



CMS NEWS

The Chicago Medical School Newsletter

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Cover Image: Students in the Philippine Medical Association hosted a holiday concert in December featuring Tagalog Christmas songs and other performances.

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!

As March begins, we look forward to Spring and the many events and festivities that we celebrate at CMS, especially for our graduating seniors. In particular, one of the most anticipated is Match Day which will take place on March 17th. It is such an exciting time in our graduating seniors' lives as they learn where they will start their residencies and the next chapter of their medical career! This year Match Day will be held as a hybrid event — in Rhoades Auditorium on campus and virtually. I wish all of our graduating students a great Match!

Since our November newsletter went out, the medical school has been extremely busy with student-led events and activities, as well as events held by faculty for the entire community. On January 25th, CMS leadership hosted an in-person event to provide the annual report of the 'State of the Medical School'. The hour-long presentation was packed with reports of each Department's accomplishments this past year and their future goals. CMS accomplishments highlighted in the address included increased Underrepresented in Medicine (URiM) enrollment, the hiring of several new faculty researchers, the distribution of \$3.5 million in scholarship awards, and a new partnership with Ascension Illinois providing 14 new hospitals for clinical training sites. Goals ranged from promoting collaborative team research to continued curricular enhancement. We are excited to see what the next year holds as our faculty, staff, and administration work together toward these goals!

Our community outreach continues on many levels. One of them includes the CMS Mini Medical School (MMS) Program, now in its second year. It is an exciting and innovative hands-on learning program for fourth and fifth-graders in North Chicago led by CMS medical students. CMS MMS enables elementary students to experience the health professions and explore their interests in science and is a partnership between CMS, AJ Katzenmaier Elementary School, North Chicago Community Partners (NCCP), and the CPASS Foundation which has provided financial support for the program.

While the first year of CMS MMS was entirely virtual due to COVID restrictions, this year students are participating in hybrid formatted activities. Following a Parent/Teacher Orientation, an educational session on child growth and development, and a mini White Coat Ceremony in January 2023, CMS

students began to engage the MMS students in a variety of medical topics. In a fun and engaging manner CMS students demonstrate what a future as a medical professional might look like. MMS also provides parents/guardians with insight into preparing their children for a career in STEM. The program will culminate with a March MMS Graduation Celebration at CMS. Our hope is to one day enroll MMS graduates at CMS.

In the area of faculty news, David Everly, PhD took the helm of the Department of Foundational Sciences and Humanities (FSH) as its Executive Chair in early January 2023, succeeding Lise Eliot, PhD who held the role for 3½ years. Dr. Everly has been on faculty at CMS for just over 15 years and is currently an Associate Professor of Microbiology and Immunology and the RFUMS Research Integrity Officer. Also, we are celebrating the retirements of Diane Bridges, PhD, Associate Professor and Assistant Dean of Distance Learning and Curricular Resources, and Robert Bridges, PhD, Professor and Director of Cystic Fibrosis Research who are retiring after long and dedicated careers to CMS. We are grateful to Dr. Diane Bridges for her many contributions to curriculum development, online teaching, and quality improvement, as well as her strong commitment to interprofessional education. We also applaud Dr. Robert Bridges for his years of dedication to CMS and his extensive research on cystic fibrosis focusing epithelial cell transport.

Finally, it is with mixed feelings that we prepare to bid goodbye to Ms. Sharlene Abbott, who will be retiring on March 3, 2023, after 5 years of distinguished service to Chicago Medical School (CMS) and Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science (RFUMS). While we congratulate her on achieving this momentous milestone in her career, we are also sad that we will no longer have the opportunity to work with her. Sharlene has served with distinction in the Academic Learning Environment office (renamed the Office of Faculty Affairs and Equity) and the Dean's office at CMS (most recently as the Administrative Director to the Dean). In her latter role, she has been indispensable to me. She helped me transition into my role as the new Dean of CMS in April 2020, shortly after the pandemic was

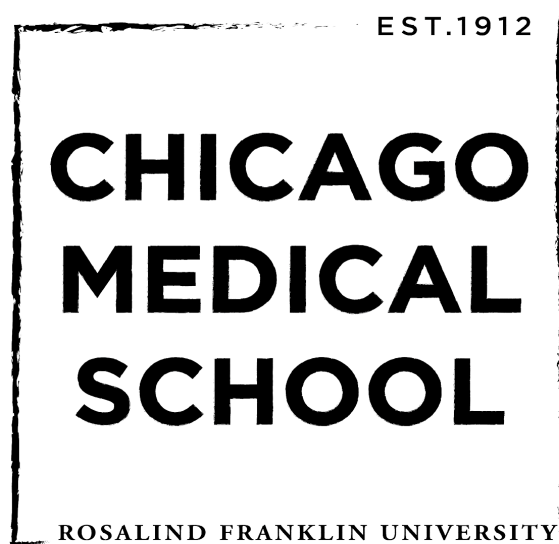
declared. It was a time of multiple crises for CMS, during which her expert assistance was key in helping me manage them. Please join me in wishing Sharlene a relaxed and enjoyable retirement.

Our next issue will feature many of the celebrated milestones in our student's lives, but in the meantime, I wish your families, friends, and you good health in 2023!

Sincerely,



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





EMS Advocacy

Fire chiefs from Lake Forest and Highland Park talked about the challenges faced by first responders during the COVID-19 pandemic and last year's Fourth of July parade shooting. The event was hosted by a new student group that seeks to promote outreach and cooperation between the healthcare community and the emergency medical services (EMS) community.

As a paramedic, **Martin Pelletier**, CMS '26, spent many years observing the challenges faced by members of the EMS profession. Paramedics and EMTs endured poor pay and burnout, which in turn led to staffing shortages that put even more pressure on the profession. Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and paramedics found themselves facing a new set of challenges.

All of these things inspired Martin to found a new student organization during his first year of medical school at CMS. **EMS Advocacy** is dedicated to bolstering the EMS profession by reaching out to those studying to become EMTs and paramedics, supporting practicing EMS providers, and developing outreach initiatives that integrate other healthcare professions and members of the community.

"I believe it is important for EMTs and paramedics to have strong relationships with not only physicians,

but other healthcare professionals such as PAs and nurses," said Martin. "That is what prompted me to start this new student organization."

The organization held its inaugural event in February, titled "EMS in Our Community," which created an opportunity for the RFU community to hear from some of the first responders who serve Lake County. **Pete Siebert**, chief of the Lake Forest Fire Department, talked about the stressors paramedics currently face on the job, and **Joe Schrage**, chief of the Highland Park Fire Department, discussed the EMS response to the 2022 Independence Day Parade mass shooting.

Chief Siebert, who has been a paramedic for 26 years, talked to students about the challenges faced by first responders. He also talked about the close relationship between the fire department and the healthcare profession: of the 3,700 calls that the

Lake Forest Fire Department received in 2022, over half of them were EMS-related, and 1,700 involved transporting someone to a hospital. “We see a lot of trauma, we see a lot of car accidents,” he said. “I’ve delivered six babies in my career.”

Most of Chief Siebert’s presentation focused on how his department dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic. He explained that COVID was not the first pandemic they had faced, noting that during his career they had previously handled SARS, Ebola, and swine flu. “We thought we had everything we needed,” he said. But they quickly realized that the PPE they had was out of date and was not sufficient to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus. Faced with the same supply chain shortages that the healthcare profession was encountering, many of the firefighters started wearing the air masks they wore to put out fires because it was the only PPE they had.

Chief Siebert and his department have also faced the stress and pressure that comes from being first responders during a public health crisis. “We came up with contingency plans: What are we going to do if everyone gets COVID?” Chief Siebert asked, noting that the firefighters live in the station with each other for 24 hours at a time. “It would weigh on you: What are we going to do? What’s going to happen next? What if all of our department tests positive?”

According to Chief Siebert, the worst of the pandemic seems to have passed, although his department is still on guard, wondering what might be coming next. “It’s been a challenge, but I feel like we made it through the hardest part,” he said. “Our people are resilient...but it weighs on us.”

During the second half of the February event, Highland Park Fire Chief Joe Schrage shared his experience during the mass shooting incident that occurred on July 4, 2022, during the Independence Day Parade. An estimated crowd of 4,000 people

had gathered for the annual parade when an active shooter opened fire, killing 7 people and wounding 48 others. Chief Schrage was off-duty and was in the parade procession, driving an antique firetruck.

When the shooting began, the fire department’s fire engines and ambulance were only a block and a half away down the parade route, so their response time was under a minute — just the amount of time it took them to turn around. In addition to the Highland Park Fire Department’s twelve people on duty and two ambulances in service, as the situation progressed, paramedics, EMTs, ambulances, and fire engines came from Glenview, Skokie, Deerfield, Lake Forest, Northbrook, Winnetka, Lincolnshire, Lake Bluff, Evanston, Libertyville, Buffalo Grove, and Prospect Heights. Overall, more than 1,800 local, county, state, and federal first responders contributed to the incident response.

Highland Park chooses a theme for its parade each year, and the 2022 theme was “We Are All Superheroes — What’s Your Superpower? Community!”

“That theme really did fit for the day,” Chief Schrage said. “As much as we saw the absolute worst of humanity that day, we saw the best come out as well.”

Chief Schrage also covered the working relationship between the first responders and the medical community, as the EMS professionals transported 24 patients to four local hospitals. He explained ways the two professions can cooperate, like when EMS professions alert hospitals as soon as possible that an active shooter situation is occurring.

“We will look to you as our partners, as our co-workers,” Chief Schrage told the medical students in attendance, speaking of the time when they would be physicians. “We need you just as much as you need us.” ■

CMS Research Fair

Chicago Medical School held its inaugural CMS Research Fair on February 1, showcasing research conducted by CMS faculty and CMS-affiliated research programs. Over 100 CMS students attended the event to see poster presentations from 12 researchers.

The following CMS faculty, students, and research affiliates presented their work during the research fair:

Mark Conneely, MD

Professor and Chair of Radiology, CMS
Department Head of Radiology and Nuclear Medicine, Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center

Dennis C. Stevens, MD, MS

Director of Clinical Research, CMS

Ricardo G. Senno, MD, MS, FAAPMR

Assistant Professor of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, CMS
SENNOGROUP Wellness & Rehabilitation

Joseph C. Rumenapp

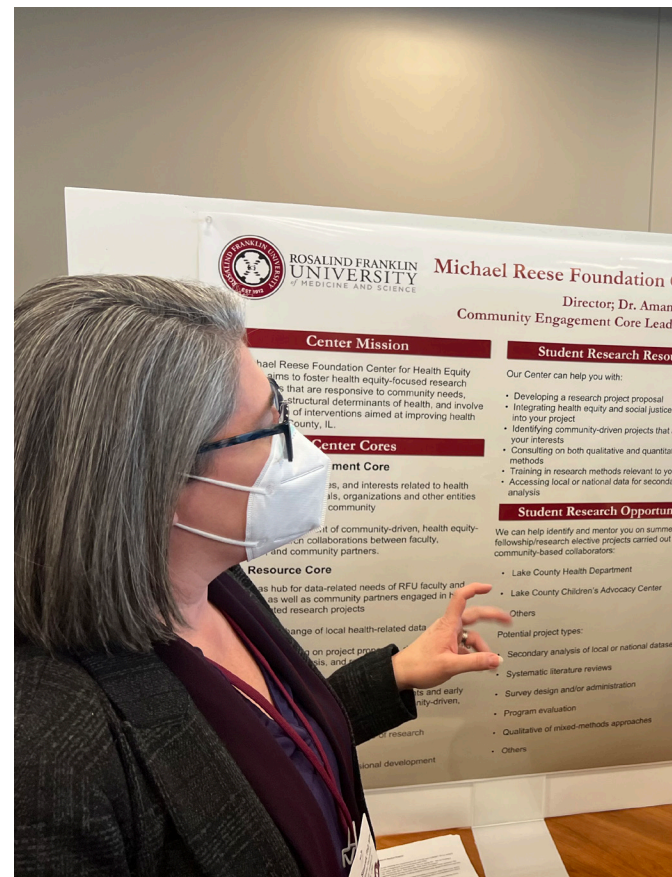
Interprofessional Community Clinic (ICC)
Executive Officer of Research, ICI
Medical Student, CMS Class of 2025

Amanda M. Simanek, PhD, MPH

Director, Michael Reese Foundation Center for Health Equity Research
Associate Professor of Humanities & Healthcare, CMS

Raúl J. Gazmuri, MD, PhD, FCCM

Director, Resuscitation Institute
Professor of Medicine and Professor of Physiology & Biophysics, CMS



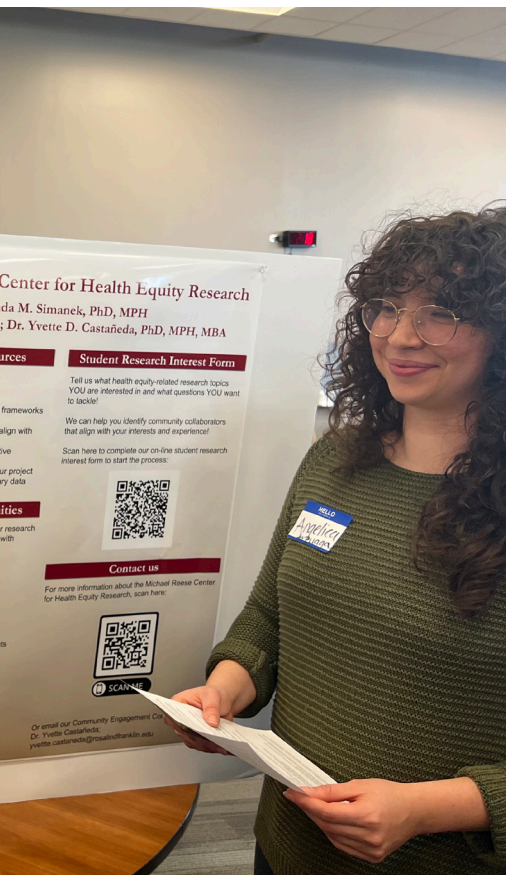
Anna Forte, MPP
Senior Research Specialist
Sinai Chicago: Sinai Urban Health Institute

Lise Eliot, PhD
Professor of Neuroscience, CMS
Stanson Toshok Center for Brain Function
and Repair

Amy Elliott, PhD
Chief Clinical Research Officer, Avera
Research Institute
Center for Pediatric & Community
Research

Aidan Nordquist, BS
Research Liaison, Advocate Aurora Health

Robert A. Marr, PhD
Assistant Dean for Research & Associate
Professor of Neuroscience, CMS ■



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: RFU Running Club



▲ 2022 Chicago Half-Marathon: From left to right: Caroline Madigan (CMS), Umar Rehman (CMS), Jessica Hrnciar (CMS), Nat Ung (CMS), Rebecca Li (CMS), Juan Medina-Echeverria (CMS), Aziz Rahman (Scholl), Naosuke Yamaguchi (CMS), Radhe Parikh (CMS).

The inaugural **RFU Running Club**, led by co-captains **Umar A. Rehman** and **Juan Medina-Echeverria**, both CMS '25, debuted its first team run during the 2022 Hoka Chicago Half Marathon last September. Participants started in Jackson Park, the site of the 1893 World Columbian Exposition, and ran through Hyde Park, the University of Chicago campus, and along Lake Shore Drive before finishing at the Statue of the Republic.

In November, the team participated in the 2022 Grant Park Turkey Trot 5K and 10K race. Participants ran along Lake Michigan on the Chicago Lakefront Trail.

The RFU Running Club is centered around interprofessionalism, connecting students from all schools within RFU and organizing weekly group runs in a fun and friendly environment. ■

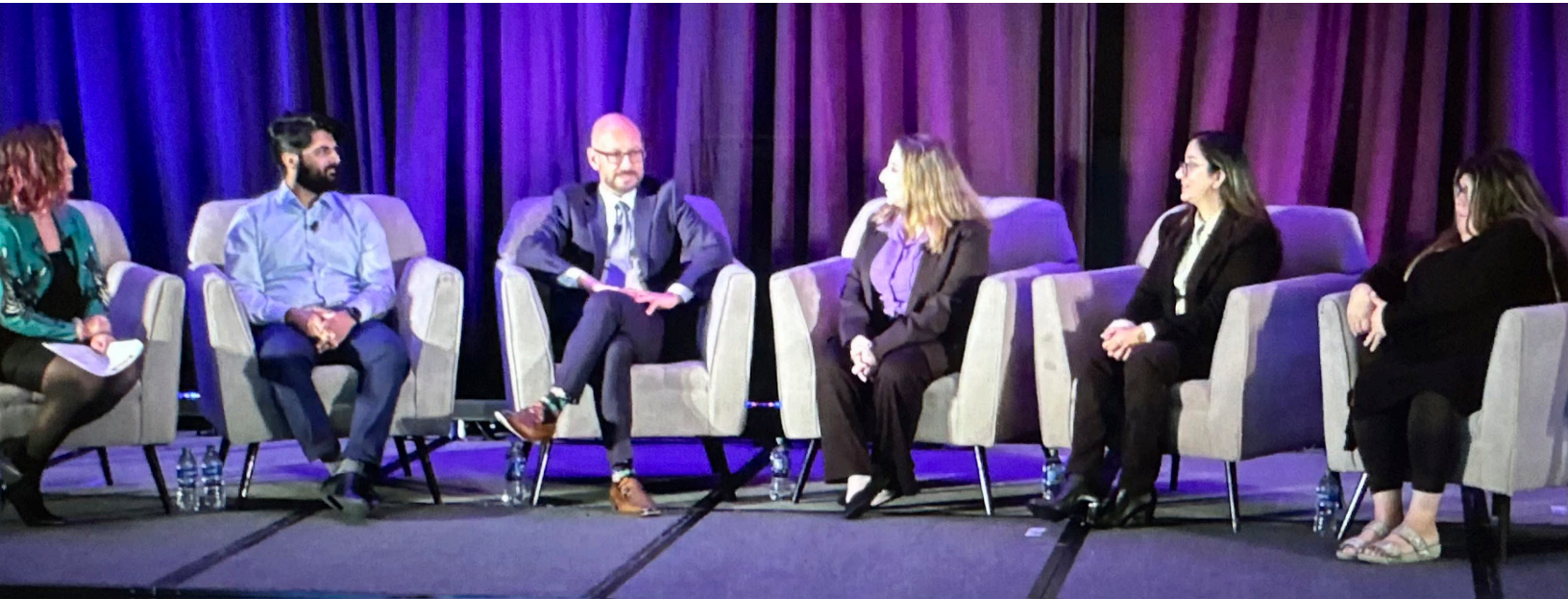


▲ 2022 Grant Park Turkey Trot: From left to right: Lily Morache (CMS), Nat Ung (CMS), Caroline Madigan (CMS), Samantha Worobey (CMS), Umar Rehman (CMS), Aziz Rahman (Scholl), Aayush Kaul (CMS), Sabina Schaffer (CMS).

◀ RFU Running Club co-captains Umar A. Rehman and Juan Medina-Echeverri.

CMS Student Speaks at Health Equity Summit

M2 student Umar Abdul Rehman represented CMS at the RARE Compassion Program Health Equity Summit.



Umar Abdul Rehman (second from left) during the panel session.

Umar Abdul Rehman, MS, CMS '25, was invited to speak at the RARE Compassion Program Health Equity Summit, held in Atlanta in November. Umar attended the summit on behalf of CMS and provided his perspective as a medical student.

The Global Genes RARE Compassion Program pairs medical students with patient partners living with a rare disease. Medical students have the opportunity to learn about the unique needs and challenges faced by patients living with an undiagnosed or rare disease, and patients and their families have the opportunity to share their story with future healthcare professionals and advocate for the rare disease community. It is estimated that around 400 million people globally (and 1 in 10 in the United States) are living with a rare medical condition. The program offers students a chance to build compassion, understanding, and

empathetic communication skills, while patients gain a greater understanding of the medical system and become better prepared to communicate with their doctors.

"I have been a participant in the RARE program since February of 2022 and have found this program to be absolutely amazing and informative," Umar said. Over the course of eight months, he was paired with four patient partners. One patient had metabolic complications of a congenital disorder, while another had a GATA2 deficiency of unknown etiology. Another patient partner had a demyelinating disease with total head-to-toe immobility.

Umar was invited to the summit to speak in a panel session titled "Experience Matters: The Importance of Rare Disease Education in Medicine." He shared



Umar (third from left) with fellow speakers at the Health Equity Summit.

his thoughts and experiences as a medical student participating in the program, and he discussed how medical education can benefit from more exposure to rare diseases as a way of increasing awareness and preparedness for medical students' future careers. He noted that the program gave him real exposure into some of the diseases he had learned about in class, and it resonated with him more than reading about the diseases in a textbook because he was able to put a face to the conditions and humanize them.

Umar was one of 15 CMS students who participated in the RARE Compassion program. The other participants are: **Kaitlyn Alleman, Neha Basti, Drake Carter, Courtney Doran, Laith Fakhouri, Erin Kim, Ryan Lew, Laura Li, Megan Mazander, Patrick O'Leary, Riya Parikh, Joseph Rumenapp, Paulina Styrzczula, and Jocelyn To**, all from the Class of 2025. ■



Umar with panel moderator Rachel Barron, Senior Manager of Health Equity at Global Genes.

Advocacy in Action

Two M2 students, Swathi and Shruthi Bhuma, spoke at a rally in Chicago last October in support of abortion and reproductive rights.



Left: Swathi and Shruthi Bhuma speaking during the rally. Right: A crowd of more than 500 people gathered in Federal Plaza for the rally and march.

On October 8, twin sisters **Swathi** and **Shruthi Bhuma**, both CMS '25, went down to Chicago to join hundreds of people advocating for abortion and reproductive rights. As the political advocacy co-directors for the student arm of Physicians for a National Health Program Illinois, the sisters stood in solidarity with groups around the country participating in the National Day of Action for Abortion and Full Reproductive Rights – part of the national Women's March organization's Women's Wave, a day of action dedicated to putting pressure on politicians ahead of the November midterm elections. While abortion is currently legal in Illinois, the individuals and organizations at the Chicago rally were advocating for abortion and reproductive rights to be protected on a federal level.

Swathi and Shruthi joined more than 500 people marching from the Federal Plaza to the Chicago Riverwalk in the rally for nationally legalized abortion rights. The action was sponsored by Chicago for Abortion Rights and co-sponsored by more than 40

other organizations, including the Chicago Teachers Union, the Illinois National Organization for Women, the Health and Medicine Policy Research Group (HMPRG), National Nurses United, and Physicians for a National Health Program Illinois.

Several people spoke in Federal Plaza during the rally, sharing personal experiences. Physicians, registered nurses, and medical students – including Swathi and Shruthi – spoke about abortion access as a necessary part of women's health care.

"We are all here today because we are united by the belief that you don't just accept the things you cannot change; you change the things you can't accept," Swathi said. "Healthcare is a human right and everyone deserves access to comprehensive care, including the full spectrum of reproductive care."

In her remarks, Shruthi emphasized the importance of individual choice. "At the end of the day, when

it comes to reproductive health, there's no such thing as an absolute right or an absolute wrong," she said. "There's just what's right for you, given your circumstances. And that is a decision that can only be made by a pregnant person and the support network they choose to involve."

Swathi and Shruthi recalled that, as medical students, they had taken an oath to do no harm and to use facts to guide their decisions. Both of those oaths led them to join the fight for abortion and reproductive rights, especially in the wake of the Supreme Court's June 24 decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.

Shruthi argued that, in their fight for reproductive rights, advocates should seek to go even further than the protections under *Roe v. Wade*, since anti-access laws like the Hyde amendment (which barred the use of federal Medicaid funds for abortion except when the life of the pregnant woman was

endangered) have always made it difficult for poor people and people of color to access reproductive care.

"We need to turn this loss into a lesson, and this setback into a set-up," she said. "In other words, we don't just need to build a new floor; we need to build the infrastructure necessary to make sure this floor protects people of all identities from harm."

The two medical students concluded their remarks by encouraging everyone in the audience to stay involved and keep advocating for full reproductive rights. "Without the community articulating the consequences of poor public policies, on a consistent basis, we're not going to see the change we wish to see in the world," said Swathi. "Shout out to all those who showed up today, and to all those who stand in solidarity with us. You, within the collective we, are what's going to make this reality possible." ■



Swathi and Shruthi onstage in the Federal Plaza.



Shruthi and Swathi at the rally.



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Our ECR Preceptors

This quarter's faculty spotlight focuses on some of the unsung heroes of CMS: our Essentials of Clinical Reasoning (ECR) preceptors. These 21 physician-educators play a vital role in our students' medical education, especially when it comes to clinical skills and experience. The preceptors bring their skills, specialty expertise, and passion for teaching to give students the skills and knowledge needed to become physicians.

ECR is an interprofessional, two-year course that is required for all medical and podiatry students. The course serves as the entry point to students' clinical experience. Through a series of labs, workshops, demos, and lectures, students learn history taking, communication, and clinical exam skills. The preceptors teach a total of 27 different labs and workshops to first- and second-year

medical and podiatry students, covering a range of topics that includes vitals, cardiac/pulmonary exam, musculoskeletal exam, neurologic exam, acute mental exam, male/female GU and breast exam, ultrasounds, neurodiversity, and cultural awareness.

Because the ECR course covers so much material, our students need teachers with a variety of skillsets. Our preceptors all have their own specialties and areas of expertise, including family medicine, ophthalmology, gastroenterology, obstetrics and gynecology, podiatry, and many more.

"Without the preceptors, we could not run the ECR course. We couldn't run the labs, we couldn't run the workshops. They are an integral part of this team," said **Rosanne Oggoian**, DO, clinical skills course director and lab director for ECR.



Dr. Oggoian also praised the preceptors for their dedication and flexibility, noting that they adapted to teaching during the pandemic. While most educational activities moved online during the 2020-2021 academic year, many of the ECR workshops and lab sessions taught crucial skills that had to be learned and practiced in person. These sessions continued on-campus with safety precautions. “The preceptors risked their lives coming on campus during the pandemic,” Dr. Oggoian said. “They love what they do and they love the students, and nothing can stop them. They are incredible.”

In addition to teaching clinical skills in hands-on labs and workshops, the preceptors help students

prepare for the head-to-toe exam and then evaluate them during the exam. And the preceptors don’t limit their teaching to the ECR course; they also facilitate and teach some of the weekly schema cases, teach in the anatomy lab, help with grading the OSCE and the M3 clinical skills exam, and participate in the longitudinal Principles of Professionalism, Health Care, and Health Equity (P2H2) course.

“They always step up whenever needed, and to us that is so valuable. If we need help, they’re there. They are very dedicated to this institution, and they love to teach,” said Dr. Oggoian. “There’s a lot of preparation that goes into this course, and a lot of expertise. Our preceptors are dedicated, and they love what they do. They inspire us, and they inspire the students.” ■

Opposite page: A group of preceptors on campus for a head-to-toe exam practice session with M1s. From left to right: Allen Saxon, MD (ECR and Instructor for Surgery Clerkship); Lawrence Hollander, MD (ECR, Schema, and Instructor for Surgery Clerkship); Rosanne Oggoian, DO, Clinical Skills Course Director and Lab Director; Bruce Goldberg, MD (ECR, Schema, P2H2, Anatomy, and MSK); Noreen Kelly-Cashman, MD '85 (ECR, Schema, P2H2, and Anatomy); Eugene Saltzberg, MD '72 (P2H2, ECR, and Schema); Ligaya Marasigan, MD (ECR, P2H2, and Schema); Carl Zenz, MD (ECR and Schema); and Agni Kamberi, MD '17 (Schema, ECR, and P2H2).

Above: Preceptors Laurie Broutman, MD, and Amita Thakerar Patel, MD, during an ECR ultrasound lab for M2s.

Thank you to all our preceptors:

Veronica Abegunde, MD
Mitchell Blivaiss, MD '76
Laurie Broutman, MD
Bruce Goldberg, MD
Stephen Goldberg, MD '67
William Greenfield, MD
Ramiro Gumucio, MD

Nicolai Hinds, MD
Lawrence Hollander, MD
Agni (Becky) Kamberi, MD '17
Noreen Kelly-Cashman, MD '85
Ligaya Marasigan, MD
Scott O'Donnell, MD '06
Pratibha Patel, DPM

Eugene Saltzberg, MD '72
Allen Saxon, MD
Frank Serrecchia, DO
Amita Thakerar Patel, MD
Holly Weiss, MD
Edwin Zarling, MD
Carl Zenz, MD



Welcoming the New ICI Board

Congratulations to the new officers of the Interprofessional Clinic Initiative (ICI)! The ICI is the student organization that leads and facilitates the operations of the Interprofessional Community Clinic (ICC), a free clinic that aims to serve the uninsured population within the Lake County community. The ICC provides multi-service healthcare, educational programs, and other supportive resources while promoting equity in clinical practice, education, research, and service through collaboration among interprofessional learners, educators, and community leaders.

President: Caroline Madigan, CMS '26
Co-Vice President: Megan Mazander, CMS '25
Co-Vice President: Manasvi Paudel, CMS '26
Executive Officer of Operations: Aayush Kaul, CMS '26
Executive Officer of Research: Rebecca Silver, CMS '26
Executive Officer of Archives: Kimi Shah, SCPM '25
Executive Officer of Public Relations: Angela Kein, CMS '26

Executive Officer of Patient Education and Resource Development: Wen Ting Hu, CMS '26
Executive Officer of Scheduling and Training: Alayna Dieter, CMS '26
Co-Executive Officer of Care Coordination: Nancy Shrestha, CMS '26
Co-Executive Officer of Care Coordination: Kristina Nguyen, CMS '26. ■

Thank you to the outgoing ICI Board for your year of service to the ICC! ▼





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Addresses the skills needed to move from the clinical practice into educating future healthcare professionals or deliver in-service in the clinical environment.
- **Population Health**
Focuses on improving the health and well-being of the public. Individuals with this background may also serve in organizations that provide research and services in the fields of healthcare analytics and healthcare policy development.



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- Active and experienced faculty
- Interprofessional focus within the curricula
- Intentional, purposeful, and individualized learning activities that provide students with opportunities to choose topics of professional interest for projects
- Flexible programs — Complete master degree programs in as little as 24 months!

For more information, contact Roland Graham at 847-578-3246 or roland.graham@rosalindfranklin.edu



Dr. Lise Eliot Receives Award from the Society for Neuroscience

Congratulations to **Lise Eliot**, PhD, professor of neuroscience, Stanson Toshok Center for Brain Function and Repair, who received the **Louise Hanson Marshall Special Recognition Award** during Neuroscience 2022, the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) annual meeting, held in San Diego last November. The award honors an individual who has significantly promoted the professional development of women in neuroscience through teaching, organizational leadership, public advocacy or other efforts that are not necessarily research related.

“SfN is proud to recognize these neuroscientists whose tireless efforts to support the careers of

women in neuroscience benefit our entire research community,” said SfN President Gina Turrigiano. “Whether through mentorship, public speaking, or establishing networking and educational opportunities for young female scientists, this year’s awardees have encouraged more young women to pursue careers in science and helped those already in the field to persevere and thrive.”

In her research at RFU, Dr. Eliot studies brain development and the role of neuroplasticity in shaping neural circuitry and behavior. She has published many articles disputing claims that women’s brains are less suited for STEM pursuits. Pulling from social, developmental, and organizational psychology

research, she has instead shown that implicit bias, gender stereotypes, and institutional bias slow women's entry into and suppress their recognition across STEM fields. In her 2009 popular science book *Pink Brain, Blue Brain: How Small Differences Grow into Troublesome Gaps*, Dr. Eliot drew from a wide range of scientific literature to show that the brains of boys and girls are nearly identical and that differences between male and female behaviors as older children and adults are the result of initially minute differences in infants that are magnified through family and societal influence.

Dr. Eliot is also the co-chair and chief architect of RFU's Women in Science and Healthcare (WiSH) Symposium, launched in 2016. The symposium aims to address gender disparities in science and healthcare by interrogating causes of and solutions for resistant challenges to women's advancement in STEM fields and highlighting the accomplishments of female scientists and clinicians. The series held its seventh annual event last September, and the corresponding WiSH Seminar Series continues throughout each year. ■

A Celebration of Life



Students from Chicago Medical School, Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine, and the College of Health Professions gathered on December 14 for the university's annual "Celebration of Life" ceremony. In this interprofessional, student-led event, students from each of RFU's clinical programs honored the anatomical gifts given to the university for student education. The students presented spoken and written tributes, music, and songs to express their gratitude and respect for the donors and their families. **Annabel Clodius** and **Riya Parikh**, both CMS '25, were among the students who spoke at the event. ■



Clockwise from bottom right: The student organizers of the program; students pen written tributes to the donors and their families; CMS student Riya Parikh speaks during the event.





The Importance of Hydration

Article submitted by Mallory Cescato, MS, CMS '23

While it may seem simple, one of the largest positive impacts on our health is the daily ingestion of enough water. At baseline, our bodies are made up of approximately 60 percent water. We lose much of this throughout the day, whether it be through sweat, urine, or feces. Knowing this, it is crucial that we stay informed on how much water we need, how to obtain it, and how to avoid losing excess amounts. Once this information is learned, then patterns can start to be formed and overall health will be improved.

Steady water intake is crucial for our bodies for several reasons. It helps to hydrate our blood, which is important because this serves to create necessarily body fluids such as tears and saliva. Sweat is also formed from water intake, and this is a vital way that we work to maintain our overall body temperature. Water ingestion will also help to lubricate joint spaces and moisturize skin. Signs of

severe dehydration can manifest as dry skin and eyes.

Proper hydration is also necessary for healing and regrowth of skin. Collagen, which makes up much of our skin, is built with water. We must help to increase the amount of water available, especially in times of healing. Studies have shown that water ingestion is even more important for diabetic patients, who happen to have slower healing times at baseline.

Aside from physical health, water improves our mental health as well. Drinking the appropriate amount of water on a daily basis has been shown to improve our mood and help with brain function. We are able to focus better, with increased ability to concentrate. This translates to feeling more alert and avoiding fatigue. The positive effects of water are numerous, and individuals quickly find out that they feel and look better after ingesting the appropriate amounts.

One of the main reasons that individuals do not drink enough daily water is that they are unaware of their recommended amount. The amount varies based on sex and age. It can be measured in ounces or glasses. Those people with a reusable water bottle may find that recommended ounces are easier to obtain. However, those without their own water bottle may prefer to hear about their recommendations in terms of 8-ounce glasses of water. Our recommended intake increases as we age, going from as low as 2-3 glasses in infants to 6-7 glasses in children ages 9-13. Adolescent boys require up to 11 glasses while adolescent girls should obtain 6-7 glasses. Adult men require 10-12 glasses and adult women require 7-9 glasses. These recommendations are constantly changing so it is no wonder that most Americans are unaware of their individual advice.

Another important aspect of adequate water intake is the knowledge of what causes us to become dehydrated. Dehydration occurs when our body loses a significant amount of fluids and then fails to replace this amount. Our body is then unable to carry out its normal physiological functions. This can be a serious condition for young children and elderly individuals.

Exercise, illness, and travel are three main causes of dehydration. During exercise, our body loses a large amount of fluids through sweat. Sweat is important as it helps to cool down our body and maintain an appropriate temperature. However, overworking ourselves can cause the body to lose an inappropriate amount of fluids and this can be hard to make up for. Many individuals may think that they are drinking enough water during their workout, but can find this not to be true later on when they may start to feel lightheaded.

It is also important to remember the time frame of drinking water for a workout. Individuals should be drinking 8 ounces of water before their workout, 7-10 ounces during their workout, and 8 ounces no

more than 30 minutes after they are finished. This will ensure that they are repleting all that they have lost.

In terms of illness, the main ways that we lose fluids are through vomiting and diarrhea. Unfortunately, both of these ailments are quite common among the American population, especially for children. There are many gastrointestinal viruses that cause these symptoms. It is crucial to try to maintain adequate oral intake, even when feeling sick. Otherwise, inappropriate fluid loss may lead to a hospital stay for intravenous fluids.

Another common but often overlooked cause of dehydration is travel. Our everyday environment usually has a humidity level of 35-65 percent. Conversely, airplanes usually have humidity level of only 10-20 percent. This drastic difference can cause dehydration much more quickly. While on long car rides, individuals may drink much less as a means of having to stop for fewer bathroom breaks. No matter the mode of transportation, travel poses a risk of dehydration if individuals do not prepare appropriately. Becoming educated on the causes of dehydration can help us to become more aware of how to avoid these situations.

Many individuals may be curious about the best ways to stay hydrated. There are many simple ways to maintain adequate fluid intake. A great way to remember to drink water is to purchase a reusable water bottle. This allows us to refill it at our leisure and carry water with us at all times. These water bottles are often inexpensive and easy to keep clean.

For those that still find it difficult to drink water even with a water bottle, there are associated apps on our smartphones. Individuals can fill out the app with their goals on how much water they would like to drink. Their phone can then remind them of the appropriate times to drink water and the recommended amount.

Fruits and vegetables are also a great way to increase our water intake. These food items contain a substantial amount of water and by incorporating more into our diet, we are indirectly increasing our water intake. In terms of staying hydrated while exercising, it is crucial to take an appropriate amount of breaks and avoid overexerting ourselves.

When feeling ill, we should try to increase our amount of fluid intake as much as we can tolerate. Finally, individuals should try to avoid a large amount of caffeinated or sugary drinks in their diet, as both can lead to dehydration.

Drinking water is a simple task that we should all be completing every day. It is the best way for our body to have the fuel to maintain its everyday functions. However, many Americans are not aware of the recommended amount of water that they should be ingesting and how to go about receiving this amount. Additionally, many people are unaware of the many ways that we can become dehydrated. It is vital to become educated on this subject. There are simple changes that we can implement, such as buying a water bottle or downloading an app on our phone. Once we begin to ingest the appropriate amount of water every day, we will see that we feel more energized, clear-headed, and ready to tackle our responsibilities.

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the-flow

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Visiting Our Clinical Sites

Dr. Brenda Affinati, Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, organizes regular site visits to Chicago Medical School's clinical affiliates. During these visits, CMS leadership meets with site directors, program directors, and volunteer clinical faculty to foster communication and make sure their needs are being met. They also meet with students who are currently rotating at that site, as well as residents where applicable, to get their perspective and feedback on their experiences.

These visits are critical to strengthening our relationship with our affiliates, fostering engagement, and providing more clerkship and elective opportunities for students. CMS has recently added Ascension Illinois as a clinical partner, which encompasses 14 hospitals in the Chicagoland area, from Kankakee to Evanston and as far west as Elgin. ■



Family medicine faculty at Ascension Resurrection



Emergency medicine faculty at Ascension Resurrection



FHCC Simulation Lab



Dean Chatterjee with M3 students at Mount Sinai Hospital



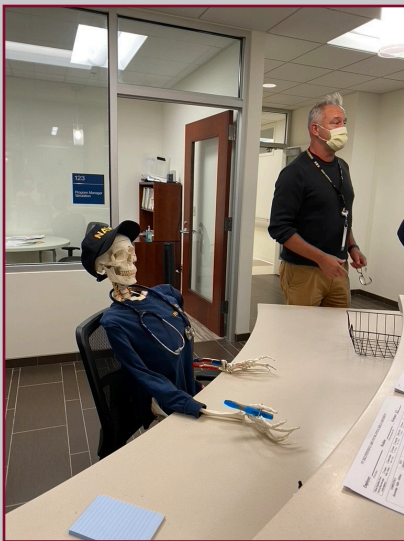
Center for Advanced Simulation in Healthcare at Northwestern Medicine Huntley Hospital



Ascension Saint Alexius Medical Center



John H. Stroger, Jr. Cook County Hospital



FHCC Simulation Lab



Ascension Saint Mary



Mount Sinai Hospital



Mount Sinai Hospital



Dr. Affinati with three CMS alumni at Mercyhealth Rockford



John H. Stroger, Jr. Cook County Hospital

Early Match Results

Congratulations to our CMS 2023 Military and Ophthalmology early matches! We had a 100% match rate for the military and ophthalmology matches, with members of the Class of 2023 matching into the following programs:

Military Match Results:

Navy Match: **Victoria Vuckovic** matched Psychiatry at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

Air Force Match: **Drew Hill** matched Preliminary Medicine at San Antonio Military Medical Center in Texas.

Army Match: **Tyson Bates** matched Ophthalmology at Madigan Army hospital in Tacoma, WA.



Victoria Vuckovic



Drew Hill



Tyson Bates

San Francisco Ophthalmology Match Results:

Arnold Nadel matched Ophthalmology at Eastern Virginia Medical School.

Edward Xie matched Ophthalmology at SUNY Stony Brook.

Peter Nesper matched Ophthalmology at UT Southwestern-Dallas.

William Bloom matched Ophthalmology at Ohio State University. ■



Arnold Nadel



Edward Xie



Peter Nesper



William Bloom



Student Dean Corner

Each quarter, student dean Nick Adimi will give updates on the projects he will be working on throughout the year.

Dear fellow classmates:

I hope everyone is doing well and that your 2023 has been a fruitful one so far. I am excited to update you all on some of the things I have been working on. However, before doing so I wanted to reiterate that if for some reason you need to reach me, please do not hesitate to contact me and I will do my best to help where I can.

During my last update I spoke about a CMS dance. We have decided to join with the ICC and help with the Dance 4 Diabetes gala that occurs every year. In years past this has been a fantastic event where students, faculty, and community members are able to get together and support the ICC. I for one was part of the ICC, and many of my classmates were as well, so I would suggest for all of you, if you are able to, to attend the event. This will be the first time it is in person since 2019, and it is set to be a very fun event and a great reason to dress up and spend time with both classmates and admin alike. There will be dinner, a silent auction, music, and dancing. If you have any questions about the event, please do not hesitate to contact me. I hope to see as many of you as possible there.

As an update to the rotation fund, this is still an ongoing process and although many of you may not have heard any updates on it yet, I wanted to assure everyone that it is still being worked

on and has not been forgotten. Hopefully further updates can be given later on down the line. If any questions or suggestions arise about this as well, I would love to hear them and help where I can.

I would like to reiterate again that I am always available through email if anyone needs to reach me. I want everyone to be able to have their voice heard, so even for the smallest of questions/concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out. My email will be at the bottom of this entry and I hope to hear from you all soon.

Good luck to everyone as this year closes out and I hope that whether you are in match, taking STEP, or just surviving school, that it all works out for the best.

Sincerely,

Nick Adimi
Chicago Medical School Student Dean, 2022-23
Chicago Medical School Class of 2024

student.deancms@rfums.org
Nick.adimi@my.rfums.org

Going Green: *CMS Seeks to Incorporate Climate Education into the Medical Curriculum*

Climate change is accelerating, with growing impacts on human health. For example, climate change contributes to higher rates of asthma and respiratory allergies, and makes those with chronic lung disease sicker. Other effects of climate change, like heat waves, floods, and other severe weather events can negatively affect the health of communities. This makes climate change not only an environmental issue, but a public health issue as well.

Chicago Medical School is taking steps to equip our students to face this issue in their future careers as health professionals. Climate education was added to the curriculum in Clinical Foundations of Medicine (CFoM), a mandatory course for first-year medical students. One element of the CFoM course is the Scholarly Assignment, which gives students the opportunity to explore important issues, like climate, that will affect their practice of medicine.

In partnership with ecoAmerica's Climate for Health Initiative, 71 CMS students and staff gathered on January 26 for an interactive workshop geared towards honing climate advocacy skills. Prior to the virtual workshop, the participants had completed

three hours of independent study to gain a broad overview of the climate crisis, its adverse effects on health, and research-proven advocacy skills.

This event marks the first-ever partnership between ecoAmerica and a medical school. ecoAmerica is an organization that seeks to expand climate leadership beyond traditional environmental circles by working with leaders in the sectors of health, higher education, community, and business to encourage and enable them to become active in publicly promoting climate solutions.

"Physicians are highly trusted sources of information," said **Regina de Leon Gomez**, MD, CFoM course director. "The students who participated gathered so that they could be part of the solution."

The workshop provided students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to put their climate advocacy into practice during interactions with their future patients. Each student received a badge, meant to be worn with their white coats and hospital IDs, with a QR code that patients can scan to begin a conversation with their physician about the impact of climate change on public and personal health.



71 CMS students and staff participated in the virtual workshop to build climate advocacy skills.

“Thank you for organizing the Climate for Health session,” **Martha Smith**, CMS '26, said after the conclusion of the workshop. “I felt that it was extremely well-done, engaging, and informative.”

Dr. Gomez plans to make the ecoAmerica workshop an annual event for students in the CFoM course. Starting next year, the workshop will have enough spots for the entire class to participate. And the CFoM course's climate advocacy event is just the beginning of CMS administration's push to include climate and environmental health material in the medical curriculum. A task force appointed by the school's Curriculum Committee to identify common societal problems that should be addressed by the CMS curriculum listed the health effects of climate change as one of the top societal issues for emphasis in our curriculum.

“Dean Chatterjee has personally expressed to me how important she feels addressing climate (planetary health) is for CMS/RFU,” said Dr. Gomez. Continuing to add climate advocacy to the CMS curriculum will more fully prepare future physicians to address issues impacting public health. ■



Students received a badge that they can wear during patient interactions to help them start conversations about the effects of climate change on health.

P2H2 Focuses on Community Connections

In November, CMS hosted more than 30 Lake County community leaders as part of the longitudinal Principles of Professionalism, Health Care, and Health Equity (P2H2) course. This was the first P2H2 session of the academic year for the M2s.

The event created an intentional space for students and community leaders to start building relationships. Speakers featured **William Coleman** from the North Chicago Thinktank, delivering a snapshot of the strengths and disparities of our hyperlocal community; **Heather Kind-Keppel**, EdD, RFU executive director of diversity and inclusion, with a land acknowledgment and grounding; Rachael Lange, MS, RFU coordinator of service learning, discussing a snapshot of RFU's community efforts; and course director **Melissa Chen**, MD, associate professor of medicine and medical director of the Interprofessional Community Clinic. ■



Graduate Medical Education (GME) News

Fellowship Matches

Congratulations to our graduating internal medicine and psychiatry residents who are continuing their education by completing a fellowship! Our residents have matched into the following fellowship programs.

Internal Medicine Residency Program (FHCC) Graduates



Ammar Ahmed, MD, matched into our own **Pulmonary Disease Fellowship** at Chicago Medical School/Rosalind Franklin University.



Megan Biggs, MD, matched into an **Infectious Disease Fellowship** at the Mayo Clinic School of Graduate Medical Education.



Seth Heithaus, MD, matched into an **Infectious Disease Fellowship** at Maine Medical Center.



Kenneth Joseph, MD, matched into a **Pulmonary & Critical Care Fellowship** at the University of Illinois College of Medicine-Peoria.

Internal Medicine Residency Program (Northwestern Medicine McHenry) Graduates



Ammar Aqeel, MD, matched into a **Gastroenterology Fellowship** at Mercyhealth GME Consortium.



Thiago Gagliano, MD, matched into an **Endocrinology, Diabetes, and Metabolism Fellowship** at Harvard University Brigham & Women's Hospital.

Graduate Medical Education (GME) News



Jashan Gill, MD, matched into a **Cardiovascular Disease Fellowship** at MercyOne North Iowa Medical Center.



Shrey Gole, MD, matched into a **Rheumatology Fellowship** at Stanford Medicine.



Hafiz Abrar Jeelani, MD, matched into a **Pulmonary & Critical Care Fellowship** at Case Western Reserve University's MetroHealth Medical Center.



Ram Chandra Khatri, MD, matched into a **Rheumatology Fellowship** at Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine - The Carilion Clinic.



Sonika Prasad, MD, matched into a **Hematology and Medical Oncology Fellowship** at St. Louis University School of Medicine.



Jishna Shrestha, MD, matched into an **Infectious Diseases Fellowship** at Baylor College of Medicine - MD Anderson Cancer Center.



Grace Ying, MD, matched into a **Hematology and Oncology Fellowship** at the Medical College of Wisconsin.

Graduate Medical Education (GME) News

Psychiatry Residency Program Graduates



Elizabeth Augustine, MD, matched into a **Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Fellowship** at Rush University Medical Center.



Sally Chu, MD, matched into a **Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Fellowship** at the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor.



Ravneet Singh, MD, matched into a **Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Fellowship** at the University of Illinois College of Medicine - Chicago.

Other GME News

Chicago Medical School's endocrinology fellowship program at the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Healthcare Center (FHCC) has been selected to participate in a multicenter VA cooperative quality improvement (QI) program for lipid optimization. The anticipated start is March and everyone in our endocrinology section will be involved in the monumental study.

The purpose of the VALOR-QI (Veteran Affairs Lipid Optimization Reimagined Quality Improvement) Initiative is to develop and implement a novel lipid optimization program focused on veterans at high risk of cardiovascular events at selected VA medical centers. VALOR-QI will comprehensively assess potential barriers and enabling factors for veterans, healthcare practitioners treating veterans, and the VA healthcare system in the management of cardiovascular disease.

The VALOR-QI program is part of the American Heart Association's initiatives to improve outcomes for the 100 million+ Americans living with hypertension, high cholesterol, and/or type 2 diabetes. Our researchers and clinicians at the FHCC will work with the American Heart Association and other medical centers across the country. ■

We are also proud to welcome the following incoming fellows to our CMS Internal Medicine fellowship programs:

- **Dr. Ammar Ahmed** (Pulmonary Disease)
- **Dr. Shruti Devineni** (Endocrinology)
- **Dr. Sharada Kc** (Cardiovascular Disease)
- **Dr. Aravind Reddy Kuchkuntla** (Cardiovascular Disease)
- **Dr. Kristian Lozev** (Endocrinology)
- **Dr. Nirosothan Rajasingam** (Cardiovascular Disease)
- **Dr. Vijay Ketan Reddy** (Hematology & Medical Oncology)
- **Dr. Anuradha Sakhuja** (Hematology & Medical Oncology)
- **Dr. Harumi Tokashiki** (Pulmonary Disease) ■

Alumni News

Recent Alumni Visits

CMS Dean Dr. Archana Chatterjee and representatives from the RFU Alumni Office have recently traveled to New York, New Jersey, and California to meet with CMS alumni.



1. Dr. Chatterjee with Kathy Gohar, MD '99.



2. Dr. Chatterjee with Jay Im, MD '14.



3. Dr. Chatterjee with Marvin Platt, MD '64, and his wife Judith Platt.



4. Dr. Chatterjee with Jill Doherty and Walter Grandberry from the RFU Alumni Office.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Hunter Launer, MD '20, MS '16

This alumni spotlight shines a light on **Hunter Launer**, MD '20, MS '16, part of a community of CMS alumni currently working at UCLA in California. The UCLA community includes over 25 Chicago Medical School graduates, from residents and fellows to faculty. And there are many additional CMS alumni living and working in the Los Angeles area.

After graduating from Chicago Medical School in 2020, Dr. Launer initially went to Tulane University to begin his internal medicine residency. But partway through his intern year at Tulane, he heard from a fellow CMS alumnus that UCLA was expanding their internal medicine program, and they had an opening for a second-year resident. Dr. Launer applied and was accepted into UCLA's program, so he moved to Los Angeles, where he is finishing his residency and preparing to begin a cardiology fellowship.

When asked what advice he would give to current medical students or those who are just beginning their residencies, Dr. Launer mentioned the importance of staying curious and open to pursuing new interests and experiences. "I think one of the biggest things that's led to my success has been just being curious and pursuing that curiosity," he said, advising medical students and residents to take a

topic that interests them and explore it, taking the initiative to learn more through research, literature reviews, and other academic resources, to see if they end up with a new passion.

That's what happened to Dr. Launer, who started medical school thinking that he would become a surgeon. But then he worked with **Sal Aiello**, CMS '24, SGPS '24, a current MD/PhD candidate, on one of Sal's research projects in RFU's Resuscitation Institute.

"That is what really sparked my interest in cardiology, because I really enjoyed learning about cardiovascular hemodynamics, and I liked learning about the physics behind cardiology. That opened up one door, which opened up another door, which led me down this path that has brought me to where I am today," Dr. Launer said. "Again, I think it's about curiosity. I was curious to learn more about this project that Sal was working on and the principles that he was trying to elucidate from his research, and I think because of that curiosity, it has led me down this path."

Dr. Launer's path now includes a fellowship in cardiovascular medicine at USC-Los Angeles County,

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which he will begin this summer. His interests include both cardiology research and patient care.

"As I'm in my last year of residency, my favorite thing to do is to be with patients, in all facets of care. I love being in the critical care setting, I love being in the procedural setting, I love being able to be with the patient and teach them," he said. "I think another thing that has led to my success is focusing on my passions, and really immersing myself in those and investing in being better at them."

Another of Dr. Launer's passions — before, during, and after medical school — is teaching. Before coming to CMS, Dr. Launer earned a master's degree in education and worked as a high school teacher in New York City. As a student at CMS, he brought his teaching skills with him, facilitating large group review sessions and getting involved with student government. Although he never sought out leadership positions, he found himself called to represent his classmates, serving as Class President and delegate to the AAMC's Organization of Student Representatives (OSR), an entity that provides medical students with a voice in academic medicine at a national level. In his roles as class president and OSR delegate, Dr. Launer was able to learn about the structural aspects behind medical education and explore ways to modify how students experience medical education. "That was really interesting for me, because as someone who has a background in education, it allowed me to use my skillset and my prior experiences in teaching and try to apply it to what is a very traditional and long-standing curriculum," he said.

Dr. Launer continued his interest in education after graduating from CMS, orienting both his

residency and fellowship applications around his wanting to be a medical educator.

"Fortunately, I was able to focus on programs that really emphasized medical education, both at Tulane and at UCLA," he said. One of the things that drew him to UCLA was their Medical Education Pathway, a program within the internal medicine residency program which gives residents formal training on being an educator, to prepare them to be effective clinician-educators and leaders in medical education.

"It's been interesting because I'm able to apply my prior experience as a teacher, but in the more formal



Dr. Launer with fellow CMS alumni at UCLA: Anige'r Oriol, MD '22, internal medicine resident; Patrick Holman, MD '18, a Med-Peds resident who is staying at UCLA for a pulmonary and critical care fellowship; and Alvin Singh, MD '21, neurology resident.

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setting of the Medical Education Pathway," Dr. Launer said, "to learn about what best practices are when it comes to teaching medical content, as well as coaching medical students and fellow residents in doing bedside teaching and chalk talks [talks where people give a presentation on their current and future scientific research] and things of those nature."

In addition to learning how to teach medical students and residents, Dr. Launer has found that his background in education also comes in handy during patient interactions. "I also try to focus on teaching the patient what is going on, because I find that to be extremely helpful in building the physician-patient relationship," he said. "I also help

educate the patient for when they ultimately leave the hospital, to prevent them from having to come back."

The CMS Alumni Network

As one of many CMS alumni currently learning and working at UCLA, Dr. Launer has had several of his former classmates to lean on for advice or collaboration. But in his experience, his connections with fellow CMS alumni extend beyond geographic proximity. He has a thread of texts with other CMS alumni who are also completing internal medicine residencies, noting that this communication started at the very beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. After matching in March 2020 and graduating a few months later at a time when almost all events



Dr. Launer with fellow CMS alumni at UCLA: Esther Banh, MD '20, anesthesiology resident, and Patrick Holman, MD '18, a Med-Peds resident who is staying at UCLA for a pulmonary and critical care fellowship.



CMS alumni at UCLA: Arjan Gower, MD '18, a hematology and oncology fellow; Patrick Holman, MD '18, a Med-Peds resident who is staying at UCLA for a pulmonary and critical care fellowship; and Shireen Nouri, MD '18, an anesthesiologist affiliated with Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center.

Alumni News

were going virtual, Dr. Launer found himself holding weekly online journal clubs with his fellow alumni, reading and discussing articles to enhance their education and help prepare themselves for residency.

"Even now, I'll text some of my friends from CMS when we have interesting cases or if we want to run ideas by one another," he said.

For Dr. Launer, this network of support also extends to current CMS students, who can draw on the knowledge and advice of those who have gone before them. "For the current students, it's such a useful resource," he said of the network of CMS alumni, especially those who have graduated recently. "I would imagine that many recent alumni are happy to talk about their experiences at specific programs or talk about career development for a

fourth-year medical student or wherever you are in your time at CMS."

In recent months, several CMS alumni have met with current students, often at the invitation of student interest groups, to share their experiences, talk about residency applications, give advice, or talk about their career path. Over the course of several weeks in January, CMS alumni participated in Operation MEDS, an annual event where alumni from various specialties meet with students to discuss the many career options available to them.

"I think so much of the strength of Chicago Medical School is the community that it creates in the students who are there," Dr. Launer said. "Being able to still call some of my friends from medical school and talk about cases is really cool, and I think it's also a testament to Chicago Medical School." ■

Other Alumni News

Kwan Kew Lai, MD '79, authored a memoir titled *The Girl Who Taught Herself to Fly*. Dr. Kew Lai is an infectious disease specialist and the 2018 recipient of the CMS Distinguished Alumnus Award for Service.

Ira Blumen, MD '81, was named interim section chief for emergency medicine at University of Chicago Medicine.

James Swift, MD '88, was appointed chief executive officer of Pediatrix Medical Group, Inc. in Sunrise, Florida.

Sheri Dewan, MD '05, authored a memoir titled *Cutting a Path: The Power of Purpose, Discipline,*

and Determination. The memoir explores the personal and professional obstacles Dr. Dewan faced as an Indian woman on her way to becoming a neurosurgeon. Dr. Dewan is one of only about 200 female neurosurgeons in the United States.

Jason Luke, MD '06, has been appointed to Bright Peak Therapeutics' newly formed scientific advisory board.

Erin Kelleher, MD '22, MS '18, authored the post "Endocrine Disorders and Menstrual Disturbances: A Review," which summarizes a 2020 review published in the *International Journal of Endocrinology and Metabolism*. ■

Farewell to Sharlene Abbott

It is with mixed feelings that we prepare to bid goodbye to Ms. Sharlene Abbott, who will be retiring on March 3, 2023, after five years of distinguished service to Chicago Medical School and Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science. While we congratulate her on achieving this momentous milestone in her career, we are also sad that we will no longer have the opportunity to work with her.

Sharlene has served with distinction in the Academic Learning Environment office (renamed the Office of Faculty Affairs and Equity) and the Dean's office at CMS (most recently as the Administrative Director of the Office). In her latter role, she has been indispensable to Dr. Chatterjee. She helped Dr. Chatterjee transition into her role as the new Dean of CMS in April 2020, shortly after the pandemic was declared. It was a time of multiple crises for CMS, during which her expert assistance was key in helping Dr. Chatterjee manage them.

Sharlene's position requires an extraordinary set of skills including efficiency, timeliness, diplomacy, gatekeeping, professional writing, maintaining confidentiality, juggling competing priorities, etc. Her expertise in all of these areas is superb. Simply put, over the past three years, she has been the face of the Dean's office, helping out everyone who has sought her assistance. Her kindness and cheerful willingness to take on whatever is asked of her has endeared her to internal and external stakeholders alike. Dr. Chatterjee sometimes teases her about "Sharlene's fan club" of which there are dozens of members!

So, while we are happy for Sharlene, her family, and friends as she enters retired life, we will miss her deeply. Bon voyage, Sharlene, and please do come back to visit us in the future! ■



Sharlene with Dean Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD, and with former CMS dean James M. Record, MD, JD.

STAFF CORNER

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



Angela Williams

Coordinator,
Clinical Sciences Department
Time at CMS: 2 years

Angela Williams, CAP, joined CMS in December 2020 as a virtual employee. As one of several employees hired during the time when all RFU staff were working from home, Angela notes that Human Resources and her CMS co-workers went out of their way to help her succeed "via Zoom" since they could not meet with her in person.

Angela is a native of North Chicago, and she's the second oldest of seven siblings. She moved to Chicago after high school and eventually landed in San Diego, where she resided and worked for 20 years. Former employers include Project Design Consultants, the University of California San Diego, and the San Diego Unified Port District. She returned home in December of 2020 during the COVID pandemic because of a deep desire to be closer to her family — a move that ultimately led her to CMS.

With over 30 years of administrative support experience, Angela is well-equipped to help people she comes into contact with at CMS. "My aspiration is to help better the lives of others through my belief in God, church, mentoring and sharing my knowledge of self-care," she said. "I truly believe that by helping others, I succeed."

As the coordinator for the Clinical Sciences Department (CSD), Angela's responsibilities include assisting the Executive Chair (and others) with their day-to-day administrative needs. She is responsible for the logistics for the monthly medical grand rounds series, ordering/maintaining supplies, reconciling expenses, coordinating meetings and interviews, and all other aspects of administrative needs for CSD.

"Angela's professionalism paired with her interpersonal skills makes her a valuable asset to CSD," said Angela's supervisor. "Her prior experience and her meticulous approach to problems make her a highly efficient assistant to the department. Her great smile, positive approach to life, and dedication to the department are exemplary."

When asked to name her favorite thing about CMS, Angela said: "My favorite thing about working at the University is that it doesn't feel like 'work.' I have the best supervisor (Dr. Maldonado). I enjoy my position and its responsibilities, my co-workers, and the smiles I receive walking in the hallways."

Outside of work, Angela enjoys spending time with her family. She also loves Chicago Steppin, a form of dance that originated in Chicago. "Whether it's in Illinois or some other state, I will travel to dance!" she said. ■

School & Department News

Awards & Accomplishments

Chicago Medical School's **Continuing Medical Education program** has once again been awarded **Accreditation with Commendation** from the ACCME. In addition to the distinction of Commendation, which has been awarded to only 27% of the 1,500+ accredited CME providers, it also confers an additional two years of accreditation (six years) over the standard four years of accreditation.

Regarding this Commendation, the ACCME says: "The ACCME by conferring Commendation rewards CME providers for implementing best practices in pedagogy, engagement, evaluation, and change management, and for focusing on generating meaningful outcomes. It recognizes the achievements of organizations that advance interprofessional collaborative practice, address public health priorities, create behavioral change, show leadership, leverage educational technology, and demonstrate the impact of education on healthcare professionals and patients."



Melissa Chen, MD, medical director of the Interprofessional Community Clinic and associate professor of medicine, has been selected as a Health Equity Scholar with the Center for Health Equity Education & Advocacy (CHEEA) at Harvard's Cambridge Health

Alliance (CHA). This year-long program focuses on the development of leadership and community organizing skills.



Joanna Dabrowska, PhD, PharmD, associate professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology and neuroscience, Center for Neurobiology of Stress Resilience and Psychiatric Disorders, was named to the Illinois Science & Technology

Coalition's (ISTC) fifth-annual "Researchers to Know" list in the biotech and life science category for 2022.

Dr. Dabrowska was recently awarded \$2.36 million by the National Institutes of Health to study potential anxiety-disorder therapies — a continuation of her previous NIH funding of \$2 million in the same field.

The ISTC list spotlights scientists from universities throughout Illinois who possess unique research strengths that illustrate the critical role of the state's university research in the national innovation economy. The 2022 list features a total of 24 scientists from 10 institutions of research and higher education who have demonstrated excellence in their work.

Eugene Dimitrov, MD, PhD, assistant professor of physiology and biophysics, Center for Neurobiology of Stress Resilience and Psychiatric Disorders, received a \$500 travel award after he was selected as one of two winners of the Addgene AAV Data Hub Challenge. Researchers were invited to submit data from their experiments with adeno-associated virus (AAV), the main viral vector used for gene therapy. Dr.

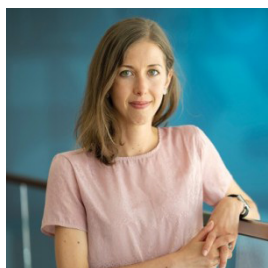


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Dimitrov was chosen as one of the top ten participants and presented his research in a virtual presentation, after which he was selected as a prize winner.

In his research project titled “Anterograde Transsynaptic Labeling of Interneurons in the Medial Prefrontal Cortex (mPFC),” Dr. Dimitrov demonstrated a novel use of AAV viruses to trace neuronal pathways, showing that interneurons in the medial prefrontal cortex are innervated by projections from the basolateral amygdala.

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Nicole Ferrara, PhD, assistant professor of physiology and biophysics, Center for Neurobiology of Stress Resilience and Psychiatric Disorders, received a one-year, \$60,000 Schweppe Scholar

Award from Chicago Medical School for her research project “Amygdala Myelination Mediates Developmental Transitions in Social Engagement.” The Schweppe Scholar Award is available to outstanding junior faculty at CMS who have not yet received NIH R01 funding (or the equivalent).

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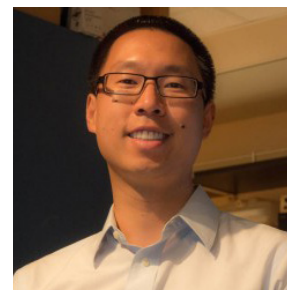
The following CMS and DePaul University colleagues received inaugural grant awards in pursuit of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Biomedical Discovery and Healthcare as part of a three-year funding agreement between the RFU and DePaul:

- **EunJung Hwang**, PhD, CMS assistant professor of cell biology and anatomy, and Eric Landahl, PhD (DePaul), received an award for their research study “Development of AI Movement Diagnostic System for Neurological Disorder Models.”

- **Kaiwen Kam**, PhD, CMS associate professor of cell biology and anatomy; Jacob Furst, PhD (DePaul); and Thiru Ramaraj, PhD (DePaul) received an award for their research study “Machine Learning Discovery of Novel Brainstem Nuclei Controlling Orofacial Behaviors.”



Dr. EunJung Hwang



Dr. Kaiwen Kam

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Juan Medina-Echeverria, MS, CMS '25, has been accepted to become part of the American Heart Association's (AHA) inaugural National Hispanic Latino Cardiovascular Collaborative (NHLCC) Scholar class of 2022-2023. The NHLCC mentorship program aims to



promote the treatment and prevention of cardiovascular diseases and stroke in the Hispanic/Latino community by reducing and eliminating health disparities that pre-vent people from living a full, optimal life. As a scholar, Juan attended the AHA's annual Scientific Sessions conference in November, and he will have ongoing mentoring and network opportunities over the next year, to enhance his education and make a greater impact in the future.

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David Mueller, PhD, professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, Center for Genetic Diseases, has been

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selected as an ad hoc reviewer for the NIH Director's Pioneer Award.

The award "supports scientists with outstanding records of creativity pursuing new research directions to develop pioneering approaches to major challenges in biomedical, social science, and behavioral re-search." This is the fourth year in succession that Dr. Mueller has been appointed on this review committee.



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Daniel Peterson, PhD, professor of neuroscience and director of the Center for Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine, received a one-year, \$90,000 grant from the Walder Foundation for his research study "Generation of Human Neural Stem Cells to Model Reprogramming Human Neurons."

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Roxane Rohani, PharmD, MSc, BCACP, assistant professor of cellular & molecular pharmacology, passed her certification exam and is now a Board Certified Ambulatory Care Pharmacist.



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Neelam Sharma-Walia, PhD, associate professor of microbiology and immunology, Center for Cancer Cell Biology, Immunology, and Infection, received a two-year, \$401,115 grant

from the National Institutes of Health for her research study "Anti-nucleolin Aptamer AS1411: Applications in Kaposi's Sarcoma Associated Herpes Virus (KSHV) Biology."

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A publication co-authored by **Amanda M. Simanek**, PhD, MPH, director of the Michael Reese Foundation Center for Health Equity Research and associate professor of humanities and health care, was selected as 1 of 8 research

papers being featured as a "Paper of the Year" by the *American Journal of Health Promotion*. The paper, "Fight Like a Nerdy Girl: *The Dear Pandemic* Playbook for Combating Health Misinformation," highlights the *Dear Pandemic* project of which Dr. Simanek is a co-founder and contributing writer.

The goal of this "best of list" is to bring attention to high-impact studies from top researchers from around the world. Criteria for selection included timeliness of the study, well-executed methods, and findings that offer a unique contribution to the field of health promotion literature.

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Nutan Vaidya, MD, vice dean of faculty affairs and equity and professor and discipline chair of psychiatry and behavioral science, has been invited to serve on the AAMC Group on Faculty Affairs (GFA)'s Professional Development Committee. The Professional



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Development Committee is responsible for developing, implementing, and evaluating the educational and professional development programs for GFA members outside of the annual GFA Professional Development Conference. As a member of the committee, Dr. Vaidya will serve as a resource to GFA representatives and will represent GFA at the annual GFA Professional Development Conference and Learn Serve Lead, the AAMC Annual Meeting.

Dr. Vaidya will hold her committee position for one year, with a three-year maximum renewal.



Rahul Vijay, PhD, DVM, assistant professor of microbiology and immunology, Center for Cancer Cell Biology, Immunology, and Infection, received a one-year, \$60,000 Schweppe Scholar Award from Chicago Medical School for his research project

“Role of 4-1BB:4-1BBL Axis in Enhancing Memory B Cell Response.” The Schweppe Scholar Award is available to outstanding junior faculty at CMS who have not yet received NIH R01 funding (or the equivalent).

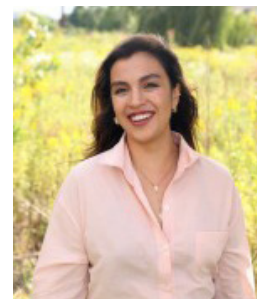
Presentations & Publications

Neil Bradbury, PhD, professor of physiology and biophysics, delivered a Master Teacher Guild presentation on December 7 titled “A Taste of the Holidays: The Science Behind Yum or Yuck!”



Yvette Castañeda, PhD, MPH, MBA, community engagement core lead, Michael Reese Foundation Center for Health Equity Research, published an article titled “Employment Precarity and Increased Risk of Hazardous Occupational

Exposures Among Residents of High Socioeconomic Hardship Neighborhoods” in the November 2022 issue of *Annals of Work Exposures and Health*.

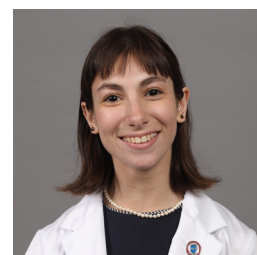


Melissa Chen, MD, medical director of the Interprofessional Community Clinic and associate professor of medicine, presented “That Was Then, This is Now: Race in the Clinical History” at Lake Forest Hospital’s Grand Rounds on November 4.

Lise Eliot, PhD, interim discipline chair of humanities and health care and professor of neuroscience, Stanson Toshok Center for Brain Function and Repair, published an article with **Julia Rauch**, CMS '23. The article, titled “Breaking the Binary: Gender versus Sex Analysis in Human Brain Imaging,” was published in the December issue of *Neuroimage*.



Dr. Lise Eliot



Julia Rauch

Dr. Eliot was also quoted extensively in a *The Wire Science* article titled “The Gendered Brain: Are Men and Women

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Different Inside the Head?" The article discussed whether sex differences in the brain are inherent or are caused by our gendered society and culture. Dr. Eliot discussed the neuroplasticity of the brain and argued that sex differences in the brain start out small but are amplified over time by environmental factors, such as gender stereotypes.

Raúl Gazmuri, MD, PhD, FCCM, director of the Resuscitation Institute and professor of physiology and biophysics, was a panelist on the topic "The Challenges for Academic-Industry Collaborations and University Start-ups," part of the university's BioInnovations Speaker Series.



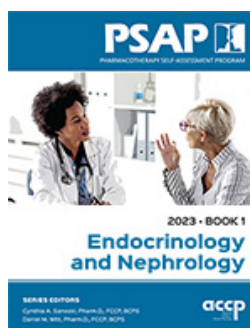
Arvind K. Goyal, MD, MPH, MBA, FAAFP, FACPM, CMS clinical associate professor of family and preventive medicine, delivered a presentation titled "Addiction Medicine 101" as part of the Clinical Sciences

Department's medical grand round series. The number of overdose cases, from both legal and illegal drugs, has been consistently rising across the U.S. During his presentation, Dr. Goyal examined some of the health system challenges in caring for patients with substance use disorders and discussed recommendations for management of frequently used substances.

Med Jimenez, MS, CMS '25, co-authored a manuscript titled "Thermal Damage Estimate Artifact Following Antecedent Biopsy" published in *Cureus Journal of Medical Science*. The paper found that MR-guided laser interstitial therapy combined with biopsy was shown imprecise with actual tissue destruction using a thermal damage estimate. The use of MR-guided laser therapy is an emerging treatment in neurosurgery and has promises for patients with intractable focal epilepsy. Med's primary research mentor is Jeffrey Raskin, MD, FAANS, FAAP, who is a pediatric neurosurgeon at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital and Northwestern Memorial Hospital.



Lalita Prasad Reddy, PharmD, MS, BCPS, BCACP, CDCES, FCCP, assistant dean for basic science education and vice chair of foundational sciences and humanities, recently published a review book for advanced pharmacist board certification. The book, *Endocrinology and Nephrology* (American College of Clinical Pharmacy, January 2023), the latest release in the 2022-2024 Pharmacotherapy Self-Assessment Program (PSAP), provides critical and robust updates on hot topics in endocrinology and nephrology.



The book's content, which includes traditional review-style chapters, interactive cases, and a recorded webcast, was developed under the leadership of Faculty Panel Chair Dr. Prasad-Reddy. The target audience

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for *Endocrinology and Nephrology* is pharmacotherapy specialists and advanced level clinical pharmacists whose practice involves the direct care and management of patients living with diabetes, CKD, or other specialized endocrinologic considerations.



Lawrence Robbins, MD, associate professor of neurology, presented “Refractory Chronic Migraine: Definition, Treatment, and Discussion of a Refractory Scale for Adolescents and Adults” on December 14 as part

of the Department of Clinical Science’s medical grand rounds series. Dr. Robbins is a neurologist specializing in headache, with certificates in pain management and psychopharmacology.

Henry Sackin, PhD, professor of physiology and biophysics, Center for Proteomics and Molecular Therapeutics, was the first author of a clinical cardiology case report titled “Sustained Suppression of Premature Ventricular Contractions by a Three-Month Pacing Adjustment,” published in the 2022 *Cureus Journal of Medical Science*. The paper addresses how pacemaker adjustments can be used to mitigate arrhythmia-induced cardiomyopathy in heart failure patients.



Beth Stutzmann, PhD, professor and chair of neuroscience, director of the Center for Neurodegenerative Disease and Therapeutics, recently co-authored three papers. The first, titled “Protein Mishandling and Impaired Lysosomal



Dr. Beth Stutzmann

Proteolysis Generated through Calcium Dysregulation in Alzheimer’s Disease,” was published in the December 2022 issue of *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. **Sarah Mustaly**, Dr. Stutzmann’s PhD student, was the lead author of the publication. A highlights paper about Ms. Mustaly and Dr. Stutzmann’s publication was published in the January 2023 issue of *Nature Reviews Neurology*.

“Lithium Provides Broad Therapeutic Benefits in an Alzheimer’s Disease Mouse Model” was published in the *Journal of Alzheimer’s Disease*.

“Essential Role of the Mitochondrial Na⁺/Ca²⁺ Exchanger NCLX in Mediating PDE2-Dependent Neuronal Survival and Learning” was published in the December issue of *Cell Reports*.



Leslie Zun, MD, MBA, professor of emergency medicine and psychiatry and behavioral science, published an article titled “A Quality Measurement Framework for Emergency Department Care of Psychiatric Emergencies” in the *Annals of Emergency Medicine*.

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Events and Other News

Jennifer Afranie-Sakyi, MD '19, and **Emma Holloway**, MD '21, participated in a CMS forum for all M2s and M4s on "Working with Patients with Disabilities." The event was part of the medical school's Principles of Professionalism, Health Care, and Health Equity (P2H2) course. **Rosanne Oggoian**, DO, assistant professor of pediatrics and clinical skills lab director, and **Kristin Paus** from the Lake County Center for Independent Living also participated in the forum.



Dr. Jennifer
Afranie-Sakyi



Dr. Emma
Holloway



Dr. Rosanne
Oggoian

Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD, dean of Chicago Medical School, was quoted in *The New York Times* article "COVID Vaccines Targeting Omicron Should Be Standard, Panel Says" and other media outlets' reporting on the Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee's (VRBPAC) Jan. 26 meeting to discuss how to simplify and streamline the COVID-19 vaccination process. Dr. Chatterjee is a member of VRBPAC, an independent advisory panel that makes recommendations to the FDA. Dr. Chatterjee was also quoted in the *Chicago Tribune* article "University of Chicago Medical School Withdraws from U.S. News Rankings," which details the decision by



several U.S. medical schools to stop participating in *U.S. News & World Report's* annual medical school rankings.

Joanna Dabrowska,

PhD, PharmD, associate professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology and neuroscience, Center for Neurobiology of Stress Resilience and Psychiatric Disorders, was featured in the Health Pulse section of *Crain's Chicago Business*, as well as in the article "Rosalind



Franklin University Professor Hopes Grant Will Lead to Development of Anxiety, PTSD Treatment," published in the *Lake County News Sun*. The news articles discussed Dr. Dabrowska's research into the hormone oxytocin. In the past five years, Dr. Dabrowska has received two grants totaling \$4.36 million from the National Institutes of Health for her research investigating if oxytocin can be used to treat anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder

"Our work fills a significant knowledge gap which can lead to a novel therapeutic strategy resulting in a more comprehensive treatment approach for anxiety disorders," Dr. Dabrowska said in a news release. ■

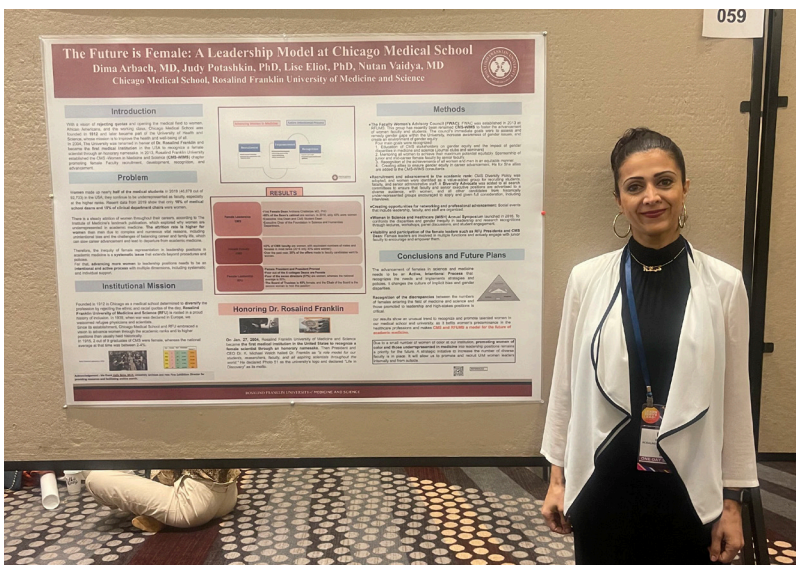
AAMC Learn Serve Lead Conference



Dr. Jeanette Morrison, Dr. Kim Fasula, Dr. Jessica Lewis, Dr. Lalita Prasad-Reddy, and Dr. Archana Chatterjee.



Dr. Kim Fasula, Dr. Michael Allswede, Dr. Jeanette Morrison, Dr. Biana Kotlyar, George Rattin, and Dr. Frank Maldonado.



Dr. Dima Arbach with her poster.

CMS faculty, staff, and leadership attended the AAMC's annual Learn Serve Lead conference, held in Nashville, Tennessee last November, and several of them participated in panels and poster presentations. **Jessica Lewis**, PhD, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, presented on the topic "Mechanisms Underlying the Formation of Medical Students' Professional Identities" during a session titled "Professional Identity Formation: When Medical Learners Are Breaking New Ground." **Dima Arbach**, MD, assistant professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, presented a poster titled "The Future Is Female: A Leadership Model at Chicago Medical School" which focused on the CMS-WIMS program. Other contributing authors for the poster included **Judy Potashkin**, PhD; **Lise Eliot**, PhD; and **Nutan Vaidya**, MD. ■



Dr. Jessica Lewis (second from left)



CMS faculty, staff, and administration held a day of service in December at Bernie's Book Bank, a nonprofit that supports reading and book ownership by collecting and distributing children's books to underserved families in the Chicago area. We were glad for this opportunity to help support their mission and give back to our community.

We want to hear from you!

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



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CHICAGO MEDICAL SCHOOL