



# CMS NEWS

The Chicago Medical School Newsletter

SUMMER 2023 | ISSUE 29



# Dean's Message

## CMS News

Summer 2023

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**Cover Image:** The Chicago Medical School Class of 2023 celebrates their commencement at the Credit Union 1 Arena in Chicago.

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Greetings from the Dean's Office!

This past month has been an exciting time as we welcomed the CMS Class of 2027 to campus for orientation, culminating in their White Coat Ceremony! Family and friends gathered together to celebrate the incoming students as they received their white coats. The students heard from upperclassmen peers, and Kaleem Malik, MD Class of '96, gave the highly inspiring keynote address. Dr. Malik is a distinguished alumnus of Chicago Medical School (CMS), and

a board certified emergency medicine/trauma physician with over 23 years of professional experience. He is also a member of our esteemed faculty. Dr. Malik exemplifies a sense of dedication, compassion, and humanism through his disaster response efforts and his philanthropic endeavors. While addressing the Class of 2027, Dr. Malik talked about the importance of listening and having empathy, and he urged the students to always see their patients as complete human beings — never as a disease or a symptom or a number.

The Class of 2027 is the largest class ever at CMS with 201 students. As was the case last year, the class is composed of about half men and half women with the percentage of women being slightly higher at 53%. Our new students come to us from 22 different states, with the largest number coming locally from Illinois. The Class of 2027 comes in with an average GPA of 3.66, and an average MCAT of 512. They are bringing a wealth of knowledge with them to CMS, coming to us with a grand total of 200 degrees, including one student who has earned a PhD. Members of the class attended many prestigious institutions including Dartmouth College, UCLA, and Brown, Vanderbilt, and Washington Universities. We are glad to have a variety of experiences and backgrounds reflected in these future healthcare leaders.

I also want to take a moment to look back on our recently graduated Class of 2023. When I penned my last message, the Class of 2023 was gearing up for their Commencement ceremony, which took place on June 2nd. Family and friends came from across the country to join the 180 CMS graduates at the Credit Union 1 Arena in downtown Chicago for the celebration. We were delighted to have CMS alumni David Feinberg, MD Class of '89, and Andrea Feinberg, MD Class of '90, with us at the ceremony, where they gave the commencement address and led students in reciting the Oath of Geneva, respectively.

We are especially proud of those students who graduated as members of the Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) Honor Medical Society and the Gold Humanism Honor Society. During the AOA induction ceremony this past May, we also honored several alumni, faculty, and residents for their leadership, service, and teaching. Congratulations to Drs. Kimberly Dary (Class of '04), Romeo C. Ignacio Jr. (Class of '97), and Kaleem Malik (Class of '96); Drs. Michael Allswede and Biana Kotlyar (our faculty initiates); and Drs. Kurian Chandy, Ryan Stefancik, and Daniel Wasserman (our resident recipients).

We have another opportunity approaching to show appreciation for our faculty, with our annual Faculty and Friends Recognition Dinner scheduled for October 25th. We hold this event each year in gratitude of the many dedicated and talented people who educate, mentor, and train our students. There will be an award ceremony to give special recognition to several individuals and groups for their exemplary service to the school and our mission.

To highlight all the effort and collaboration that goes into educating our students, I have had the opportunity this summer to visit several of our clinical sites. Accompanied by additional CMS leadership, we have recently visited Weiss Memorial Hospital, Aurora Sinai Medical Center, West Suburban Medical Center, and Holy Cross Hospital. These visits are critical to making sure that the needs of our students and our clinical partners are being met. During these visits, we have conversations with site leadership and with CMS students and residents who are currently rotating at that site. Follow-up with these and many other sites is ongoing with regard to expanding student educational opportunities.

As summer is closing, we have many events to look forward to in the fall and winter months ahead. In addition to the Faculty and Friends Recognition Dinner, we have a faculty development event featuring academic medicine career coach Laura Schweitzer, PhD, President Emerita and former Vice President for Health Sciences at SUNY Albany in New York, who will

be visiting our campus to talk about transactional vs. transformational leadership. We also look forward to our Office of Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion's annual Race and Medicine Symposium, which this year will focus on maternal mortality in Illinois and the racial disparities associated with maternal health. A panel of guests, including experts from the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Lake County Health Department, will speak about this important topic.

In the next newsletter, I'll have more details to share about our upcoming events. In the meantime, I wish all our students, faculty, staff, and residents a happy start to the new academic year.

Sincerely,



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





# *Commencement*

## *Celebrating the Class of 2023*

Rosalind Franklin University celebrated its 109th Commencement on June 2 at the Credit Union 1 Arena in Chicago. Graduates' families, friends, and the RFU community gathered to celebrate the Class of 2023 as our 180 new doctors received their medical degrees — the culmination of years of hard work and accomplishments in the face of unexpected challenges.

"You have persevered through the demands and disruptions of the greatest public health crisis of the last century," said RFU President and CEO **Wendy Rheault**, PT, PhD, FASAHP, FNAP, DipACLM, during the ceremony, referring to the COVID-19

pandemic. "You represent a generation that succeeded against unforeseen odds to complete your education while at the same time serving your community with courage and compassion."

"I'm so proud of your dedication, perseverance, and courage," Dr. Rheault told the graduates. "I'm very confident that your RFU education will help you create a healthier, more equitable future for all."

Podiatry graduate **Zanib Cheema**, DPM '23, delivered the graduate address, recalling the abrupt switch to online learning at the onset of the pandemic, which occurred one month into the spring semester of her



**Clockwise from top left:** Paarul Sinha, MD '23, crosses the stage with her diploma. Lauren Gard, MD '23, receives her diploma from Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD, dean of Chicago Medical School. Guhan Krishnan, MD '23, with learning community mentor Susan Scanlon, MD, and Rosanne Oggioan, DO, clinical skills course director and lab director and assistant professor of pediatrics. Zachary Lang, MD '23, waves to the audience. Sahar Khalid, MD '23, presented by Saba Khalid, MD.

**Opposite page:** Dr. David T. Feinberg delivers the commencement address.

first year at RFU. She commended her classmates for their resilience and for adapting to the new realities of healthcare, such as completing clinical training and laboratory research while wearing layers of PPE.

“Going forward, may we never stop growing, learning, achieving, and striving to build upon the foundations that we have learned at RFU,” said Dr. Cheema. She then quoted the university’s namesake, Dr. Rosalind Franklin, who once said that “science and everyday life cannot and should not be separated.”

“I hope we continue to use science as a means of opening doors to new opportunities,” Dr. Cheema

said. “As we enter this next phase of life, I hope we never stop looking for opportunities to have fun and enjoy what we do.”

Two Chicago Medical School alumni participated in the ceremony, with **David T. Feinberg**, MD '89, MBA, delivering the commencement address and **Andrea Feinberg**, MD '90, leading the graduates in reciting the Declaration of Geneva. The Feinbergs have helped lead a growing movement to improve health outcomes and lower costs by addressing inequities in the social determinants of health, including food, housing, education, and transportation. In his remarks to the graduates, Dr. David Feinberg



emphasized the importance of addressing the root causes of suffering, not just the symptoms.

As chairman of Oracle Health, Dr. Feinberg is committed to making health care more accessible, affordable and equitable. He built his early career as a pediatric psychiatrist around helping children and families. He served as president and CEO of both UCLA Health and Geisinger Health prior to assuming leadership of Google Health in early 2019.

During the commencement ceremony, he drew on these experiences to provide advice to the graduates.

Dr. Feinberg shared a series of vignettes from his career and the lessons those experiences had taught him, such as: Health care is about people caring for people. Do what's right for your patient. Despite all odds, love can heal. Learning can happen anywhere. Make health care easier to understand and navigate. Find the people who can help and support you.



"Sitting in your chair all those years ago, I didn't realize how my patient's stories would stick with me for a lifetime," Dr. Feinberg told graduates, later adding, "Patients can make just as big of an impact, if not more, on us as we do on them."

The graduates join a network of over 23,000 RFU alumni. We wish the CMS Class of 2023 all the best as they begin their residencies and move into the next stage of their careers. ■

**Top row, from left:** Graduates take a moment to celebrate in the minutes before the ceremony begins. CMS graduates enter the Credit Union 1 Arena. Aaron Dyson, MD '23. Hamad Hussain, MD '23.

**Bottom row, from left:** Edouard Nicaise, Dil Patel, Dayken Dawson, and Aayush Boddu, all MD '23. Kayla Quebral, MD '23, crosses the stage, presented by Bernard Quebral, MD. Graduates recite the Declaration of Geneva. RFU President and CEO Dr. Wendy Rheault; David T. Feinberg, MD '89, MBA; Andrea Feinberg, MD '90; and RFU Board of Trustees Chair Lee Sacks, MD. CMS faculty Amy Swift-Johnson, MD '06, and Melissa Chen, MD.

# Awards & Honors

Congratulations to our outstanding students who received the following distinctions and awards.

## Ronald M. Reifler Primary Care Award



*The Ronald M. Reifler Primary Care Award is awarded to a graduate who will be continuing their career in primary care. This award commemorates Mr. Reifler's love of learning and enthusiasm for helping others to reach their potential.*

**Dallen Powers,  
MD '23**

## Martin Gecht, MD '44 Memorial Award



**Nahae Kim,  
MD '23**

*This award honors Dr. Gecht's love of the Chicago Medical School and commemorates his commitment to the community. The award recognizes student efforts in community service projects including development, leadership, assessment and inspiration of community projects.*

## MD with Distinction in Research Award



**David Galel,  
MD '23**



**Sean Hormozian,  
MD '23**



**Peter Nesper,  
MD '23, MS '19**

*The MD with Distinction in Research Award is awarded to medical students who complete a substantial committee-refereed research program during the course of their medical studies.*

## Ronald Bangasser, MD '75 Memorial Award



**Rachel To,  
MD '23**

*This award commemorates the commitment that Dr. Bangasser, CMS Class of 1975, had for organized medicine and service to his colleagues. The recipient of this award has demonstrated leadership in medical school, a training which will follow into his/her life in organized medicine.*

## Health Administration Outstanding Dual Degree Student Award



**Tim Bauer, MD '23,  
MS '23, MS '19**

*The Health Administration Outstanding Dual Degree Student Award is presented to an exceptional graduating student from the Health Administration program who is also receiving a dual degree from the university.*

## Chicago Medical School Dean's Award for Service to the School

This award was established in 1974 to give recognition to graduating students who have been active in school functions and have demonstrated a continuing interest in the future of the school.



Emily Crawford,  
MD '23



Lauren Gard,  
MD '23



Maria Mercurio,  
MD '23



Rachel Anderson,  
MD '23



Alexandra Reed,  
MD '23

### John J. Sheinin, MD, PhD, DSc Research Award



Alexandra Ritger,  
PhD '23, MD '25

The John J. Sheinin, MD, PhD, DSc Research Award is presented for originality and creativity in a research project conducted while a medical student.

### Eugene J. Rogers, MD '46 Memorial Award for Excellence in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation



Dayken Dawson,  
MD '23

This award is presented to a graduate who will be continuing their career in the specialty of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

### Distinction for Excellence in Interprofessional Healthcare



Lauren Gard,  
MD '23

This distinction is awarded to students who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to advancing interprofessional collaborative care while at RFU.

### Melvyn Leichtling, MD '48 Oncology Research Award



Warren Nakazawa,  
CMS '25

This award was established in 1977 to give assistance to students who submit an outstanding research proposal related to the field of oncology.

### CMS Student Service Award



Taylor Lewis,  
MD '23



Jennifer Vu,  
CMS '24

This award recognizes students who have demonstrated excellent achievement in working with persons and communities that are underrepresented in medicine.

### USPHS Excellence in Public Health Award



Laura Li, MD '25

This award is given by the U.S. Public Health Service to medical students who are involved in public health issues in their community.

# Alpha Omega Alpha Induction Ceremony

Chicago Medical School held its annual Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) induction ceremony on May 30. Students, faculty, residents, and alumni were inducted into the national honor medical society in recognition of their scholarly achievement, professional conduct, excellence in teaching, and service. Congratulations to all the members of the CMS community who were honored at this event.

## Class of 2023 Initiates

Tyson Bates	Mustafa Farooqi	Mallory Miller	Kaitlyn Todd
William Bloom	Jeremy Foreman	James Nardini	Danielle Wales*
Anastasiya Boutko	Kathryn Fritz	Peter Nesper*	Edward Xie
Alecia Cherney	David Galel	Alexander Papadogiannis	Meghna Yalamanchi
Grant Christensen	Lauren Gard	Dil Patel	Lucy Yao
Emily Clamp	Meredith Hazelrigg	Julia Rauch	Jim Zhang
Emily Crawford	Sean Hormozian*	Alexandra Reed	
Azad Darbandi	Taylor Lewis*	Anne-Isabelle Reme	
Dayken Dawson	Ricardo Lopez-Betancourt*	Rachel Silverman	
Olivia Ekean	Anjali Mehta	Rachel To*	

\*inducted during their M3 year



## Class of 2024 Junior Initiates

Amin Alayleh

Murad Alostaz

Kylea Barnes

Reid Colliander

Alexander Freidinger

Devon Mitchell

Monica Myers

Cole Roblee

## Alumni Initiates

**Kimberley M. Darye**, MD '04

President

Elmhurst Memorial Hospital

**Romeo C. Ignacio, Jr.**, MD '97, MS '97, MS '93

Trauma Medical Director

Department of Trauma

Staff Pediatric Surgeon

Division of Pediatric Surgery

Rady Children's Hospital San Diego

**Kaleem A. Malik**, MD '96, MS '92

Clinical Faculty, Assistant Professor

Chicago Medical School

Director, Medical Disaster Response

Humanity First, USA

President & CEO

Meridian Emergency Consultants MD (MEC MD)

CEO

TriLab Health



## Faculty Initiates

**Michael Allswege, DO**

Associate Professor, Emergency Medicine  
Assistant Dean of Clinical Education

**Biana Kotlyar, MD**

Assistant Professor, Psychiatry  
Education Director, Psychiatry

## Resident Award Recipients

**Kurian Chandy, MD**

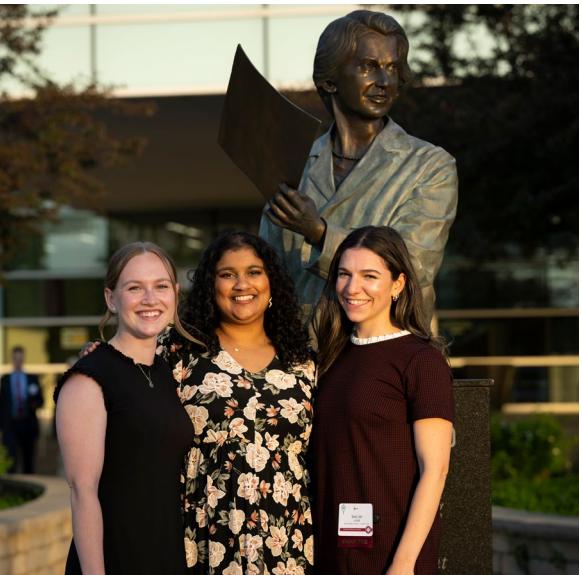
Internal Medicine Resident (FHCC)

**Ryan Stefancik, DO**

Psychiatry Resident

## Ashley Evans Professionalism Award Recipient

**Emily Clamp, MD '23** ■



**Pages 10-11, top row, from left:**

James Nardini, MD '23.  
Mustafa Farooqi, MD '23.  
Dayken Dawson, MD '23.  
Olivia Ekean, MD '23.  
Kathryn Fritz, MD '23.  
Michael Allswede, DO, assistant dean of clinical education, faculty initiate.

**Pages 10-11, bottom row, from left:**

Kimberly M. Darey, MD '04, alumna initiate.  
Alexandra Reed, MD '23.  
Emily Crawford, MD '23.  
Dil Patel, MD '23.  
Cole Roblee, CMS '24.  
Kaleem Malik, MD '96, MS '92, alumnus initiate, with Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD, dean of CMS.

**Pages 12-13, top row, from left:**

Alexander Papadogiannis, MD '23.  
Julia Rauch, MD '23.  
Alecia Cherney, MD '23.  
Daniel Wasserman, MD, psychiatry resident.  
Rachel To, MD '23, AOA Chapter President.  
Ryan Stefancik, DO, psychiatry resident.

**Pages 12-13, bottom row, from left:**

Danielle Wales, MD '23; Anjali Mehta, MD '23; and Taylor Lewis, MD '23.  
Romeo C. Ignacio Jr., MD '97, MS '97, MS '93, alumnus initiate.  
Anne-Isabelle Reme, MD '23.  
Kurian Chandy, MD, internal medicine resident, Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center.  
Rachel Silverman, MD '23.  
Devon Mitchell, CMS '24.



# Gold Humanism Honor Society

On May 31, twenty-seven members of the CMS Class of 2023 were inducted into the Gold Humanism Honor Society, an international organization that recognizes medical students for their integrity, compassion, and dedication to service. Students are nominated by their peers and approved by faculty and staff. Congratulations to the inductees:

**Samantha Benigni**, MD '23

**Malcolm Burks**, MD '23

**Carolyn Cook**, MD '23

**Emily Crawford**, MD '23

**Azad Darbandi**, MD '23, MS '19

**Amrit Deol**, MD '23

**Aaron Dyson**, MD '23

**Olivia Ekean**, MD '23

**Jeremy Foreman**, MD '23

**Lauren Gard**, MD '23

**Yanina Guevara**, MD '23

**Sean Hormozian**, MD '23

**Brianne Jennings**, MD '23, MS '19

**Christina Khouri**, MD '23

**Patrick Kittredge**, MD '23, MS '19

**Bohæ Lee**, MD '23

**Catherine Mahon**, MD '23

**Maria Mercurio**, MD '23

**Ashni Patel**, MD '23, MS '19

**Keith Pierzchala**, MD '23

**Julia Rauch**, MD '23

**Anne-Isabelle Reme**, MD '23, MS '18

**Hilary Brown Rettrey**, MD '23

**Kirin Tiwary Schultz**, MD '23

**Rachel To**, MD '23

**James Zhang**, MD '23 ■

**From top to bottom:** Jeanette Morrison, MD, executive vice dean for CMS and vice dean for medical education; Aaron Dyson, MD '23; Melissa Chen, MD, clinical director of the ICC; and Rosanne Oggioian, DO, clinical skills course director and lab director, with her daughter Grace. Dr. Morrison with Azad Darbandi, MD '23, MS '19. Brianne Jennings, MD '23, MS '19, with Dr. Oggioian. Dr. Oggioian; Dr. Chen; Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD, dean of CMS; and Dr. Morrison.





# ***CMS Student Selected for Distinguished Fellowship***

*As a Schweitzer Fellow, Ruth Londono Alzate, CMS '26, will carry out a service project in an underserved Chicago community.*

Second-year medical student **Ruth Londono Alzate** has been selected for the distinguished Schweitzer Fellowship — a year-long service-learning program that provides graduate students in health-related fields with opportunities to design and implement innovative projects that address the health needs of underserved Chicago communities.

Named in honor of famed humanitarian and Nobel laureate Dr. Albert Schweitzer, the Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellows Program encourages students to become lifelong leaders in public service by helping to address unmet health needs among vulnerable Chicagoland residents. Each fellow will collaborate with existing community organizations to launch a community-based project, dedicating a total of 200 hours of service. Using a broad public health lens, Ruth will work to improve community wellbeing and target the social determinants of health — the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age that have a profound impact on health and quality of life.

Ruth proposes to initiate a healthy lifestyle and empowerment program for at-risk youth who come from families experiencing financial struggles. The program will provide educational seminars and leadership courses to youth. The aim of the program is to empower these youth to believe in themselves and positively impact their community.

“Growing up in Zion, Illinois, I saw the need for empowerment and healthy coping mechanisms in the youth,” said Ruth. “I applied to the Schweitzer Fellowship because it is a great opportunity to give back to the community I grew up in and utilize the skills I learned in the Peace Corps to bridge gaps in health education and mental health access in my community.”

Using an interdisciplinary approach, the Fellowship exposes students to real-world interprofessional, collaborative health care and aims to develop lifelong leaders in service who will be dedicated to making change and combating health disparities throughout their careers. As a member of the 2023-24 class of Schweitzer Fellows, Ruth joins 27 other outstanding students representing 11 schools, 11 disciplines, and 19 academic programs.

In addition to her service project, Ruth and her peers will also participate in a thirteen-month program that includes monthly meetings, training, and ongoing opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration as well as support from a team of mentors from participating schools, project sites, and program alumni. The new Fellows join a network of over 700 Chicago alumni who have provided over 120,000 hours of community service to more than 150 community groups over the course of the program’s 27-year history. ■



## TeleHelp Ukraine

*CMS Student Julia Minkevitch helps lead the charge to provide support to a nation in need.*

In August 2022, six months after Russia invaded Ukraine, **Julia Minkevitch**, CMS '25, began her first year of medical school. She also decided to put her newly acquired medical knowledge to use by becoming a part of **TeleHelp Ukraine (THU)**, a non-profit and 501(c) charity founded to provide free medical and mental health consultations (through telemedicine services) to Ukrainians who have been deeply impacted by the ongoing war.

"Having spent several years living in Ukraine and with both of my parents hailing from the country, the impact of the Russian invasion deeply saddened me," said Julia. "In response, I made the decision to join TeleHelp Ukraine. Utilizing my language skills and limited medical knowledge, my goal is to contribute and provide assistance to Ukrainians, with the hope of alleviating some of the suffering caused by the invasion."

Julia has participated in various teams within THU, including patient services, operations, and provider services. Her commitment led her to pursue a higher leadership role within the organization, and she was appointed executive director of the nonprofit this year.

"I am inspired by the dedication exhibited by my fellow directors, who are passionate about helping Ukrainians," she said. "Our volunteers and clinicians are truly exceptional, and we look forward to expanding our team to extend our reach to a broader patient population and accomplish our goals."

Using a global network of clinicians and volunteers, THU works to provide telemedicine services to Ukrainians affected by the war, particularly those located in Ukraine and Poland. Patients — many of whom are displaced and don't have access to working



healthcare facilities — can sign up for appointments on the THU website, where they can also request specialties and leave relevant medical information. THU then arranges the availability of providers, translators, and medical interpreters. During the telemedicine visit, clinicians provide primary care, mental health care, or specialty consultations, with medical interpreters providing live translation during the virtual visit if needed.

### More Help Is Needed

RFU faculty and students are invited to volunteer their skills and time to help TeleHelp Ukraine fulfill its mission. Physicians of all specialties are needed, as well as mental health providers. Licensed clinicians from anywhere around the world can participate, although English proficiency is required. Medical students and other healthcare students (especially those who speak Ukrainian or Russian) can provide help with outreach, patient support, logistics, and other tasks.

"I hope that medical and other health profession students, physicians, and mental health professionals will join TeleHelp Ukraine to lend their expertise and

support to those affected by the Russian invasion," Julia said. "Ukrainians deserve access to essential medical and mental health services, especially during this crisis when access has been compromised. As healthcare providers, it is our responsibility to step up and help bridge the gap, ensuring that the affected communities receive the care and assistance they urgently need." ■

For more information, visit THU's website at [telehelpukraine.com](https://telehelpukraine.com)

Anyone interested in volunteering or making a monetary donation to THU can visit <https://telehelpukraine.com/i-want-to-help-1>

Anyone interested in volunteering, fundraising, or partnerships can also contact Julia at [julia.minkevitch@my.rfums.org](mailto:julia.minkevitch@my.rfums.org)

# Inaugural Emergency Medicine Orientation

This summer, rising M3 students preparing to start their clerkship rotations participated in an inaugural emergency medicine (EM) orientation in the simulation center at Northwestern Medicine Huntley Hospital. After years of too much virtual learning, the EM elective's new-and-improved orientation teaches students a variety of skills necessary in acute care medicine. **Nathan Sandalow**, MD, education director for emergency medicine and lead developer for the new orientation initiative, wanted to prepare CMS learners to become active contributing members of an ER team as soon as their first shift.

During the orientation, students learned to perform emergency point-of-care ultrasound, including the FAST (focused abdominal sonography in trauma) scan as well as bedside cardiac and gallbladder ultrasound techniques. They also received hands-on experience in central venous catheterization, including ultrasound-guided internal jugular vein catheterization and landmark-guided subclavian vein catheterization, so they can care for hemodynamically unstable patients as soon as they enter the ER.

Students also had the opportunity to use thoracic models to practice tube thoracostomy techniques to relieve hemothoraces and pneumothoraces. Practicing emergency physicians guided the students through various endotracheal intubation techniques including emergent cricothyroidotomy, making sure that CMS students are prepared for emergency airway interventions when they arrive at the start of their EM rotations.

"The emergency medicine elective and simulation course are designed such that any of our graduating students, no matter what specialty they choose to pursue, have an understanding of the techniques used in caring for the most acutely ill," said Dr. Sandalow. "Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our volunteers — Dr. Elina Kamaroff, Dr. Jordan Rosenberg, and Dr. Patrick Boyle. And thank you to the staff at the Huntley Simulation Center, Dr. Amy Pabst and Mr. Lawrence Wood." ■





# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

## Medical Outreach in the Philippines

Over the summer, members of the Philippine Medical Association of Chicago, including several CMS students, traveled to Pangasinan province in the Philippines for a medical mission. Students got a chance to shadow at a local hospital (Dagupan Doctors Villaflor Memorial Hospital) and present as invited plenary speakers for a continuing medical education talk titled "Bridging the Gap: Creating A Better Quality Access Within the United States

Healthcare System." The students also got a chance to see community rural medicine in practice, learning how physicians provide health care in remote areas.

CMS participants in the medical mission included **Ligaya V. Marasigan**, MD, associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology; **Med Jimenez**, CMS '25; **Alvi Renzyl Cortes**, CMS '25; **Lance Madanguit**, CMS '25; and **Warren Nakazawa**, CMS '25. ■



# *White Coat Ceremony*

After several days filled with orientation activities, the Class of 2027 capped off their first week on campus with the White Coat Ceremony, the rite of passage that marks a student's entrance into the world of medicine. Begun in 1993 by the Arnold P. Gold Foundation, the tradition of the white coat ceremony emphasizes the importance of compassionate patient care at the very start of medical students' training. Before the members of the Class of 2027 crossed the stage to don the white coats that would identify them as physicians-in-training, several CMS faculty, alumni, and upperclassmen spoke to them about the trust inherent in the doctor-patient relationship, and the qualities they would have to embody to prove themselves worthy of that trust.

**Kaleem Malik, MD '96, MS '92**, a trauma/emergency medicine physician, gave the keynote address. A

distinguished alumnus of CMS, Dr. Malik serves as the Director of Medical Disaster Response for Humanity First, USA, under the direction of the WHO and the United Nations. He has dedicated much of his career to medical missions and disaster response, most recently helping the victims of the two earthquakes in Turkey earlier this year. In his speech to the Class of 2027, Dr. Malik talked about "the journey of the ask" — the extraordinary things that would be asked of them during their careers as physicians.

He also spoke about the importance of listening and exercising empathy, asking them to see their patients as people first, not numbers. "Appreciate the magnitude and the fullness of your patient; appreciate the fullness of their existence. This is not a digit, it's not a number — it's a patient," he said.



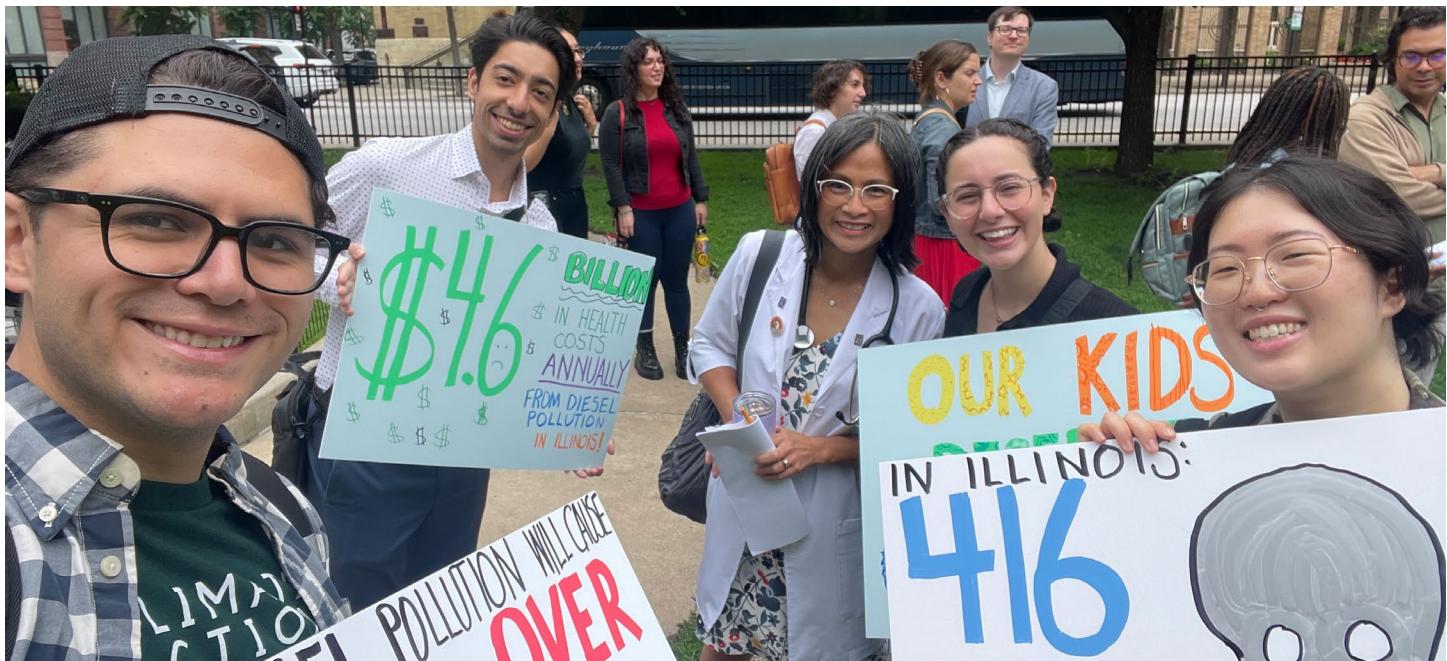
"Let the IRS worry about us as numbers; that's fine. We should never view them as anything other than the whole person, the human being."

**Bryce Alderson**, CMS '26, class president, gave the student address, welcoming the new students to CMS and offering them some practical advice. He assured them that even though they might experience stress and doubt, they were not alone. He also encouraged them to be adaptable and never compare themselves with others, and to remember that medical school was about more than books and exams.

"I believe your primary goal here is not even to learn to be a doctor," Bryce said. "I truly believe, on the deepest level, that our purpose here in medical school is to build, develop, and forge an unbreakable character so that one day, when you are a physician, you will have the willpower, the drive, and the spirit you need to never, never give up."

In keeping with the ceremony's focus on compassion and humanism in medicine, two students from the CMS Class of 2025 reflected on the meaning of the white coat and shared what traits and characteristics the coat represented for them. For **Reema Rashied**, the white coat represents the privilege of being trusted to care for patients. "Wear your white coat with pride and humility, and remember that it's not about the coat; it's about the heart that you put into it," she said.

For **Alana Campbell**, as a first-generation student, the white coat represents the culmination of the hard work and sacrifices she made to get to medical school. "Your journey through medical school allows you to craft your identity as a healthcare professional," she told the Class of 2027. "Each day, as you put on your white coat, envision it as a canvas upon which you can paint a reflection of the physician you want to be for your patients in the future. Let your white coat symbolize the transformative potential within you all." ■



## Joining the Fight for Clean Air

**Regina de Leon Gomez**, MD, CMS assistant professor and director of the Clinical Foundations of Medicine course, participated in a July press conference in Heritage Green Park in Chicago, joining other air quality and climate advocates in an effort to improve the air quality in Illinois. The climate advocates called on Governor Pritzker to enact clean truck rules to reduce harmful pollution.

The press conference was organized by Neighbors for an Equitable Transition to Zero-Emission (NETZ), a community-focused coalition working to get Illinois to adopt the Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT) and Omnibus Low Nitrogen Oxides (LowNOx) rules in order to reduce the air pollution caused by diesel trucks, thereby improving public health. The event took place shortly after smoke spreading southward from Canadian wildfires caused record-breaking spikes in dangerous air pollutants in Illinois, bringing thoughts about the connections between air quality and health to the forefronts of many people's minds.

Dr. Gomez, an obstetrician/gynecologist, spoke about the danger of pollution from diesel fuels and heavy-duty vehicles, especially for pregnant people,

infants, and marginalized populations. "Exposure to air pollution like what we find in diesel pollution puts pregnant people at risk for adverse outcomes like pre-term delivery and low birth weight. Our failure to address pollution is a failure to appreciate the perinatal death and neonatal disability caused by pre-term births," she said during the press conference, going on to note that Black mothers and those with asthma face the greatest risk to their health. She also explained that the pollutants released into the air by diesel exhaust can increase the risk of asthma attacks, lung cancer, heart attacks, and strokes.

"The technology for electric trucks is already here," said Dr. Gomez. "Now we have a choice: to breathe dirty air that makes people sick, or to reduce diesel pollution. It's up to Governor Pritzker to make a good choice and protect these vulnerable populations by enacting the clean truck safeguards." ■

**Top photo, from left to right:** Dany Robles, Climate Policy Director, Illinois Environmental Council; Tarik Shahzad, The Nature Conservancy; Dr. Regina Gomez, Chicago Medical School; Emilee Chacras, Sierra Club; and Linda Trey, Union of Concerned Scientists.

# *Addressing Veteran Pain Through A Whole Health Approach*

A team of researchers and healthcare providers from RFU and the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC) — including the FHCC's Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) team, TBI/Polytrauma Case Management team, and Whole Health team — received the #BetterTogether Award for the month of May, awarded by the Veterans Integrated Services Network (VISN) 12 Veterans Experience subcommittee. The VISN 12, which comprises parts of Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana, works to better meet local healthcare needs of veterans within the VA Great Lakes Health Care System.

The team, which includes **Bharathi Swaminathan**, MD, EMG and TBI Fellowship Director and VISN 12 PM&R Lead at the FHCC and Site Director for the PM&R Residency Program for CMS; **Julie Schwertfeger**, PT, PhD '20, DPT '16, MBA, CBIST, clinical assistant professor of psychiatry and behavioral science for CMS and Advanced Polytrauma/TBI Research Fellow at the FHCC; **Emily Squier**, MA, LCSW, Senior TBI/Polytrauma Case Manager at the FHCC; **Cindy Gunnarson**, MSN, Whole Health System Manager at the FHCC; and student **Nathaniel Ung**, CMS '26, received this award for their work implementing a performance improvement initiative to empower veterans through education about Whole Health and the availability of complementary and integrative health services.

The FHCC PM&R team provides Battlefield Acupuncture (BFA) to treat traumatic brain injury (TBI), pain, and anxiety. With the support of an EQUITY Quality Improvement grant, the PM&R staff developed a patient-flow process to provide general Whole Health self-driven skills such as Biofeedback, Deep Breathing, Forgiveness, Mindful Awareness, and Progressive Relaxation. Seventy-five percent of the veterans presenting for BFA volunteered to participate in the performance improvement project, and preliminary findings include patient improvements in:

- Knowledge of the Whole Health philosophy and CIH modalities provided at the FHCC.
- Understanding about how CIH modalities can improve their TBI, pain, and anxiety.
- Patient and clinician use of the Whole Health philosophy and self-care modalities.

Through this collaboration, staff, patients, and medical residents are connecting self-management skills to medical treatments, and patients are more active participants in their own care and wellness.

The RFU/FHCC team will also be presenting their Whole Health quality improvement project at the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine in the fall, where they will discuss using integrative health and BFA to improve patient care for veterans suffering from chronic pain following a TBI. ■



Dr. Bharathi Swaminathan



Dr. Julie Schwertfeger



Nathaniel Ung



Emily Squier



Cindy Gunnarson

# Clinical Sciences Corner

*Our Clinical Sciences Department works to give our students the clinical experiences they need to become skilled, compassionate physicians.*



A CMS leadership team including Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD, dean of CMS; Brenda Affinati, MD, FACP, associate dean for clinical affairs; Michael Allswede, DO, FNAP, assistant dean of clinical education; Nutan Vaidya, MD, vice dean for faculty affairs and equity; Frank Maldonado, MD, executive chair of clinical sciences; and Alice Holmes, coordinator for clinical affairs, visited Holy Cross Hospital in August along with directors of clinical education from RFU's Physician Assistant program, Nurse Anesthesia program, and Scholl. The clinical education leadership met with CMS alumni John Wahhab, MD '15 (Emergency Medicine Sub-Internship Director and Assistant Education Director) and Fernando Orellana, MD '00 (Emergency Medicine Site Director and Medical Director of Holy Cross).



Dr. Frank Maldonado, Dr. Nutan Vaidya, Dr. Michael Allswede, Dr. Archana Chatterjee, Dr. Brenda Affinati, and Alice Holmes at Holy Cross Hospital.



In May, the Internal Medicine site directors held their spring meeting as the CMS Class of 2025 prepared to begin their clerkships.

# Innovation in Education: *Using a Virtual Simulation to Teach Interprofessional Patient Care*

Last November, **Robin L. Dyer**, MD, OTR, assistant professor of internal medicine, interprofessional education, and clinical simulation, and **Tamzin Ritchie**, BSc, research specialist, DeWitt C. Baldwin Institute for Interprofessional Education, were among the recipients of the inaugural Elizabeth Shafernich Coulson Faculty Award for Innovation in Teaching and Learning. All RFU faculty had the opportunity to present proposals that identified a challenge in teaching and learning and presented an innovative solution. Dr. Dyer and Ms. Ritchie's proposal was one of two projects that were awarded funding.

Their project has involved developing a web-based simulation focused on specific ethnic disparities in OB/GYN health outcomes and severe maternal morbidity for BIPOC women in rural communities. In July, Dr. Dyer and Ms. Ritchie filmed their simulation at the Center for Advanced Simulation at Northwestern Medicine Huntley Hospital, using two standardized patient actors and a full filming crew to follow the story of Simone and Daniel Sodo. The simulation explores how a family's complex medical

needs are complicated by healthcare disparities and social determinants of health: Simone has pre-eclampsia, and her husband Daniel is a veteran with PTSD and opioid use disorder. The videos follow the family through all three trimesters of Simone's pregnancy.

In addition to the two actors, six interprofessional RFU faculty members, including **Dr. Amy Pabst** from CMS, acted in the simulation. The finished simulation will be used with second-year students in RFU's medicine, clinical psychology, podiatry, physician assistants, physical therapy, nursing, and pharmacology programs. The educational experience will help increase students' awareness of social determinants of health while giving students a chance to collaborate interprofessionally.

Dr. Dyer and Ms. Ritchie have been asked to present their project at the Jefferson Interprofessional Education Conference in the fall. They will also share results from the project at RFU's Innovation and Impact seminar in the spring of 2024. ■



*The film team in the ambulance bay area of Northwestern Medicine Huntley Hospital's simulation center.*



*CMS faculty Dr. Amy Pabst (left) with the standardized patient actor playing Simone.*





# *Celebrating Our Staff*

## *RFU Staff Recognition & Awards*

Congratulations to **Katie Stanutz**, Director of Curriculum Management, for winning an award at the university's 16th annual Staff Recognition & Awards ceremony! Katie received an "Unsung Champion" award, which recognizes individuals for hard work done behind the scenes. This award recognizes Katie as a dedicated worker who consistently works to improve her area, completes tasks and duties with a high level of quality, has a positive attitude, and demonstrates sincere willingness to help in whatever capacity necessary — all while performing acts of initiative and commitment that often go unnoticed.

Katie was nominated for this award by two different people. The first nominator said, in part: "Katelyn goes above and beyond in her role. She is always there to help our class with all of our NBME computer problems and she makes all the students feel comfortable and supported during exam days. ... I greatly appreciate her kindness and dedication to help students in any way she can. I am incredibly grateful for all she does for our class and this school. It truly means the world."

The second nominator said, in part: "I can think of no more-deserving recipient of the Unsung Champion

award than Katelyn Stanutz. Katie is the truest example of dedicating oneself to detail-oriented and thoughtful work, including chief proctor responsibilities, data collection and analysis, and program evaluation. She never seeks personal recognition or reward. She is thorough, meticulous, logical, and prepared! ... Katie's selflessness and dedication inspire others to make a difference and create a ripple effect of positive change. I am

honored to nominate her for this award. She is most deserving of this honor."

We would also like to thank and acknowledge all the other CMS staff members who were nominated for awards this year: **Kari Brownholland, Allie Cassidy, Nikki Dixon, Danielle Priester, Lesly Rivera, Sarah Schuck, and Nichole Ulibarri**. We're grateful to all our staff for everything you do! ■



# Graduate Medical Education (GME) News

## Welcoming Our New Residents



### ► Psychiatry Residents, Class of 2027

**Front row:** Drs. Shifa Khan, Paulina Pys, and Ji In Choi.

**Back row:** Drs. Michael Luo, Muhammad Nouman, Connor Haszto, and Omar Ruyyashi.

**Not pictured:** Dr. Ryan Shu.

### Internal Medicine Residents (Northwestern), Class of 2026 ▶

**Front row:** Drs. Mina Fattah, Gauri Pikale, and Izna Hadi.

**Back row:** Drs. Vishal Garimella, Eria Muwanguzi, Bolumaduro Adeyemi, Antonio Galindo, Kevin Chen, Oluwafunmbi Fatunmbi, Harin Shah, Omar Kakhouri, and Nasibul Alam.



### ► Internal Medicine Residents (FHCC), Class of 2026

**Front row:** Drs. Juwariah Abdul, Selina Soto, and Nicolette Celia.

**Back row:** Drs. Neeta Muddasani Reddy, Manoj Kumar, Aamirhusen Tirmijisaiyed, Khaled Ali, Syed Fazal Mehdi Rizvi, and Dr. Fnu Simranjit.

**Not pictured:** Dr. Christopher Iruolagbe.



# Graduate Medical Education (GME) News

## Residency Graduation Ceremonies

Chicago Medical School celebrated the graduates of its three residency programs during a combined ceremony on campus on June 8. Congratulations to our recently graduated psychiatry residents, FHCC internal medicine residents, and Northwestern Medicine McHenry internal medicine residents!

Some of the programs also organized additional off-campus celebrations for the new graduates. ■



Graduating Northwestern Medicine McHenry internal medicine residents — Om Parkash, MD; Shrey Gole, MD; Shirly Samuel, MD; Grace Ying, DO; Jashan Gill, MD; Sonika Prasad, MD; Delaram Majlesi, MD; Jishna Shrestha, MD; Artem Sharko, MD; Prashant K. Sura, MD, residency associate program director; Ram Chandra Khatri Chhetri, MD; Maryna Shayuk, MD, residency program director; Ted Lorenc, MD, director of medical education, Northwestern Medicine McHenry; Thiago Gagliano Juca D. Oliveira, MD; Gowthami Koorapati, MD; and Arvin Mallari, MD.



Graduating FHCC internal medicine residents — Front row: Chief Medical Resident Nehal Patel, MD; Javairia Quraishi, MD; Megan Biggs, MD; Aathi Mariappan, MD; Ammar Ahmed, MD; and Jonathan Bell, MD. Back row: Todd Johnson, MD; Piotr Krolikowski, MD; Hiteshwar Mangat, MD; William Cotter, MD, residency associate program director; Seth Heithaus, MD; Kenneth Joseph, MD; and Jonathan Daniels, MD, residency program director.



Graduating psychiatry residents — Front row: Sally Chu, MD; Joy Tso, residency program administrator; and Elizabeth Augustine, MD. Back row: Paul Hung, MD, residency program director; Nicholas Sahagian, MD; Ali Khoshkish, MD; Hans Wang, MD; Nikhilesh Raju, MD; Daniel Wasserman, MD; and Ravneet Singh, MD.

# Graduate Medical Education (GME) News



Northwestern Medicine internal medicine residents celebrated with a boat cruise in Chicago.



The graduating psychiatry residents at their celebratory graduation dinner at Maggiano's.

# Graduate Medical Education (GME) News

## Residency Awards

The winners of the psychiatry residents' annual poster competition, held this past spring, received their awards at the graduation dinner. **Ali Khoshkish**, MD, and **Daniel Wasserman**, MD, received first place for their poster titled "Getting to the Point: Acupuncture." **Allison Fassett**, MD, received second place for her poster titled "A Deluded Brain through a Neuroimaging Lens." **Jeremy Wolfe**, MD, received third place for his poster titled "Autoimmune Encephalitis as a Psychiatric Rule-Out Condition." **Shermeen Sheikh**, MD, received the "faculty choice" prize for her poster titled "TikTok Tics."



Dr. Daniel Wasserman, Dr. Ali Khoshkish, and Dr. Jeremy Wolfe, with program director Dr. Paul Hung.

**Nithin Edara**, MD, received the **Collegiality and Humanism Award**, given in honor of Dr. Chandra Vedak, a CMS associate professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences. This award is given in recognition of "going the extra mile" for fellow residents.

**Gary Wu**, MD (junior resident) and **Ravneet Singh**, MD (senior resident) received the **Marc Fahami Award for Passion in Psychiatry**, awarded to two residents each year for demonstrating a passion

for the field of psychiatry and care of psychiatric patients.



Dr. Gary Wu receives his award from Dr. Paul Hung.

**Ria Datta**, MD, was named **Resident Teacher of the Year**, an honor awarded by medical students in Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences for excellence in teaching medical students.



Dr. Ria Datta receives her award from Dr. Paul Hung.

The following faculty also received awards, nominated by psychiatry residents. **Wynetta Harris-Castillo**, MD, assistant professor, received the **Clinical Teacher of the Year Award**, while **Laura Colbert**, MD, assistant professor, received the **Academic Teacher of the Year Award**. **Jackie Rajani**, MD, R '21, associate professor of neurology, received the **Faculty Service Award**.

# Graduate Medical Education (GME) News

Residents and faculty from the FHCC internal medicine residency program also received awards this summer. Congratulations to the following individuals:



**Vishnu Jindal**, MD, assistant professor of medicine and FHCC site director, received the **Max H. Weil Excellence in Clinical Teaching Award**, which recognizes an individual with outstanding teaching in a clinical setting.

Dr. Jindal also received the **James B. Hammond Humanitarian Award**, which recognizes an individual who has exhibited humanitarianism for the community or the world.



Dr. Krolikowski



Dr. Khoukaz

**Piotr Krolikowski**, MD, was named **Outstanding Graduating Medical Resident**, while **Hekmat Khoukaz**, MD, was named **Outstanding Medical Intern**. Dr. Krolikowski also received the **Eric Gall Professionalism Award**, which recognizes the resident or fellow who demonstrates the highest degree of welfare for their patients and aspires to altruism, accountability, excellence, duty, service, honor, integrity, and respect for others and for the health needs of society. ■

## Other GME News



In July, the psychiatry residents had a quarterly Wellness Day at the Chicago Botanic Gardens. They spent the afternoon doing a scavenger hunt in the gardens.

Congratulations to **Hyder Ali**, MD, and **Mariam Khabsa**, MD, both from the Northwestern Medicine McHenry internal medicine residency program, for receiving a Golden Apple Award for Resident Teacher of the Year! ■



Dr. Hyder Ali



Dr. Mariam Khabsa

# Alumni News

## Alpha Omega Alpha Alumni Inductees

Congratulations to the three CMS alumni who were inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society Delta Chapter of Illinois! The ceremony took place May 30 at RFU. ■



Kaleem A. Malik, MD '96, MS '92 (second from right) with his family and Dean Archana Chatterjee.



Romeo C. Ignacio Jr., MD '97, MS '97, MS '93 (left) with his family and Dean Archana Chatterjee.

# Alumni News



Kimberley M. Dary, MD '04 (second from right) with her family and Dean Archana Chatterjee.

## Other Alumni News

**Ronald Hirsch**, MD '88, vice president of the regulations and education group at R1 RCM Inc., shared best practices for case management at the 29th Annual Midwest Care Coordination Conference, held May 11 at the University of Southern Indiana.

**Mark Zimmerman**, MD '90, was appointed chief of ambulatory psychiatry and behavioral health at South County Psychiatry, which has five locations in Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Connecticut.

**Kaleem A. Malik**, MD '96, MS '92, received The Humanitarian Global Health Award at the Institute of Medicine of Chicago's 2023 Annual Meeting and Healthcare Awards program on June 22. Dr. Malik was also the keynote speaker for Chicago Medical School's White Coat Ceremony for the Class of 2027.

**Bridget Martell**, MD '97, MA, was appointed to the board of directors at POINT Biopharma Global Inc., a precision oncology company focused on the development of radiopharmaceuticals.

**Sohaib Amjad**, MD '19, was selected as Resident Educator of the Year at John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County, where he recently graduated from his Emergency Medicine residency after serving as Chief Resident.

**Estefan Beltran**, MD '20, received the Alex S. Tucker, MD, Service Award at University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health's Multicultural Affairs graduation celebration. ■

# Alumni News

## Recent Alumni Visits



CMS and RFU leadership traveled to Los Angeles to meet with some of our LA-area alumni at an event in West Hollywood.

Pictured from left to right: George Rattin, RFU Executive Director of Development; David Hoffman, MD '94; Dean Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD; Sharon Hame, MD '91; Leo Li, MD '91; Jason Bromberg, MD '96; and Michael Ellison, EdD, CMS Associate Dean for Admissions.



In May, Chicagoland alumni met with CMS and RFU representatives at the Barn Steakhouse in Evanston to learn about opportunities to engage with CMS and its students.



Dean Chatterjee with Barry Schifrin, MD '63, in Los Angeles.



### Pamela Bain

Executive Administrative Assistant,  
CMS Dean's Office  
Time at CMS: 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  months

Earlier this summer, the CMS Dean's Office was happy to welcome Pamela Bain as our new Executive Administrative Assistant. In this role, Pamela provides administrative support to Dean Chatterjee, including managing calendars and arranging travel. She is also the first face most people see when entering the Dean's Office suite; visitors to the Dean's Office over the summer may have already met and been welcomed by Pamela.

"Each day, my goal is to provide exceptional support to Dr. Chatterjee, the CMS Dean's Office, and the RFU community at large," Pamela said.

Pamela was born and raised in North Chicago. She stayed in the Chicagoland area to attend a satellite campus of Columbia College, where she earned a bachelor's degree in psychology. After graduation, she retained her Illinois roots, taking jobs in Deerfield and Lincolnshire. Most recently, she worked not far from RFU at W.W. Grainger in Lake Forest. She has over a decade of experience providing strategic support to executives and senior leadership. She has had additional previous experience coordinating meeting and event logistics, managing international and domestic itineraries, and facilitating travel plans for executives.

Although she is new to the world of academic medicine, Pamela says that she was drawn to CMS/RFU because of its footprint in the Chicagoland community.

When asked to name her favorite thing about working at CMS, Pamela responded: "The people! I have never experienced such a seamless and supportive onboarding."

Pamela is always willing to learn new skills — for example, although she is an excellent cook, she shared that she just recently learned how to cook eggs during the pandemic. Other hobbies include listening to true crime podcasts and spending time with her favorite humans: her daughter, Bryanna; her life-partner, Torrance; and her best friend of 40+ years, Carla. Pamela loves music and will travel anywhere to see a favorite artist. She aspires to live by her favorite quote: "Enjoy yourself. It's later than you think." — Carl Sigman ■

# School & Department News

## Awards & Accomplishments



**EunJung Hwang**, PhD, assistant professor of cell biology and anatomy, received a two-year, \$780,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for her research study “Neural Circuits for Decision Making.”



**David Mueller**, PhD, professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, Center for Genetic Diseases, received a \$110,000 award from Washington University in St. Louis as part of a five-year grant for the research study “Regulation of Mitochondrial Metabolism by Tyr-phosphorylated ATP Synthase  $\alpha$ -subunit and its Therapeutic Implications in Prostate Cancer.”







**Warren Nakazawa**, CMS '25, won the Central Society for Clinical and Translational Research (CSCTR) poster presentation award after presenting his poster titled “Understanding Phospholipase D2 Activation and its Role in Viral Gene Expression during de Novo Kaposi Sarcoma-associated Herpesvirus (KSHV) Infection” at the CSCTR’s Midwest Clinical and Translational Research Meeting, held April 24-45 in Chicago. The poster was based on research conducted in Dr. Neelam Sharma-Walia’s lab.

Warren's poster abstract will be published in the *Journal of Investigative Medicine*.



**James O'Donnell**, PhD, MS, associate professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology, was elected President of the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics-Great Lakes Chapter (ASPET-GLC) at the annual meeting this June.





A professional portrait of Beth Stutzmann, PhD. She is a woman with shoulder-length brown hair, wearing a blue sleeveless top with a keyhole neckline. She is smiling and looking directly at the camera. To the right of the portrait, a block of text provides information about her research and grant.

Dr. Stutzmann also received a \$99,975 award from Loyola University as part of a four-year grant for the research study “Sex-specific Regulation of microRNAs in Alzheimer’s Disease.”

## **Presentations & Publications**



**Michael Allsweide, DO, FNAP,**  
assistant dean of clinical education  
and associate professor of  
emergency medicine, co-authored

# School & Department News

an article titled “The Criminalisation of Women’s Healthcare in the Post-Dobbs Era: An Analysis of the Anti-Abortion Trigger Law Statutes,” published in the *European Journal of Contraception & Reproductive Health Care*.



**Yvette D. Castañeda**, PhD, MPH, MBA, research assistant professor in the Department of Foundational Sciences and Humanities and community engagement core lead in the Michael Reese Foundation Center for Health Equity Research, has published several articles recently:

- “Leveraging Key Informant Interviews to Inform Intervention Development: The Greater Lawndale Healthy Work Project,” published in *Community Health Equity Research and Policy*.
- “Barriers and Facilitators to Addressing COVID-19: Results from the Chicagoland CEAL Program Needs Assessment of Community-Based Organizations and Nonprofits,” published in *Frontiers in Public Health*.
- “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*.

Dr. Castañeda also gave a lecture titled “Qualitative Paradigms: Ethnography, Narrative Analysis, and Case Analysis” at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

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**Joanna Dabrowska**, PhD, PharmD, associate professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology, Center for Neurobiology of Stress Resilience and

Psychiatric Disorders, presented her research titled “Neuropeptidergic Modulation of the BNST Activity by Vasopressin” at the Society for Biological Psychiatry’s annual meeting in San Diego.



**Nicole Ferrara**, PhD, assistant professor of physiology and biophysics, is first author on two articles accepted for publication that are currently in press: “Amygdala Circuit Transitions Supporting Developmentally-Appropriate Social Behavior” will be published in *Neurobiology of Learning and Memory*, and “Maturation of a Cortical-Amygdala Circuit Limits Sociability” will be published in *Cerebral Cortex*.

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**Elliot M. Levine**, MD ’78, associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology, recently published several articles:

- “Extended Use of Levonorgestrel Intrauterine System for Contraception,” published in the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*.
- “Addressing Racial/Ethnic Health Disparities and the Rising Incidence of Syphilis,” published in the *Archives of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*.
- “The Expanding Role of Sonography in the Clinical Practice of Modern Obstetrics and Gynecology: A Clinical Perspective,” published in the *Journal of Diagnostic Medical Sonography*.



# School & Department News



Dr. Kelly Oh



Dr. Hongkyun Kim

**Kelly Oh**, PhD, research assistant professor of cell biology and anatomy, and **Hongkyun Kim**, PhD, associate professor of cell biology and anatomy, along with **Ame Xiong**, graduate student, DPM/PhD program (all from the Center for Cancer Cell Biology, Immunology, and Infection) authored two publications: “Clarinet/CLA-1 Recruits RIMB-1/RIM-Binding Protein and UNC-13 to Orchestrate Presynaptic Neurotransmitter Release” was published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, and “Active Zone Trafficking of CaV2/UNC-2 Channels Is Independent of  $\beta$ /CCB-1 and  $\alpha 2\delta$ /UNC-36 Subunits” was published as a featured article in the *Journal of Neuroscience*.

**Kelly Oh**, PhD, research assistant professor of cell biology and anatomy, and **Hongkyun Kim**, PhD, associate professor of cell biology and anatomy, along with **Ame Xiong**, graduate student, DPM/PhD program (all from the Center for Cancer Cell Biology, Immunology, and Infection) authored two publications: “Clarinet/CLA-1 Recruits RIMB-1/RIM-Binding Protein and UNC-13 to Orchestrate Presynaptic Neurotransmitter Release” was published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, and “Active Zone Trafficking of CaV2/UNC-2 Channels Is Independent of  $\beta$ /CCB-1 and  $\alpha 2\delta$ /UNC-36 Subunits” was published as a featured article in the *Journal of Neuroscience*.



Dr. Judy Potashkin



Sarah Arora

and Lifestyle Impact the Development and Progression of Alzheimer’s Dementia,” published in *Frontiers in Nutrition*. The article discusses epidemiological and clinical studies suggesting that lifestyle changes, including diet and physical activity, offer a therapeutic route for slowing and preventing cognitive decline and dementia. Dr. Potashkin and Ms. Arora summarize the pathophysiology, associated risk factors, and the potential neuroprotective pathways activated by several diets and eating regimes that have shown promising results in promoting brain health and preventing dementia.

Dr. Potashkin and colleague Jose Santiago, NeuroHub Analytics, LLC, co-authored two articles: “Physical Activity and Lifestyle Modifications in the Treatment of Neurodegenerative Diseases,” published in *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience*, and “Biological and Clinical Implications of Sex-Specific Differences in Alzheimer’s Disease,” published in the *Handbook of Experimental Pharmacology*.



**Amy Pabst**, MD, MHPE, assistant professor of family medicine and healthcare simulation medical director, presented “SPs in Role-playing as Candidates for Interviewer Training in Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs)” at the Association of Standardized Patient (SP) Educators Annual Conference in Portland, Oregon.

**Judy Potashkin**, PhD, professor and discipline chair of cellular and molecular pharmacology, Center for Neurodegenerative Diseases and Therapeutics, and **Sarah Arora**, CMS '24, authored an article titled “Diet

**Olivia Powrozek**, graduate student, gave an oral presentation titled “A Novel Role of Aquaporin 3 in Regulating Oxidative Stress in Kaposi’s Sarcoma-Associated Virus (KSHV)-associated Primary Effusion Lymphoma” at the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics-Great Lakes Chapter



Olivia Powrozek

# School & Department News

(ASPET-GLC) annual meeting in Chicago. The presentation featured work conducted by Ms. Powrozek; **Melanie Klemond**, CMS '24; **Morgan Mroz**, CMS '24; and **Neelam Sharma-Walia**, PhD, associate professor of microbiology and immunology.

Ms. Powrozek also presented a poster on the same topic at the American Society for Virology annual meeting, held June 24-28 in Athens, GA.



Melanie Klemond



Morgan Mroz



Dr. Sharma-Walia



**Sabahat Raees**, CMS '25, authored a research article titled "Calcium Carbonate as a Potential Intervention to Prevent Labor Dystocia: Narrative Review of the Literature," published in the *Journal of Patient-Centered Research and Reviews*.

The goal of this narrative review was to provide a synopsis of pertinent literature on calcium use in obstetrics to explore the potential benefit of calcium carbonate as a simple and low-cost intervention for prevention or treatment of labor dystocia.

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Khalil Qadri

**Khalil Qadri**, CMS '24, presented a poster titled "Role of Phospholipase D in Modulating the Mammalian Target of Rapamycin (mTOR) Signaling in Primary Effusion Lymphoma (PEL) Cells" on May 16 as part of a National VA Research

Week event held by RFU and the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center. The poster was based on research conducted by Mr. Qadri; **Robert DeBlander III**, CMS '24; **Olivia Powrozek**, graduate student; **Adina Dobre**, CMS '24; **Asha Kumari**, PhD, postdoctoral research associate; and **Neelam Sharma-Walia**, PhD, associate professor of microbiology and immunology.



Robert DeBlander III



Adina Dobre

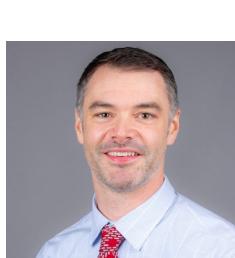


Dr. Asha Kumari



**Hector Rasgado-Flores**, PhD, professor of physiology and biophysics, presented on the topic "Assembling a Successful Research Team and Lab for UIIM 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.

Also, 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.



**Joseph Rumenapp**, CMS '25, published a research article from research he conducted at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The article is entitled "Developing Health Literacy Events: A Case

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# School & Department News

Study of Teachers Designing Health Curricula" and is published in the *Health Education Journal*. Joseph co-authored the article with a team of researchers and teachers about codesigning elementary school curricula toward building health literacy.

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**Amanda Simanek**, PhD, MPH, associate professor of foundational sciences and humanities and director of the Michael Reese Foundation Center for Health Equity Research, co-authored "What Were the Information Voids? A Qualitative Analysis of Questions Asked by *Dear Pandemic* Readers between August 2020-August 2021," published in the *Journal of Health Communication*. This publication reports findings from a qualitative analysis of 3,800 questions submitted by readers to the social media-based science communication campaign *Dear Pandemic*, of which Dr. Simanek is a founding member and contributing writer. Four themes emerged: the need for clarification of other information sources, lack of trust in information, recognition of possible misinformation, and questions on personal decision-making. Each theme reflects an unmet informational need of *Dear Pandemic* readers, which may be reflective of the broader informational gaps in science communication efforts.

Dr. Simanek also presented on "Gender Inequities in Health" at the 6th Annual Population Health Institute, Sinai Population Health Institute, on June 6.

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**Beth Stutzmann**, PhD, professor of neuroscience and director of the Center for Neurodegenerative Disease



*Dr. Beth Stutzmann*

and Therapeutics, presented an invited talk titled "A Tragic Triad of Organelle Dysfunction in Alzheimer's Disease: Calcium Culpability" at the Cellular and Organellar Calcium Signaling Conference in Haifa, Israel. The talk was based on work from her lab by Sarah Mustaly, PhD '23, and Wacey Gallegos, SGPS '26. Drs. Stutzmann and Mustaly also co-authored comments on the Alzforum.org post "Whole Genome Analysis Nets New Lewy Body Dementia Gene."

Dr. Stutzmann was also an invited speaker at the Gordon Research Conference on Organellar Channels and Transporters, held in Barcelona, Spain, on August 5. Her talk was titled "Mitochondrial Dysfunction in Alzheimer's Disease and Down Syndrome in Patient-Derived Human Neurons."

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**Justin Whalley**, PhD, assistant professor of foundational sciences and humanities, Center for Cancer Cell Biology, Immunology, and Infection, co-authored a publication titled "A Transcriptomic Approach to Understand Patient Susceptibility to Pneumonia After Abdominal Surgery," published in the *Annals of Surgery*. The work was done with colleagues and collaborators from the University of Oxford, Imperial College, Queen Mary University of London, Wellcome Sanger Institute in the UK, and St. Vincent's University Hospital in Ireland.



# School & Department News

## Events and Other News



**Neil A. Bradbury**, PhD, professor of physiology and biophysics, Center for Genetic Diseases, was interviewed, along with other educators and researchers, for an article in *TIME Magazine* on attention span. Dr. Bradbury was

contacted by the *TIME* correspondent concerning a 2016 paper he had published on attention span in physiology students, which he was recently invited to update for *Advances in Physiology Education*.

Dr. Bradbury was also interviewed by his former graduate student **Isha Dey**, PhD '18, for the article "Cystic Fibrosis: Current Understanding and Prospects," published in *ASBMB Today*, the member magazine of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

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**Sarah Schuck**, director of the Dean's Office, was elected to the executive council of the RFU Staff Council, where she will serve as chair during the 2023-2024 term. The Staff Council serves as the official liaison between staff and other university constituencies.



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The CMS community celebrated **Juneteenth** both on and off campus. Juneteenth is celebrated each year to mark the date of June 19, 1865, when news of the Emancipation Proclamation finally reached enslaved Africans in Texas. Today, Juneteenth commemorates

African American freedom and emphasizes education and achievement.

On campus, RFU hosted an event on June 15 with music, education, food, and community. Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) **Eric Williams**, PhD, gave a presentation about the history and importance of gospel music from the time of the slave trade through the Civil Rights movement. Attendees also enjoyed music from the Community Singers and lunch provided by JR Smokehouse and Food for Thought. RFU's DEI Office and African American/Black Employee Resource Group co-sponsored the event's activities.

Off campus, **Michael Ellison**, EdD, CMS Associate Dean for Admissions, spoke as a panelist at the second annual "Juneteenth in Joliet" celebration at the Joliet Area Historical Museum in Joliet, IL. During the program, panelists discussed the evolution of race relations; adapting to change; bridging economic gaps; strengthening the community's foundation to better support diversity, equity and inclusion; how to build trust and understanding; and ways to positively affect the future. ■



*Dr. Michael Ellison at the Joliet Area Historical Museum*



RFU deans at the university's 109th Commencement ceremony: Sandra Larson, PhD, CRNA, APRN, FAANA, FNAP, Founding Dean of the College of Nursing; Stephanie Wu, DPM, MS, FACFAS, Dean of the Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine; Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD, Dean of Chicago Medical School; and Scott Hanes, PharmD, Interim Dean of the College of Pharmacy.

## Upcoming Events

**CMS Faculty & Friends Recognition Dinner** — Oct. 25 in Northbrook, IL

**Women in Science and Healthcare (WiSH) Symposium: Climate Change and Women's Health** —  
Sept. 14 on campus and Zoom  
Register online at [rfu.ms/wish23](http://rfu.ms/wish23)

**Race and Medicine Symposium: Maternal Mortality in Illinois** — Sept. 20 on campus and Zoom  
Register online at [bit.ly/oedi-race-medicine](http://bit.ly/oedi-race-medicine)



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