanoff with two of the physical therapists (Prince Taxa on the left and Rich Agyemang on the right) in front of the physical therapy department at KATH.



Dr. Lanoff giving a lecture with volunteer "patient" physical therapist Rich at KATH.



Dr. Lanoff with physical therapist James Twumasi of KATH and a patient after having just given a joint injection.



Dr. Lanoff with two patients, and physical therapist Prince on the far left.

Sima Ramratnam, MD '07, Receives Research Award



Congratulations to CMS alumna **Sima Ramratnam**, MD '07, MPH, for receiving the Ellen R. Wald Research Award from UW-Madison's School of Medicine and Public Health. Dr. Ramratnam, a pediatric pulmonologist, allergist, and immunologist and

clinical director of UW Health's Pediatric Allergy Clinic, received this award in recognition of her outstanding research accomplishments in the field of pediatrics.

Dr. Ramratnam is an associate professor in the Division of Allergy, Immunology, and Rheumatology at UW-Madison. She began her work with the Department of Pediatrics in 2013 as a pulmonologist addressing difficult-to-treat asthma. Through her early team research work on asthma treatment that identified factors contributing to racial disparities in childhood asthma, she realized she wanted a deeper understanding of immune mechanisms and the impact of allergic diseases on airways. She pursued further clinical and research training over three years in allergies and immunology funded by an NIH T32 grant, joining the school's Division of Allergy, Immunology, and Rheumatology in 2019.

Dr. Ramratnam's clinical interests are broad, and her research experience is extensive. Her most recent NIH K08 grant is likely to be funded; the project will investigate how air pollution exposure interacts with genetic factors to increase the incidence of early-onset asthma in children living in neighborhoods with poverty.

In his nomination for Dr. Ramratnam for this award, Jim Gern, MD, vice chair of research in the Department of Pediatrics at UW-Madison's School of Medicine and Public

Health, wrote, "She was an outstanding team scientist and an active participant in writing teams. She was the primary or co-author of 13 high-quality manuscripts, an impressive academic output for a young researcher. She is now leading a writing group for the NIH-funded Environmental Influence on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) program to determine whether wheezing illnesses in early life influence cognitive development in children."

Dr. Gern further summarized Dr. Ramratnam's outstanding qualities in his nomination: "She is an excellent clinical researcher who is passionate and highly motivated to address asthma health disparities. She has developed a unique skill set in pulmonary medicine, allergy/immunology, public health, and team science, and she has honed these skills by participating in workshops for faculty development, leadership, and advancing women in science."

Dr. Ramratnam received her award and gave a lecture about her research on May 15 during UW-Madison's Pediatrics Research Week. ■



Dr. Ramratnam (left) with other award winners during UW-Madison's Pediatrics Research Week.

Alumni Visits / Alumni on Campus

Dean Archana Chatterjee and university representatives have traveled in recent months to catch up with CMS alumni in Boston, MA and Providence, RI. They've also welcomed several alumni who visited the RFU campus.



On a visit to Boston in March, Dr. Chatterjee and her husband had dinner with three CMS alumni. Pictured from left to right are Sam Gogoi; Dr. Archana Chatterjee; Mina A. Farahani, MD '14; Stephanie Puga, MD '21; George Rattin from the RFU alumni office; and Harold Fogel, MD '12.



Sushama Gundlapalli, MD '99, a gastroenterologist in Naperville, IL, recently visited campus to meet with Dean Chatterjee and Dr. Frank Maldonado to learn about opportunities to mentor current students. Dr. Gundlapalli is pictured here locating her class photo on the Class of 1999 composite.



Thomas Kirages, MD '98, visited RFU in April, touring campus and revisiting his class composite.



In April, Dr. Archana Chatterjee, Dr. Frank Maldonado, and George Rattin visited Rania Agha, MD '02, at Dr. Agha's dermatology practice in Oakbrook Terrace, IL, followed by dinner with Dr. Agha and her husband.



Dr. Chatterjee met alumni for dinner during a visit to Providence, Rhode Island. Pictured from left to right are Sam Gogoi; Dr. Archana Chatterjee; Anna Ward, MD '03; George Rattin; Peter Ward, MD '03; Jerry Tarnoff, MD '73; and Yanhan Ren, MD '22. ■

CMS Alumni Share Their Expertise with Students

Over the last several months, CMS alumni have come to campus or connected with students on Zoom to share their experiences and impart knowledge and advice during a variety of special events.



Dr. Peter Orris

Peter Orris, MD '75, MPH, came to campus on April 10 to participate in the medical school's Planetary Health Workshop, part of the first-year Clinical Foundations of Medicine course. Dr. Orris gave the workshop's keynote presentation, titled "Health

Impacts of Climate Change: Medical Care's Role in Creating the Burden and Ending It."



Dr. Richard Fichman

Richard Fichman, MD '79, a pioneer in cataract surgery, connected virtually with CMS students on March 26 to share insights from his ophthalmology career and answer student questions, in an event organized by the Ophthalmology Interest Group.



Dr. Mila Felder

Mila Felder, MD '02, met virtually with CMS students for a Q&A session, organized by the CMS Emergency Medicine Interest Group. Dr. Felder is a nationally recognized well-being advocate, and she currently serves as Vice President of Well-Being for All Teammates at Advocate Health. Her previous roles have

included Vice Chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine at Advocate Christ Medical Center (ACMC), Medical Staff President at ACMC, and Medical Director of Well-Being for Advocate Medical Group.



Dr. Sean Tabaie

Sean Tabaie, MD '09, a pediatric orthopedic surgeon at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, OH, met virtually with CMS students interested in orthopedic surgery, in an event organized by the Orthopedic Surgery Interest Group.

Dr. Tabaie talked about his career interests, research, and involvement in the orthopedic community, and offered to be a clinical mentor to students interested in pursuing this specialty.

Chicago Medical School hosted a "Pediatric Pathways" event on March 4, an in-person networking event where six CMS alumni from a variety of pediatric subspecialties came to campus to help guide CMS students in choosing a career path. **Sheri Fisher**, MD '01; **Kimberly Forsey**, MD '93; **Susan Fuchs**, MD '82; **Joanna Lewis**, MD '05; **Deborah Margulis**, MD '98, MS '94; and **Rick Pervos**, MD '82, met with students interested in a career in pediatrics, offering insight into different career paths within the field and helping the students identify areas of interest. ■

Other Alumni News

Diane Drugas, MD '87, was named as the new section head for breast surgical oncology at UI Health in Chicago.

Juan Gaztanaga, MD '02, joined Lee Health Heart Institute as medical director of Cardiac CT/Advanced Imaging at HealthPark Medical Center in Fort Myers, Florida.

Charles Tate, MD '24, was featured in the Creating Pathways and Access for Student Success (CPASS)

Foundation newsletter in an article titled "Meet the Residents," which detailed Dr. Tate's journey to becoming a doctor and the challenges he overcame as a first-generation college student and a single father to a young daughter. Dr. Tate is now in the first year of his emergency medicine residency at University of Illinois College of Medicine Peoria. ■

Awards & Accomplishments

Brenda Affinati, MD, associate professor of medicine and director of clinical integration, received an award from the Lake County Children's Advocacy Center (LCCAC). Dr. Affinati, along with **Jeff Espina**, MBA, and **Brian Nicholson**, RN, BS, MHS, from the RFU Health Clinics, received the Fred L. Foreman Criminal Justice Award in recognition of their commitment to developing the Rosalind Franklin University Children's Advocacy Center Medical Clinic to treat children who have been abused or witnessed abuse. The team from RFU has partnered with the LCCAC to launch this new medical clinic on-site at the LCCAC's location in Gurnee, where it will become the first facility of its kind in the state approved by the Illinois Department of Public Health.

The RFU "Visionary Team" received the award during the LCCAC's annual awards ceremony on April 1. Award recipients were selected due to their dedication to the center's mission to protect the children of Lake County.



Eric Rinehart, Lake County State's Attorney; Dr. Brenda Affinati; Carrie Flanigan, executive director of the LCCAC; and Brian Nicholson.

Congratulations to the CMS students who were honored for their leadership during **LEAD Week** in recognition of their efforts in areas such as community service, research, mentorship, and diversity and inclusion:

- **SJ Bennett**, CMS '28, received the Student Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Board Member Award.
- **Kyle Labak**, CMS '27, received the Helix Award.
- **Ana Delgado**, CMS '27, received the Commitment to Research Award.

- **Atif Malik**, CMS '27, received the Excellence in Sportsmanship Award.
- **Sawyeh Maher**, CMS '27, received the Ambassador for Student Fitness & Wellness Award.
- **Justine Li**, CMS '27, received the Student Voice Award.
- **Elizabeth Snider**, CMS '27, and **Philip Lulek**, CMS '25, received the Excellence in Tutoring Award.

Congratulations to the following CMS-affiliated organizations and groups:

- The **Lifestyle Medicine Interest Group** received the Student Organization of the Year Award.
- The **Association of Native American Medical Students** received the New Student Organization of the Year Award.
- The **Science Saturdays** graduate student staff received the Excellence in Educational Service Award.
- The **Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA)** received the Program of the Year Award.
- The **ICC, APAMSA, the Women's Health Interest Group**, and **Medical Students for Choice** received the Outstanding Collaboration Award for their "Breakfast and Breast Exams" initiative.
- **LMSA** and **SNMA** received the Outstanding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Project Award.
- **Stitchers** received the Team Unity Award.
- **Black Men in White Coats** received the Rising Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Focused Organization Award.



Weihang "Valerie" Chai, PhD, director of the Center for Genetic Diseases and professor of microbiology and immunology, received a five-year, \$1,887,613 R01 award from the National Cancer Institute for the project "Molecular Modulator of RAD51 in Maintaining Genome Stability."

The grant will continue supporting Dr. Chai's research on understanding the molecular mechanism for protecting genome stability and drug resistance in cancer therapy.

School & Department News

Congratulations to **Kuhn Hong**, MD, assistant professor of medicine, who received the Physician Volunteer of the Year Award from the Illinois State Medical Society. Dr. Hong received this honor in recognition of his passion for servicing medical needs around the world and sharing his more than 50 years of experience where it is most needed. Dr. Hong has spent more than 25 years working as a volunteer physician on Chicago's west side, reading x-rays and diagnostic images for free at the Lawndale Christian Health Center. Since his retirement in 2013, he has been actively serving in short-term missions both in the U.S. and overseas in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, and South America.



Rikhil Makwana, CMS '26, was accepted into the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Medical Research Scholars Program, a year-long research immersion program for future clinician-scientists that advances health by inspiring careers in biomedical research. During the program, Rikhil will participate in biomedical research from bench investigations to bedside applications, while also attending lectures, interactive grand rounds, journal clubs, workshops, and other training sessions.

A portrait of Rikhil Makwana, a young man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a blue shirt and a grey plaid blazer. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a building with decorative columns.



Ali Panahikarvand, CMS '27, was accepted into the Aliabadi-Kazim Scholars Program at the University of



A professional headshot of a young man with dark hair, a beard, and glasses. He is wearing a dark suit, a light-colored shirt, and a patterned tie. He is smiling and looking directly at the camera. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Hector Rasgado-Flores, PhD, professor of physiology and biophysics, and Latinx students and community liaison, received a \$82,150 grant from the University Center of Lake County for the project “UCLC El Centro.”



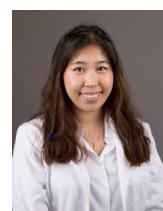
Congratulations to our second-year students who were named "Mentors of the Month" for March! **Stephanie Samon** (Emanuel House), **Megan Klode** (Finkel House), **Crystal Banh** (Lipschultz House), and **Jefferson Sun** (Portes House) were nominated by the first-year students they mentor, in appreciation for all they've done to help their mentees thrive during their first year of medical school.



Stephanie
Samon



Megan Klode



Crystal Banh



Jefferson Sun



Sarah Schuck, director of the Dean's Office, was elected for a second term as treasurer for the AAMC's Deans' Assistants Group (DAG), which is comprised of members serving as administrative/executive assistants to deans in colleges of medicine.



Justin Whalley, PhD, assistant professor of microbiology and immunology at the Center for Cancer Cell Biology, Immunology, and Infection, along with colleagues Drs. Bin Zhang (MIT), Longzhi Tan (Stanford), Tamar Schlick (NYU), Dave Thirumalai (UT Austin), and Bill Noble (UW), has been selected as part of the initial cohort of multidisciplinary working groups by the National Science Foundation's National Synthesis Center for Emergence in the Molecular and Cellular Sciences (NCEMS). Their working group, "The Epigenetic Drivers of Neurodegenerative Processes in Human Brain Cells," aims to develop an innovative multimodal AI model integrating single-cell genomic data to explore how genome structure influences gene expression, particularly in Alzheimer's disease progression.

Presentations & Publications

Several CMS faculty have delivered grand rounds presentations in recent months:

- **Dima Arbach**, MD, assistant professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, presented a psychiatry grand rounds lecture titled "Obesity in Psychiatry: Risks and Management" on March 11 at Elgin Mental Health Center.
- **Marianna Krive**, MD, lecturer of medicine, delivered a virtual medical grand rounds presentation on March 12 titled "360-degree View of the Cardio-Oncology Landscape."
- **Lise Eliot**, PhD, professor of neuroscience, gave a psychiatry grand rounds presentation titled "On the Origin of Gender: Brain Sex Difference and Social Learning" on April 8 at Elgin Mental Health Center.
- **David Everly**, PhD, associate professor of microbiology and immunology and executive chair of the Department of Foundational Sciences & Humanities, gave a virtual medical grand rounds lecture titled "Bird Flu: The Ongoing Animal Pandemic and Implications for Human Health" on April 9.
- **Richard Lenhardt**, MD, assistant professor of medicine and program director of the CMS pulmonary medicine fellowship, gave a virtual

medical grand rounds presentation on May 14 titled "An Introduction to Interstitial Lung Disease for the Internist."

Maureen Benjamins, PhD

assistant professor of medicine at CMS and senior research fellow at the Sinai Urban Health Institute (SUHI), co-authored an op-ed in the *Chicago Tribune* on March 3 entitled "Health Researchers: Flu Cases Are Unnecessarily on the Rise. Policy Failures Are to Blame." The commentary describes the impact of recent policy changes and executive orders on flu outcomes, including health inequities.



Dr. Benjamins also co-authored a recent study in the *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice* with fellow SUHI researchers and partners from the National Association of County and City Health Officials. The research study, titled "Strategic and Performance Planning in US Local Health Departments: A Comparative Analysis of Strategic, Community Health Improvement, and Quality Improvement Plans," analyzed nearly 100 strategic plans, quality improvement plans, and community health implementation plans collected from a sample of 31 local health departments, highlighting shared themes and key differences in their approaches to public health planning.



Dr. Esther Calderon

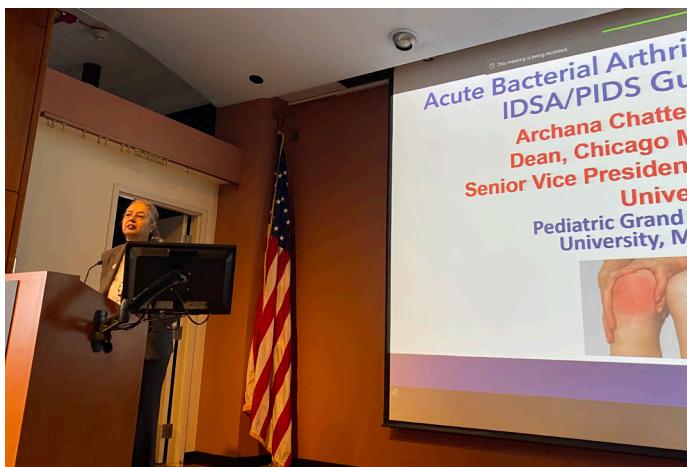
Esther Calderon, PhD, assistant professor of physiology and biophysics, presented a poster titled "Engaging Students in Combined Didactic and Problem/Case-Based Learning Sessions in a Large Class-Size Medical School" at the American Physiology Summit, held April 24-27 in Baltimore, MD. **Donghee Kim**, PhD, professor and discipline chair of physiology and biophysics, is a co-author on the poster.

School & Department News

Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD, dean of CMS and senior vice president for medical affairs for RFU, and **Nutan Vaidya**, MD, vice dean for faculty affairs and equity, participated in two “bootcamps” for fellow medical school faculty.

- On April 9-11, they participated in The University of Texas Medical Branch's Faculty Leadership Collaborative Mid-Career Bootcamp, a three-day virtual workshop designed for associate professors in academic health. Dr. Chatterjee, Dr. Vaidya, and other leaders and trailblazers in academic medicine presented advanced leadership principles to faculty from academic health institutions around the world.
- Dr. Chatterjee and Dr. Vaidya also participated in a virtual Early-Career Faculty Development Bootcamp in May, presented by Rush University, Rosalind Franklin University, and Southern Illinois University. Dr. Chatterjee presented a session on “Creating Harmony with Your Work Life and Personal Life” while Dr. Vaidya presented three sessions titled “Striving and Thriving in Tough Times,” “Giving and Receiving Constructive Feedback,” and “Understanding and Planning for Promotion.”

Dr. Chatterjee also traveled to Brown University on March 7 to give a pediatric grand rounds presentation on acute bacterial arthritis at Rhode Island Hospital.



Dr. Chatterjee presenting at Brown University



Dr. Archana
Chatterjee



Dr. Nutan Vaidya

Lise Eliot, PhD, professor of neuroscience, Stanson Toshok Center for Brain Function and Repair, gave a lecture on “The Role of Sex and Gender in Adolescent Development” on campus on March 18. Following the lecture, Dr. Eliot joined John Steven Cummins, MD,

medical director at Elgin Mental Health Center, and Oly Khowash, PhD student, in a panel discussion. The event was organized by CMS Women in Medicine and Science (CMS-WIMS) in honor of Women's History Month.

Dr. Eliot also traveled for two invited seminars, delivering “Neuroplasticity and the Origin of Gender Difference” at Marquette University in Milwaukee and “Pink Brain, Blue Brain: Neuroplasticity and Gender Development” in New Orleans as part of Tulane University’s Brain Institute Seminar Series. She also authored an article titled “‘Precision Medicine’ and the Failed Search for Binary Brain Sex Differences to Address Gender Behavioral Health Disparities,” published in the *American Journal of Human Biology*.



Raúl Gazmuri, MD, PhD, FCCM, professor of physiology and biophysics and director of the Resuscitation Institute, is lead author on the article “A Single Early Warning Signs (SEWS) System for Recognizing Clinical Deterioration Outperforms the National Early Warning

School & Department News

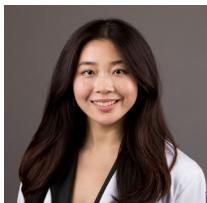
Score (NEWS) by Having a Lower Activation Threshold, Broader Clinical Scope, and Faster Response Time," published in *Resuscitation Plus*. Co-authors included **Rebecca Bieber** and **Calis Lim**, both CMS '27, who assisted with the literature review and organizing part of the discussion, and **Mylene Apigo**, RN, MSN, and **Ma Lea Martin**, RN, BSN, Critical Care Section, Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center, who helped with the data collection.



Dr. Raúl Gazmuri



Rebecca Bieber



Calis Lim

of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology in Chicago. One poster, "PODIOMICS: Biomarkers for Prediction, Prognosis and Treatment of (non)Healing Chronic Diabetic Foot Ulcers" reflected an interdisciplinary collaboration between Chicago Medical School and the Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine (SCPM). Led by Joseph Benedict, a P2 student at SCPM, co-authors included **Keith D. Philibert**, MS, senior research associate; **Xiaomeng Shao**, research assistant; **Charlie Yang**, PhD, research assistant professor; and Stephanie Wu, DPM, Dean of SCPM. The second poster, titled "Structural Neuromics in the Brain and Beyond: Proteomics, Enzymology, and Crystallography for Neuropeptide Discovery and Reclassifying Substrate Specificity," was presented by Keith Philibert and co-authored by Xiaomeng Shao and Dr. Yang.

On April 12, **Marc Glucksman**, PhD, director of the Center for Proteomics and Molecular Therapeutics and professor and chair of biochemistry and molecular biology, participated in a public panel discussion in Winnetka concerning how significant funding cuts to the NIH can affect patient care, health care, and the ability for medical research to improve the well-being of all. Illinois congressman Brad Schneider hosted the roundtable, which also included representatives from Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern, Lurie Children's Hospital, and Rush University.



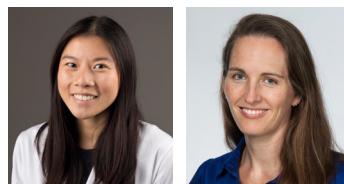
Photo courtesy of the office of Rep. Schneider.

The laboratory of **Dr. Marc Glucksman** presented two posters at the annual meeting of the American Society



Antwione Haywood, PhD, associate dean for student affairs, published an article titled "What Premedical Students Need to Succeed: Updated Premed Competencies for Entering Medical Students" in *Academic Medicine*, the journal of the AAMC.

Adam Joyal, CMS '27, co-authored an article titled "An Orexin Agonist Promotes Wakefulness and Inhibits Cataplexy Through Distinct Brain Regions," published in *Current Biology*.



Anne Leung Dr. Benjamins

Anne Leung, CMS '26, and **Maureen Benjamins**, PhD, assistant professor of medicine, co-authored a new study titled "Black:White Inequities in Infant Mortality Across

the 69 Most Populous US Cities, 2018–2021," published in *Frontiers in Public Health*. The study reveals alarming

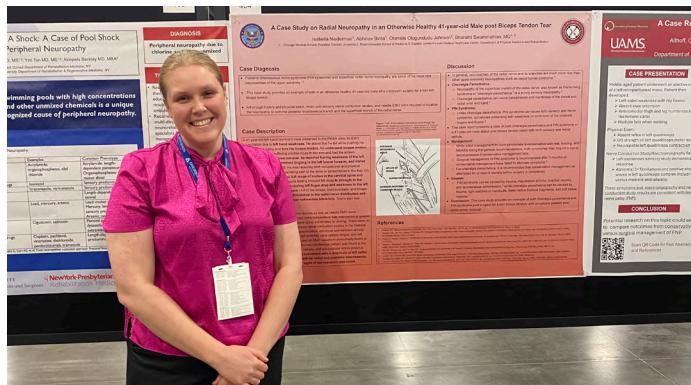
School & Department News

infant mortality inequities in the biggest US cities; black infant mortality rates were more than four times higher than white rates in Chicago and nine other cities.

Jessica Lewis, PhD, assistant dean for student affairs, co-authored an article titled “Competence, Mattering and Belonging: An Evidence-Based and Practical Approach to Understanding and Fostering Medical Student Professional Identity Formation,” published in *Medical Teacher*.



Isabella Niedermair, CMS '26, presented two posters at the 2025 Association of Academic Psychiatrists Annual Meeting, held in Phoenix, Arizona. Her works were titled “A Case Study on Radial Neuropathy in an Otherwise Healthy 41-year-old Male post Biceps Tendon Tear” and “Posterior Interosseous Nerve (PIN) Syndrome in an Otherwise Healthy 43-year-old Firefighter: A Case Study.” Both posters were case reports that Isabella worked on with the support of CMS associate professor **Dr. Bharathi Swaminathan** at the FHCC.



James O'Donnell, PhD, associate professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology, served as faculty for the Drug Diversion Certificate Program, a CE-granting program offered by the American Society of Health-Systems



Pharmacists. He co-authored an oral presentation titled “Drug Testing Interpretation and Review.”

Ani Oganesyan and **Krishi Korrapati**, both CMS '27, along with **John Wahhab**, MD, assistant professor of emergency medicine, authored an article titled “Catecholaminergic Polymorphic Ventricular Tachycardia in a 16-Year-Old: A Case Report,” published in *Clinical Practice and Cases in Emergency Medicine*, the case report companion journal of the *Western Journal of Emergency Medicine*.



Ani Oganesyan



Krishi Korrapati



Dr. John Wahhab

Binita Pandya, CMS '27, presented a poster at the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship's Celebration of Service event on April 10, detailing the service project she's been working on for the past year. Binita coordinated efforts with Roberti Community House in Waukegan to increase health agency and help community members make positive everyday health decisions and navigate health systems. She created educational materials and programming on health education and communication, initiated interactive lessons and experiments with youth through an after-school program, and created bilingual infographics and lectures for an adult cooking program.



Binita with one of her project mentors, CMS associate professor Dr. Stuart Kiken.

School & Department News

On March 12, **Hector Rasgado-Flores**, PhD, professor of physiology and biophysics, and Latinx students and community liaison, presented “Music and Entropy” and participated in a roundtable discussion titled “The Musical Brain” at the Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla in Mexico. Dr. Rasgado-Flores, a physiologist and a pianist, has composed a piano composition titled “Body Notes” which uses music to describe various aspects of human physiology, and his research interests include the therapeutic effects of music on the human body. This event was sponsored by the Mexican Chapter of the Society of Neurosciences and the Mexican Physiological Society.



• • • • •

Roxane Rohani, PharmD, MSc, BCACP, assistant professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology, Center for Cancer Cell Biology, Immunology, and Infection, was the first and presenting author on a poster titled "Genetic Associations with CD4 Recovery in People With HIV After Initiation of Antiretroviral Therapy," which she presented during the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI), held March 9-12 in San Francisco.

• • • • •

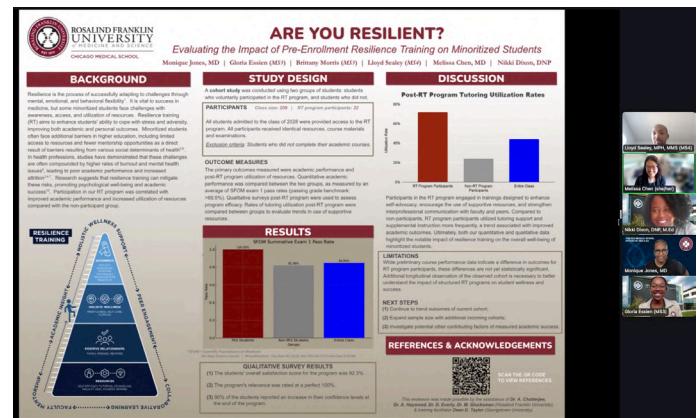


CMS students and faculty presented several posters during Northwestern University's annual conference of the National Collaborative for Education to Address the Social Determinants of Health (NCEAS) conference, held virtually on February 25. CMS representatives presented on two aspects of community engagement in our health equity curriculum: **Shivani Sharma**, CMS '27; **Susanna**

Calkins, PhD, director, Nexus for Faculty Success; and **Melissa Chen**, MD, assistant dean of diversity, equity, and inclusion, presented “Inviting the Community In: An M1 Curricular Community Event.” **Aroosha Aamir, Tommi Tsao, Nathaniel Ung**, all CMS '26; **Neha Basti**, and **Alexander Ellyin**, both CMS '25; **Dr. Susanna Calkins**; and **Dr. Melissa Chen** presented “Designing a Community Project: A 2-Week Medical School Curriculum,” and won an award for their poster presentation, which was delivered by Aroosha on behalf of the team.

Monique Jones, MD, director of URiM student success, and **Nikki Dixon**, RN, MEd, MSN, director of academic advising and success, presented “Are You Resilient: Evaluating the Impact of Pre-Enrollment Resilience Training for Minoritized Students.” Co-authors included **Gloria Essien**, CMS '26; **Brittany Morris**, CMS '26; **Lloyd Sealey**, CMS '25; and **Dr. Melissa Chen**.

Finally, **Sophia Galluccio**, CMS '26; **Iswarya Vimalan Jeya**, CMS '27; **Shivam Malhotra**, CMS '28; **Heather Kind-Keppel**, EdD, RFU associate vice president for diversity, equity, and inclusion; and **Dr. Melissa Chen**, presented “A Framework for DEI Assessment in a Student Run Free Clinic.”



A CMS team of faculty and students presents on the impact of pre-enrollment resilience training.

• • • • •



Amanda M. Simanek, PhD, MPH, associate professor and director of the Michael Reese Foundation Center for Health Equity Research, co-authored an article titled “Early Life Trauma Patterns and Adult

School & Department News

Epigenome-Wide and NR3C1-Specific DNA Methylation in the Sister Study," published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*. She also gave two recent presentations:

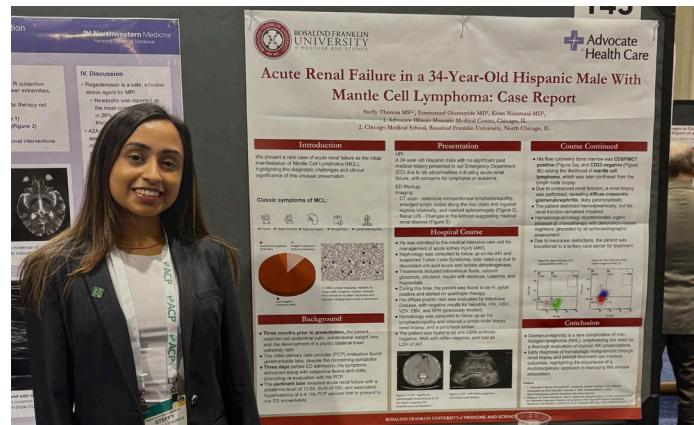
- Dr. Simanek, along with others from *Those Nerdy Girls*, presented a March 25 plenary session titled "Combating Misinformation in Laboratory Science" at the Association of Public Health Laboratories Annual IDLab Conference in Pasadena, CA, in which she discussed the current health information landscape and offered practical strategies for building trust with your audience and communicating scientific concepts clearly to non-experts.
- On April 26th, she presented a talk titled "Recognizing the CLEAR Need to Address Social Inequities in Diabetes in Lake County, Illinois" at the Innovation and Impact in Lower Extremity, Health, Performance, and Mobility event celebrating 20 years of CLEAR. The talk discussed social inequities in diabetes prevalence in Lake County and highlighted student projects mentored by the Michael Reese Foundation Center for Health Equity Research which serve to address these inequities.

Jasmine Sindelar, CMS '27, co-authored an article titled "Youth Perspectives on the Use of Medications for Weight Loss," published in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*.



Beth Stutzmann, PhD, director of the Center for Neurodegenerative Disease and Therapeutics and professor and discipline chair of neuroscience, along with colleagues from research institutes in New York and Arizona, co-authored "Profiling Hippocampal Neuronal Populations Reveals Unique Gene Expression Mosaics Reflective of Connectivity-based Degeneration in the Ts65Dn Mouse Model of Down Syndrome and Alzheimer's Disease," published in *Frontiers in Molecular Neuroscience*.

Steffy Thomas, CMS '26, was selected to present her abstract titled "Acute Renal Failure in a 34-Year-Old Hispanic Male with Mantle Cell Lymphoma: Case Report" at the American College of Physicians National Meeting, held in New Orleans on April 5. "During the conference I got to meet amazing physician leaders and attend sessions taught by physicians," Steffy said. "I am an aspiring internal medicine doctor and hope to continue to get involved in ACP and leadership in the future."



Justin Whalley, PhD, assistant professor of microbiology and immunology, Center for Cancer Cell Biology, Immunology, and Infection, is a corresponding author on the recently published article titled "Pleural Fluid Proteomics from Patients with Pleural Infection Shows Signatures of Diverse Neutrophilic Responses: The Oxford Pleural Infection Endotyping Study (TOPIDS-2)," featured in the *European Respiratory Journal*.

Events and Other News

Congratulations to **Archana Chatterjee**, MD, PhD, on her five-year anniversary as Dean of Chicago Medical School! Dr. Chatterjee took on this leadership position in April 2020, one month into the COVID-19 pandemic and weeks before the school's LCME accreditation visit. Over the last five years,



School & Department News

Dean Chatterjee has led the medical school as we navigated the pandemic years, revised the school's administrative structure, grew clinical training sites locally and nationally, grew the class size by 7%, tripled the number of endowed scholarships, established the Women in Medicine and Science (WIMS) program, and built a partnership with the Michael Reese Foundation for student scholarships and the new Center for Health Equity Research. She has also hosted AAMC Council of Deans fellows four years in a row and has successfully nominated two ELAM fellows, enhancing the CMS and RFU reputation nationally. We are glad to have Dr. Chatterjee as our Dean as she continues in service of the school's mission and vision and works to enhance the CMS experience for all students, faculty, and staff.

Dr. Tucker Edmonds is the inaugural Vice President and Chief Health Equity Officer for Indiana University Health and the Associate Dean for Health Equity Research for Indiana University School of Medicine. The COD fellowship program is designed to foster the development of future leaders in academic medicine, and this is the fourth year in a row that CMS has been chosen to host a COD fellow.



Members of the Dean's Cabinet at dinner with COD Fellow Dr. Tucker Edmonds.

Rosalind Franklin University held its annual **Dance for Health Equity and Educational Excellence** on March 1, continuing a 38-year tradition benefiting patient care at the Interprofessional Community Clinic (ICC). The event raised \$46,757 to support the ICC, a student-organized clinic that provides quality healthcare to underserved patients in the community while also serving as a valuable educational opportunity for RFU students.



Delaney Griffiths, CMS '27, and Lana Trautman, CMS '28, past and current president, respectively, of the ICI.

From April 14-18, we welcomed **Dr. Brownsyne Tucker Edmonds** to campus as the latest AAMC Council of Deans (COD) Fellow to be hosted by Dean Chatterjee.

In May, Chicago Medical School celebrated the Class of 2027 with a series of four "**Classroom to Clerkship**" ceremonies (one for each learning community). These events marked the students' transition from classroom-based learning to clinical clerkships. ■



Members of the Portes learning community during their ceremony on May 7.



Chicago Medical School faculty who serve as mentors to geographically and economically disadvantaged CMS students gathered on campus on May 19 for an end-of-the-year luncheon to celebrate five years of the Individualized Strategic Enhancement Program (ISEP), which supports disadvantaged students to help them fully achieve their personal and professional potential.

We want to hear from you!

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



**ROSALIND FRANKLIN
UNIVERSITY**
of MEDICINE AND SCIENCE

CHICAGO MEDICAL SCHOOL