



CMS NEWS

The Chicago Medical School Newsletter

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ISSUE 24

**NAVIGATING THE
DIFFICULTIES OF NEWLY
DIAGNOSED CANCER
AS A MEDICAL
STUDENT COUPLE**
M3 student Lily Yan
reflects on a challenging
experience.

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M2 WHITE COAT AND TRANSITION CEREMONY

*The Class of 2024
celebrated their first two
years of medical school.*

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RESIDENT APPRECIATION

*The GME Office and our
clinical sites sponsored
several events to show
appreciation for CMS
residents.*

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Celebrating Match Day

The Chicago Medical School Class of 2022 joined thousands of their peers across the nation on March 18 in celebrating Match Day, the annual rite of passage when graduating students learn where they will spend their residency training. CMS continues an excellent record of successful residency placement, with a 97% match rate. During the virtual event, as students gathered with friends and family in small groups and came together on Zoom, the Class of 2022 celebrated their achievement in the face of two years of pandemic restrictions.

Members of the Class of 2022 were on the verge of transitioning to the third year of their programs when the World Health Organization declared COVID-19

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Dean's Message

Greetings from the Dean's Office!



As the academic year closes, students are heading in different directions depending on where they are in their medical school journey. The M1 students have just completed their first year of classes and the rising M3 students begin their clinical rotations this week. Rising M4 students are reviewing their final elective options, working on their residency applications, and preparing for their final year while the Class of 2022 is just days away from Commencement on the 3rd of June. Life on campus is busy and filled with exciting celebrations!

In my message last quarter, I mentioned that Match Day was about to take place, so I am happy to share the results of March 18th. Match Day was a day filled with celebrations across the country — both virtual and in-person. I am proud to share that for the 2022 match season, there were a total of 206 CMS students who fully participated in the match with 200 successfully matched into a program that begins with orientation in June 2022. This figure includes all specialties and those students who were successful in the Supplemental Acceptance and Offer Program (SOAP). In short, the CMS 2022 match was 97%! I also want to shine a light on our Underrepresented in Medicine (UiM) students who had an exceptional match of 100%! I hope you will join me in congratulating all our students on their successful match!

We were delighted to gather in-person on April 21st for the first Faculty & Friends Recognition Dinner since 2019. Over 85 guests attended the dinner and awards ceremony to celebrate our CMS faculty's achievements. Those recognized included: **Rosanne Oggolan**, DO, who received the Dean's Award for Excellence In Educational Innovation; **Andrew Dahlem**, MD, for the Dean's Award For Excellence in Clinical Education; **Terrence Li**, MD, for the CMS Champion Award; **Melissa Chen**, MD, for the Outstanding Faculty Community Service Award; **Amy Pabst**, MD, MHPE, CHSE, for the Outstanding Faculty Mentor Award; **Eun Jung Hwang**, PhD, for the Junior Faculty Investigator Award; **Michael Allswede**, DO, FNAP, **Dima Arbach**, MD, and **Michael Ellison**, EdD each receiving the Dean's Special Recognition Award. Student leaders from each class presented awards for teaching excellence to the following faculty members: **Gordon Pullen**, PhD; **Phillip Zaret**, MD; **Janice Urban**, PhD; and **Monica Oblinger**, PhD. The night concluded with a heartfelt tribute and standing ovation for **Gordon Pullen**, PhD, on his retirement from CMS after 38 years of service. Other retiring faculty recognitions included: **Michael Sarras, Jr.**, PhD (18 years), **Karen DiMario**, MS (27 years), **Michael**

Fennewald, PhD (34 years); **Ann Snyder**, PhD (41 years); and **Charles McCormack**, PhD (58 years). A heartfelt congratulations to all the faculty award recipients and to those dedicated retiring faculty with 216 combined years of service!

Congratulations also to **Dr. Jeanette Morrison** who was recently accepted into the Hedwig van Ameringen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine® (ELAM) program. The very competitive nationwide program offers an intensive one-year fellowship of leadership training with extensive coaching, networking and mentoring opportunities aimed at expanding the national pool of qualified women candidates for leadership in academic medicine, dentistry, public health, and pharmacy. Please join me in congratulating Dr. Morrison on her acceptance to this prestigious program and best wishes as she takes on this challenge.

Continuing with faculty news, I am delighted to share with you that we have successfully recruited an exceptional physician and higher education executive, **Myrtis Sullivan**, MD, MPH, FAAP as the Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. Dr. Sullivan may be familiar to many of you as she has been serving as the CMS M4 Lipschultz House Learning Community Mentor since 2018. A board-certified pediatrician, she most recently served as Medical Director of Zing Health, Medicare Advantage Health Plan where she provided consultation for Utilization and Disease Management for Medicare beneficiaries. Dr. Sullivan has received several awards throughout her esteemed career and is widely published in her discipline of pediatrics. When Dr. Sullivan joins CMS/RFU in September, she and her team will collaborate with offices across the school and university to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in CMS' research and educational missions, creating a welcoming environment for students, faculty, and staff.

In closing, I want to share my sincere appreciation for all our CMS staff who work tirelessly every day to support our school. Thank you for your steadfast contribution to our faculty and our students. Your dedication to CMS helps to make it the thriving and robust institution it is today. It gives me great pleasure

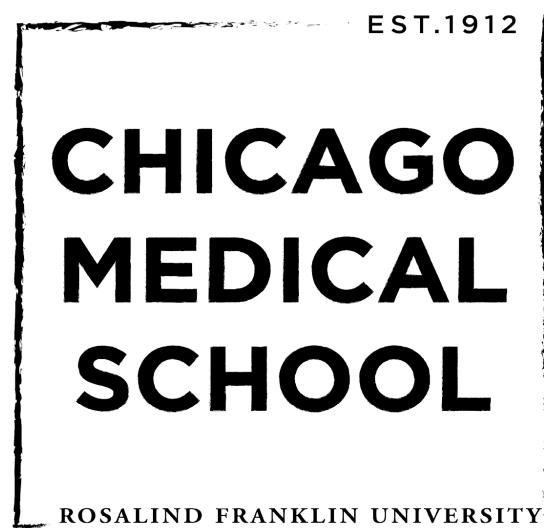
to spotlight two of our CMS staff members who were selected as award recipients from across all staff at the University at the recent Staff Recognition & Awards Ceremony. Congratulations to **Kara Bass**, Coordinator, Foundational Sciences and Humanities, for receiving the Rising Star Award and to **Crystal Gutierrez**, Lead Administrative Coordinator, Foundational Sciences and Humanities, for the Unsung Champion Award. You make us proud!

As the academic year comes to a close, we look forward to commencement later this week and many surrounding celebrations. Summer is just around the corner so be sure to devote precious time to your loved ones and enjoy all that the warm days of the season have to offer. In the meantime, I wish your families, friends, and you good health!

Sincerely,



Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD
Dean, Chicago Medical School





Celebrating Match Day

continued from cover

a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. Students were confronted with major adjustments demanded by COVID safety protocols, including hybrid learning, online and limited in-person clinical rotations, and virtual residency interviews. Match Day was a celebration of students' success in the face of these unexpected challenges, and the resiliency of the class was a common theme in all the speeches heard during the event.

Speakers included **Archana Chatterjee**, MD, PhD, dean of Chicago Medical School; **Gordon Pullen**, PhD '82, associate dean for basic science education and vice chair of foundational sciences and humanities; and **Ashley Schaefer**, CMS '22, class president. The event also featured a 40-minute photo slideshow

put together by student leaders, celebrating their classmates' time together during the past four years.

"Guided by our world-class faculty and staff, our students have excelled in academics, research and community service," Dr. Chatterjee said. "Our Match Day results are a testament to our faculty, staff, and students' efforts. Our graduating students stand on the brink of fulfilling their calling — a lifelong commitment to caring for others. We are incredibly proud of them and extend our heartfelt congratulations to their families, friends, and of course, our wonderful graduating class."

Dr. Pullen, who is retiring at the end of this academic year, expressed his pride in the Class of 2022 for



the challenges they had worked through, recalling the uncertainty students faced as the first wave of COVID hit during their second year of medical school. Addressing the students, who had matched into 26 different specialties in 35 states (plus Washington, DC), Dr. Pullen said, “Regardless of where you match, there’s still a lot more to learn, and we will continue to be proud of your accomplishments. I wish all of you the ultimate success and fulfillment as you continue to reach for your goals.”

Class Council President Ashley Schaefer recalled the excitement of watching the CMS Class of 2019 celebrate their Match Day when she was a first-year medical student, rushing up the lobby stairs with her Friday schema case group and arriving just in time to hear the end of the countdown and watch the fourth-year students open their envelopes. Although she could not have predicted then that her own Match Day would take place virtually, or that she would be opening an email from the

National Resident Matching Program® instead of an envelope, the sense of joy and celebration remains the same.

“Today is a celebration of you,” Ashley told her classmates. “The triumphs and challenges you have experienced individually and collectively as the CMS Class of 2022 over the last four years have prepared us for where we are going and what we need to do...I am immensely proud to be embarking on this next chapter of our medical profession with colleagues such as you.” ■

Thank you to all the students who shared photos of their Match Day celebrations! (displayed on the following pages)







Navigating the Difficulties of Newly Diagnosed Cancer as a Medical School Couple

Essay submitted by Lily Yan, CMS '23

Cancer is a word you hear nearly every day during medical school. In school, we live and breathe memorized facts about associated diseases and the oddities of paraneoplastic syndromes, but the concept of cancer always keeps its distance. We learn it as a rare disease in children, the elderly, and people with a family history of cancer. Unfortunately, as a medical school couple, our experience with cancer became personal, forcing us to confront a textbook exception. Being young and healthy, we did not expect one of us to suddenly fall prey to the disease.

My fiancé's neck pain began in high school during our early dating days, and progressively worsened during medical school. "Don't worry, it's probably from studying all day," I told him. I later regretted these words. When his pain became unbearable, he got an ultrasound and biopsy. We waited patiently, uncertain of what lay ahead. We remembered that sarcoma is rare but often deadly. What are the odds? We concluded that it was unlikely. However, the seed of doubt began to sprout.

On the day of the results, we studied while impatiently waiting for the call. Slowly, an air of anxiety seeped into the room. Despite upcoming exams, studying was the last thing on our minds as we jumped at the phone anytime it buzzed. It was a familiar heart-pounding feeling like the one felt while opening the medical school admissions email. However, this time it was a feeling of life or death.

Finally, the phone call we had been anxiously waiting for arrived. We both rushed to huddle over

the speakerphone. The physician greeted both of us with empathy, saying, "I'm so sorry this happened to you." Word for word, it was what we learned to say in medical school. Unfortunately, when the roles are reversed and you become the patient, you realize these words were not enough to soften what we heard — a diagnosis that would change our lives.

After hearing "Synovial Sarcoma, a form of cancer," we sat in disbelief and quietly held hands. Our minds stopped as we were consumed with the word "cancer." Although it was his diagnosis, my world felt like it was collapsing. I knew that my fiancé's brain had shut off. Even though it was difficult for me too, it was imperative that I take in everything the physician had to say. Processing his words was like drinking from a broken fire hydrant. Information about the diagnosis, treatment, and scheduling was overwhelming. The call was traumatizing, and our usually chatty car ride became painfully silent. "Synovial Sarcoma": these were the only words that registered in our consciousness. Thoughts raced through my fiancé's mind:

"Am I going to die?"
"But I'm so young!"
"Will I have to drop out of school?"

Similarly, I thought to myself:

"How can this happen?"
"Why him?"
"How can I live without him?"

We sat silently, lost in disbelief and racing thoughts. Our minds were in shock. Upon arriving home, we

went to separate rooms to hide our silent stream of tears, each thinking we had to be a strong pillar of support for the other. However, the sadness was unbearable. We embraced tearfully and knew it was what we needed. We succumbed to the reality of the nightmare and cried silently. Words were not needed to communicate our pain. Our nine years of unconditional support for each other would now be tested again.

The next steps of the journey were not easy, as we had to navigate the complexities of cancer treatment while dealing with the rigors of being in medical school. Thousands of worries swarmed our minds, both as patients and as future physicians. We worried about the possibility of him losing arm function in the future due to the neck surgery. Disability, dropping out, and chemotherapy resistance were also scary possibilities. We understood the challenge that lay ahead, but I was determined to do my best to support him while also being in medical school.

Despite my determination, being a medical student while having a loved one with cancer at times became unbearable. It was difficult to drive an hour to his house, cook, and help him through his neutropenic fevers. The hardest part was discussing cancer in class: I was not emotionally ready to do so. However, for the sake of my future patients, I knew I needed to learn about and discuss the complexities of care. This was emotionally taxing because I was living it and learning about it forced me to face the realities even more.

Fortunately, my fiancé did his best to support me too. One of my fondest memories was when he told me that my potstickers were tasty even though I knew he could not taste them due to the chemotherapy. Seeing him stay strong for me while undergoing treatment and studying inspired me to also do my best. This was easier said than done, but we persevered through these trials together.

In retrospect, this experience forged a stronger bond between us. Seeing him persevere through a life-

changing illness, I discovered newfound respect for his strength. Having weathered this storm together, he knows that I will continue to be there for him for whatever lies ahead. Once lost in a sea of textbooks, we realized that the ship of each other's support is what kept us afloat.

We also learned the important lesson of what it is like to be on the patient's and caregiver's side of the story. We hope that sharing our experience gives future medical students a new perspective of what patients and their loved ones go through, which is much more than just the disease we see in textbooks — it is a physical, spiritual, and emotional roller coaster. Going forward, we propose that students shadow an ill patient for a day to better understand what they go through. We hope that medical students not only learn medical knowledge, but also strive to understand the patient and their loved ones' journey and empathize with their personal struggles outside of their diagnosis. ■

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Author Contributions:

All authors contributed to the conception and design of this article. All authors read and approved of the manuscript.

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CMS Winter Carnival

Chicago Medical School hosted its first Winter Carnival on March 11, inviting all CMS faculty, staff, students, and administration to attend an evening of food and fun. Activities included cookie decorating, candle making, a photo booth, ring toss and other games, a positive affirmation wall, and “Family Feud” trivia games. ■





ASRC Winners

The university's 17th annual All School Research Consortium (ASRC), held virtually on March 16, featured the research efforts of nearly 100 participants, including RFU students, postdoctoral trainees, and resident clinicians. Keynote speaker Allison Arwady, MD, MPH, commissioner of the Chicago Department of Public Health, kicked off the daylong event with an address titled "Data to Action: The Critical Role of Cross-Disciplinary Research and Building Trust in the Time of COVID." The keynote was followed by three research symposia as well as the poster presentations.

CMS students and residents presented a total of 56 research talks and posters. Congratulations to the following award winners:



Best CMS Research Talk:

Justine Kim, CMS '23

"The Development of a Personalized Analogy Rating Scale for Adolescents Diagnosed with Anxiety"



Best CMS Research Poster:

Yanhan Ren, CMS '22

"Indications and Outcomes of Surgery for High Myopia: Staar Intraocular Collamer Lens vs. LASIK"



Best Postgraduate Research Talk:

Anum Khan, MD, R '24, Internal Medicine Resident (FHCC)

"When 'Taller-Than-Wide' is Not Taller-than-Wide"



Best Postgraduate Research Poster:

Gowthami Koorapati, MD, R '23, Internal Medicine Resident (Northwestern Medicine)

"A Case of Pulmonary Cement Embolism Post Kyphoplasty" ■

St. Baldrick's Day



RFU held its annual St. Baldrick's celebration and fundraiser on campus on March 19, inviting volunteers to shave their heads for a cause: raising funds to defeat children's cancer. Four brave faculty members — **Dr. Bruce Goldberg**, assistant professor of medicine; **Dr. Carl Correll**, associate professor of biochemistry and molecular biology; **Dr. David Everly**, associate professor of microbiology and immunology; and **Dr. Rosanne Oggiano**, assistant professor of pediatrics — signed up to auction off their hair. For each \$3 donation, students, faculty, and staff could place a vote for which of the four faculty members would shave their head. The verdict was... Dr. Correll!

All proceeds from the event went to the St. Baldrick's Foundation, a non-profit organization

that raises money for childhood cancer research. The event also featured other opportunities to make an impact: the Pediatrics Interest Group hosted a card-making station for patients at a local pediatric hospital, and Be The Match provided information on stem cell transplants, swabbing kits, and joining the bone marrow registry.

We thank everyone who participated in the event and helped raise funds and awareness for this important cause. For more information or to make a donation, visit stbaldricks.org. ■



Chicago Medical School celebrated the Class of 2024 on May 7 as M2s attended their long-awaited White Coat Ceremony. This rite of passage marking students' entrance into medical school is usually held in the fall of M1 year, shortly after first-year orientation. But the Class of 2024 were not able to have their ceremony in the fall of 2020 due to the safety restrictions of the pandemic. Instead, they began a year of mostly virtual education, as statewide stay-at-home orders were issued, the RFU campus was closed, and most classes were held via Zoom.

Because of the unique circumstances, the Class of 2024 was celebrating an additional milestone alongside their White Coat Ceremony: the completion of their first two years of medical school, and the

transition from didactic instruction to the clinical phase of their education.

"I am absolutely delighted to be with you today, in person, to celebrate this long-overdue but truly memorable event," CMS Dean **Archana Chatterjee**, MD, PhD, told the students.

Serene Perkins, MD '00, a surgical oncologist who completed a residency in general surgery and fellowships in molecular genetics, cell and tissue transplantation, and hepatobiliary and pancreatic surgical oncology and organ transplantation, gave the keynote address. Dr. Perkins began serving as chief medical officer at Mid-Columbia Medical Center in Oregon in 2019, and she recounted memories of how her hospital dealt with the start of the pandemic





the following year. She also expressed gratitude to her many teachers and mentors and talked about the importance of hope.

"As you enter your clinical years, I urge you to remember that there is no greater privilege than the practice of medicine," she told the Class of 2024, noting that they would be there at the beginning and end of patients' lives.

Victor Barragan, president of the Class of 2024, delivered the student address. He spoke about the British surgeon Dr. Joseph Lister, who was the first person to incorporate the science of germ theory into surgical practice, drastically increasing patients' chances of surviving surgery. "In a very short period of time, someone was able to champion change,

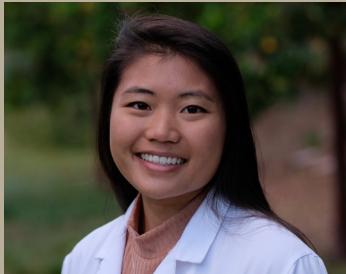
champion and challenge the establishment of medicine, to give patients better outcomes and move medicine forward," Victor said.

Victor hopes that the field of medicine is on the precipice of another important change, as healthcare workers have an increased awareness of the social determinants of health and are creating efforts to combat them. "As I stand here in Rhoades Auditorium and take a look around at my colleagues from the Class of 2024, I can say that without a doubt there are many Dr. Listers among us," he said, encouraging his classmates to become champions for change.

The program concluded with a reflection by **Keaton Erickson**, CMS '22, who spoke about symbols and how they are inherently personal: one object can mean different things to different people, and those meanings can change over time. Dr. Perkins led the Class of 2024 in reciting the modified Oath of Geneva, and then students were coated by their learning community mentors — **Nitika Pant**, MD '11; **Liza Pilch**, MD; **Amanda Lund**, DO; and **Rene Roberts**, MD — who symbolically welcomed the students to the profession of medicine.

"Today marks your commitment to learning the art and practice of medicine for your patients," said **Sandra LaBlance**, PhD, senior associate dean for student affairs. "The weight of the white coat across your shoulders shall serve as a reminder that your hard work as a medical student will guide you in your future work, which will lighten the burden for others." ■





Student Dean Corner

Each quarter, student dean Rachel To gives updates on the projects she will be working on throughout the year.

Greetings, classmates and colleagues:

As we close out the end of the 2021 - 2022 academic year, we celebrate the conclusion of yet another fruitful year for CMS students. I leave the Class of 2022 with these words from Dr. Rosalind Franklin: "In my view, all that is necessary for faith is the belief that by doing our best we shall succeed in our aims: the improvement of mankind." Congratulations to our graduating M4s and best wishes to them as they embark on their next phase of training in residency!

With the forthcoming end of my term as CMS Student Dean, I wanted to provide a few updates regarding student research at CMS. There have been several increases in the number of opportunities available for our existing clinical research experiences for first year students, including a total of 32 positions available for the Russell Research Institute and 15 for the Sinai Urban Health Institute. CMS is continuously striving to increase the number and variety of clinical research opportunities through existing and new clinical partners. During the April student leaders meeting, I proposed several action items to the Dean and CMS faculty with regards to improving student research. As part of the initiative, the web pages on InSite are currently being modified to accurately reflect and more clearly communicate available research opportunities. Moreover, research faculty are working towards putting together workshops and other resources to aid students in not only finding additional research opportunities but also succeeding well in their research endeavors. While improving student research is an ongoing process,

sustainable change takes time and effort from both students and faculty working together. I encourage my peers who are passionate about research and making impactful change to continue these efforts in hopes of achieving both equity in available opportunities as well as diversity of experiences.

It has been a sincere pleasure and honor to serve as the CMS Student Dean for this past academic year. From working on the RFU ID badges to creating quarterly newsletters to student leadership development, this has been a tremendous learning experience and I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to not only work towards institutional change but also to discover so much about myself in the process. A special thanks to Dr. Chatterjee, Dr. Morrison, and Dr. LaBlance for their mentorship and challenging me to be a better leader. I am excited to welcome the incoming CMS Student Dean and look forward to what the 2022 - 2023 academic year will bring under their student leadership.

Thank you to my peers, CMS faculty, and staff for a memorable academic year. Have a wonderful summer!

Sincerely,

Rachel To
Chicago Medical School Student Dean, 2021-22
Chicago Medical School Class of 2023

University Faculty Awards

Congratulations to the three CMS faculty who were chosen to receive awards at the university's annual Faculty Awards Ceremony on April 28!

Gustavo Martinez, PhD, assistant professor of microbiology and immunology, received the **Board of Trustees Research Award**. This award is presented to a junior faculty member who has shown promise in research activities, published work, and grantmanship.

Gordon Pullen, PhD, associate dean for basic science education and assistant professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology and physiology and biophysics, received the **Rosalind Franklin Award for Excellence in Teaching**. This award is presented to recognize meritorious teaching in the health sciences and expertise in fostering student learning.

William Frost, PhD, director of the Stanson Toshok Center for Brain Function and Repair and professor and discipline chair of cell biology and anatomy, received the **Timothy R. Hansen Mentoring Award**. This award is presented to a full-ranked faculty member with at least five years of service to RFU



who has shown outstanding contributions in advising, guiding, and coaching university faculty, either formally or informally.

We congratulate these faculty members and thank them for their contributions to RFU and CMS! ■



Dr. Gustavo Martinez



Dr. Gordon Pullen



Dr. William Frost

Art and Medicine: Visualizing Health Equity



The university hosted **“Visualize Health Equity: A Community Art Project,”** a traveling exhibit from the National Academy of Medicine (NAM), on campus throughout the month of April. NAM, a nonprofit research organization based in Washington, D.C., called on artists to illustrate what health equity looks, sounds, and feels like to them.

The RFU community was also invited to share their visions of health equity, and they responded with compositions of self-reflection and collaboration, referencing their experience pursuing careers in the health sciences, their heritage, and observations about their communities through compelling visual narrative. These artistic representations were displayed along with the banners comprising the national exhibit.

Among the submissions were three CMS students from the Class of 2023: **Sarah Davidson**, who submitted a beaded textile artwork titled “Seed Beads”; **Nahae Kim**, who submitted a mixed media piece titled “Reflections from an Antiracist

Accomplice in Progress”; and **Kayla Quebral**, CMS ’23, who submitted a digital illustration titled “Continuation.” ■

Above: The exhibit, showcasing banners from the traveling gallery along with artwork submitted by members of the RFU community.

Below: M3 Sarah Davidson’s textile artwork, “Seed Beads,” a visual representation of the last five years, with each “brick” of beads representing the events and feelings of one month.



Interprofessional Corner

A place to highlight IP work, opportunities, research, and other news

This spring, several CMS students and students from our other health sciences programs at RFUMS participated in a collaborative program with the University of New England. The Interprofessional Team Immersion (IPTI) experience offered 12-15 hours of interprofessional, case-based interactions to enhance participants' interprofessional clinical

skills. Simulations and collaborative activities provided a robust understanding of the multifaceted dynamics of a clinical care team and helped prepare our students for real-life scenarios. The IPTI program concluded on April 27 with a poster session. We're proud of our students' extraordinary work! ■

Dr. Kimberly Fasula Earns Her PhD!

Congratulations to **Kimberly Fasula**, PhD, MS, MPH, RDH, PHDH, Director of Interprofessional Education, who recently earned her PhD! Dr. Fasula received her PhD in Curriculum and Instruction in Health Professions Education from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). Her program was delivered collaboratively between the College of Medicine,

Department of Medical Education, and the College of Education, Department of Curriculum & Instruction.

The title of her dissertation was "Assessing Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice among Licensed Health Care Professionals."

Dr. Fasula's research topic stemmed from a previous study she conducted and her observations and experiences in clinical practice. From 2014 to 2016, she served as the Principal Investigator on a clinical trial that looked at associations between oral biofilm and risk factors for cardiovascular disease and began understanding the importance of interprofessional, collaborative patient care. At the same time, she recognized the lack of collaboration that existed across disciplines and health professionals in practice. Her doctoral work took a deeper dive to identify interprofessional educational gaps and deficiencies in collaborative practice, with her study findings suggesting a need for reforming workforce knowledge and training for team-based patient care and the development of coursework/programs focusing on interprofessionalism and collaborative practice. ■



CMS Students Hone Their Clinical Skills

First-year students have the opportunity to develop and practice the skills they'll need to become a physician during Clinical Skills labs, a part of the required Clinical Foundations of Medicine course. In recent months, M1s have learned how to place an intravenous (IV) catheter and how to respond to an obstetric emergency.

In March, students attended an IV Skills Lab. During this hands-on session, M1s learned how to place an IV with the help of various preceptors: labor and delivery critical care nurses from Northwest Community Hospital, emergency room nurses and EMS instructors from Vista Medical Center East, and nurse anesthetist students and critical care nurses from RFU's own Nurse Anesthesia program.

In April, M1s attended an OB Emergency Skills Lab. During the four-and-a-half-hour workshop, students rotated through multiple activities relating to labor and delivery. ■



IV Skills Lab



IV Skills Lab



OB Emergency Skills Lab

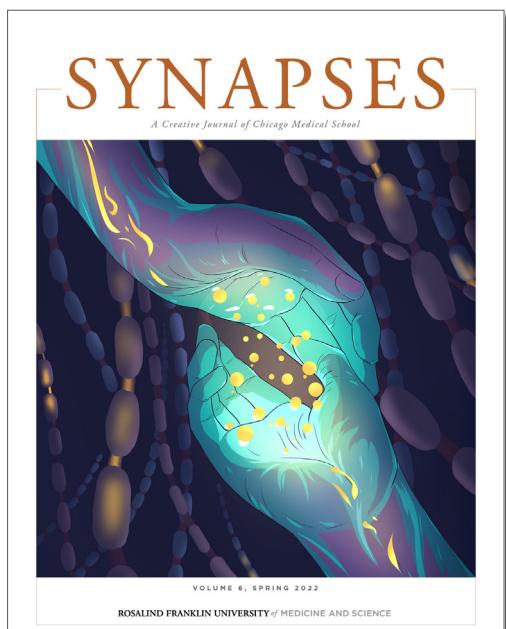


OB Emergency Skills Lab

6th Annual *Synapses* Salon

Chicago Medical School held a salon and reception on May 5 to celebrate the release of the sixth volume of *Synapses*, the school's creative journal, which publishes fine art, photography, poetry, fiction, and non-fiction submitted by CMS students, faculty, staff, alumni, residents, and fellows. The salon featured a poetry reading by **Regina de Leon Gomez**, MD, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology, and presentations by student and faculty authors and artists: **Andrew Trandai**, CMS '25; **Lucy Yao**, CMS '23; **Andrew Zwijack**, CMS '25; and **William Greenfield**, MD, assistant professor of family medicine.

The evening began with presentations by two students who discussed their art. Andrew Trandai discussed the inspiration behind his digital artwork "Long-Distance Potentiation," which was chosen for the journal's cover. The artwork is a visual metaphor for the struggles to connect during the pandemic, and the persistence many people have shown by learning to connect with each other using new avenues, such as Zoom.



The sixth volume of *Synapses*, featuring cover artwork by Andrew Trandai, CMS '25.

Lucy Yao talked about the significance of the acrylic pouring technique she used to create two of her paintings, "Currents" and "Synaptic Idealism." Because she did not have full control over the final outcome of the painting, this method challenged Lucy to overcome her perfectionist tendencies. "No matter how much you may plan the color or the composition, there's always an inherent unpredictable element present, and the painting will never turn out exactly how you envisioned it," she said. "However, this experience reminded me that sometimes rewarding things in life come from letting go and embracing the unknown."

Dr. Gomez read her poem titled "Stricken Vessel," and then Andrew Zwijack talked about his non-fiction essay "Lessons from Medicine Hitting Home," which focused on the intersection of his medical education and his personal life as his mother was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia (AML). Dr. Greenfield closed the program with a discussion of his writing and a reflection on how investing in the humanities can improve the practice of medicine. With a focus on the arts, he said, "we are not only better people, better citizens, but also we are more observant and we are better able to care for the population that we serve."

Dr. Nutan Vaidya, vice dean for faculty affairs and equity, echoed that thought in her closing remarks. "Medicine is a science which is practiced like an art, and art allows a physician or healthcare worker to go to the depths where mere science or logic cannot," she said. "So for all of you physician-artists, keep the art in you alive, because that makes you better physicians, better healthcare workers, and that's where the healing begins."

The full journal can be found at <http://rfu.ms/synapses>. The submission cycle for next year's volume will open in the fall. ■

CMS Leaders Make Their Mark through ELAM Program

One member of the CMS administration has been accepted into the program, while another recently completed her project.



Congratulations to **Jeanette Morrison**, MD, Executive Vice Dean for CMS, Vice Dean for Medical Education, and Associate Professor of Medicine, who has been accepted as a member of the 2022-2023 class of Fellows in the Hedwig van Ameringen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine (ELAM) Program. The ELAM program offers an intensive one-year fellowship of leadership training with extensive coaching, networking, and mentoring opportunities for women faculty in schools of medicine and other healthcare schools who have shown strong evidence of leadership potential. The curriculum focuses on topics such as effective leadership behaviors, managing change initiatives, organizational

dynamics, and strategic approaches to financial and resource management.

The program is dedicated to expanding the national pool of qualified women candidates in academic leadership positions in the health sciences. All fellows must share a conviction that academic health centers must change in response to today's societal, technological, and market forces, as well as a desire to play a leadership role in guiding this process of change.

Over the coming year, Dr. Morrison will work with CMS leadership on an Institutional Action Project of her choice that addresses a need or priority of CMS and promotes organizational change. We congratulate Dr. Morrison on this achievement and look forward to what she will accomplish as an ELAM Fellow.



Mildred M.G. Olivier, MD '88, the school's former Assistant Dean for Diversity and Inclusion, who left CMS in January to become the founding campus dean of Ponce Health Sciences University at the regional campus in St. Louis, was accepted into the ELAM program for the 2021-2022 academic year, when she was still at CMS. Dr. Olivier's Institutional Action Project was the Mini Medical School, a leadership

development initiative launched this past winter with North Chicago Community Partners.

Mini Medical School was a free virtual program led by CMS students and open to North Chicago fourth graders. Over the course of five sessions taught by CMS first- and second-year students, participants learned about anatomy, neuroscience and mental health, and the importance of preventing and treating diseases. Dr. Olivier had a twofold goal for her project: to develop leadership skills in CMS students who are underrepresented in medicine, and to inspire children to pursue careers in medicine.

Dr. Olivier presented her project at the 2022 ELAM Program Leaders Forum on April 27, with a poster titled "Mini Medical School: Engaging Elementary School Students, Parents/Guardians, and Teachers in an Educational Program Designed to Encourage Healthcare Aspirations among Student Populations Under-Represented in Medicine." ■



▲ First- and second-year CMS students on the Mini Medical School Executive Committee packaged supplies to be shipped to participants.

◀ Fourth graders in the program used "Squishy Human Body" models with removable organs, bones, and muscles to learn about the musculoskeletal system, the cardiopulmonary system, and the nervous system. The models were part of the kits mailed to participants.

▼ Dr. Olivier presented a poster summarizing her Mini Medical School project at the ELAM Program Leaders Forum. Dr. Archana Chatterjee, Dean of CMS and one of Dr. Olivier's mentors during her time in the ELAM program, was also in attendance.





Faculty & Friends Recognition Dinner

Chicago Medical School hosted its annual Faculty and Friends Recognition Dinner on April 21 to celebrate and express appreciation for the school's faculty, including the many volunteer faculty members who dedicate their time and effort to CMS. Congratulations to all the faculty members who received awards, as well as everyone who was nominated! We thank you for everything you do for our school, our students, and our community.

Terrence Li, MD, education director, associate professor, and discipline chair of neurology, received the **CMS Champion Award**, given to an individual who exemplifies the values of the CMS mission statement and embodies the core values of the institution in all aspects of their professional life.

Andrew Dahlem, MD '13, education director and assistant professor of family and preventative medicine, received the **CMS Dean's Award for Excellence in Clinical Education**, given to a clinician-educator who demonstrates empathy and respect for students and creates a culture that encourages student expression of ideas.

Rosanne Ogoian, DO, assistant professor of pediatrics and clinical skills course director and lab director, received the **CMS Dean's Award for**

Excellence in Educational Innovation, given to an individual who demonstrates innovation in teaching and learning approaches.

EunJung Hwang, PhD, assistant professor of cell biology and anatomy, received the **CMS Junior Faculty Investigator Award**, given to a junior researcher who has made substantial contributions to research that promotes a vibrant, collaborative, and interprofessional community.

Melissa Chen, MD, associate professor of medicine and clinical director of the ICC, received the **CMS Outstanding Faculty Community Service Award**, given to an individual who has served the underserved population at CMS, its surrounding communities, and its clinical affiliates, while serving as a role model for other faculty, students, and staff.

Amy Pabst, MD, MHPE, CHSE, assistant professor of family and preventative medicine and medical director of healthcare simulation, received the **CMS Outstanding Faculty Mentor Award**, given to an individual who has served as an outstanding mentor to other faculty members at CMS and its affiliates.

Michael Allswede, DO, FNAP, assistant dean of clinical education and associate professor of



emergency medicine; **Dima Arbach**, MD, director of faculty engagement and wellness and assistant professor of psychiatry; and **Michael Ellison**, EdD, associate dean for admissions, received the **Dean's Special Recognition Award**, which recognizes individuals who have gone above and beyond in their hard work and dedication to CMS.

In addition to the awards given out by the CMS administration, each class of students selected one faculty member to receive the **"Most Excellent Professor"** award. **Monica Oblinger**, PhD, professor of cell biology and anatomy, received this award from the Class of 2025. **Janice Urban**, PhD, director of the Center for Neurobiology of Stress Resilience and Psychiatric Disorders and professor of physiology and biophysics, received the award from the Class of 2024. **Phillip Zaret**, MD, associate professor of surgery, received the award from the Class of 2023, and **Gordon Pullen**, PhD, associate dean for basic science education and associate professor of physiology and biophysics, received the award from the Class of 2022.

The event concluded by honoring several faculty members who have recently retired or are about to retire: **Dr. Pullen**; **Ann Snyder**, PhD, associate professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology; **Michael Sarras Jr.**, PhD, professor emeritus of cell biology and anatomy; **Charles McCormack**, PhD, professor of physiology and biophysics; **Michael Fennewald**, PhD, associate professor of microbiology and immunology; and **Karen DiMario**, former assistant dean for admissions. ■

We also recognize and appreciate all our other wonderful faculty who were nominated for awards:

Jeffrey Bulger, PhD, professor and director for bioethics and humanities

Ismael Lee Chuy, MD, instructor of psychiatry

David Everly, PhD, associate professor of microbiology and immunology

Michael Fennewald, PhD, associate professor of microbiology and immunology

Mark Grumet, DC, associate professor of basic biomedical sciences

Lucy Hammerberg, MD '82, assistant dean for career and specialty advising

Johnny He, PhD, director of the Center for Cancer Cell Biology, Immunology, and Infection

Michael Noone, MD, lecturer of obstetrics and gynecology

Lawrence Robbins, MD, associate professor of neurology

Ioana Sandu, MD, assistant professor of psychiatry

Jasleen Singh, MD, instructor of psychiatry

Bharathi Swaminathan, MD, discipline chair and associate professor of PM&R

Richard Trester, MD, co-discipline chair, co-education director, and clerkship director of obstetrics and gynecology

Rahul Vijay, PhD, assistant professor of microbiology and immunology

Joshua Williams, MD, assistant professor of psychiatry



Interprofessionalism in Action

Recent Accomplishments of the Interprofessional Community Clinic

Students and faculty members representing RFU's Interprofessional Community Clinic (ICC) presented their clinical research projects at the National Society of Student-Run Free Clinics Conference in Mobile, Alabama.

The presentations covered a range of topics such as access to nutrition education, quality improvement and efficiency initiatives, the need for podiatric physicians in free clinics, vaccine registration efforts, and demystifying health in minoritized communities. This conference provided students a chance to share what they have accomplished at the ICC, and allowed them to learn how other clinics serve their patients and bring ideas home with them.

Presentations and posters by CMS students and faculty included the following:

- **Amy Marr**, CMS '24; Anna Sandler, COP '23; **Melissa Chen**, MD; and Roberta Dume, PharmD, BCPP: "Implementation of Care Coordinators and the Improvement of No-Show Rates in a Student-Led Interprofessional Clinic"
- **Melissa Kulon**, CMS '24; Emilie Green, CHP '26; **Melissa Chen**, MD; and Kristin Schneider, PhD: "Retrospective Analysis of the Effects of Health Behavior Change Consultations on HbA1c Levels in Diabetic and Prediabetic Patients in an Interprofessional Student-Led Free Clinic"
- **Aashka Patel**, CMS '24; **Heather Kind-Keppel**,

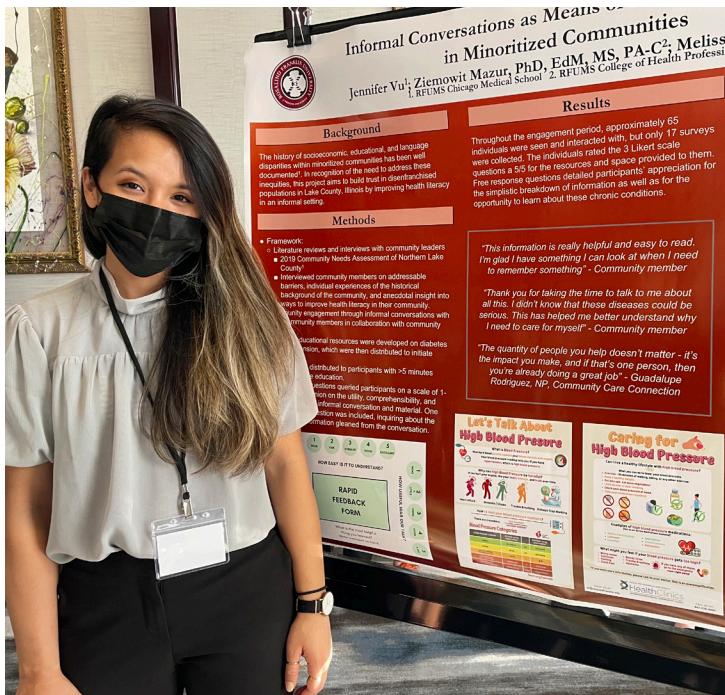
EdD; and **Melissa Chen**, MD: “Intake Packet Hubs: Improving Accessibility to Onboarding Paperwork Through Community Partners”; “The Telehubs Program: A Novel Approach to Addressing Lack of Internet Access for Uninsured Patients”; and “The Vitals Boxes Program: Increasing Access to At-Home Vital Signs Measurement by a Student-Led Free Clinic in a Pandemic”

- **Tiffany Shu**, CMS '24, and **Melissa Chen**, MD: “Cooking as Medicine: Increasing Access of Nutrition Education to Local Communities with Healthy Cooking Recipe Videos during COVID-19”
- **Melissa Kulon**, CMS '24; **Anant Amar**, CMS '24; and **Melissa Chen**, MD: “Development of a Mass-Calling Vaccine Registration Effort in an Interprofessional Student-Led Free Clinic”
- Carol Kurth, SCPM '24; Tessa Glatte, SCPM '24; and **Melissa Chen**, MD: “Internal Audit of Missed Appointments in a Student-led Free Clinic”
- **Tiffany Shu**, CMS '24; Sarah Haag, PT, DPT; and **Melissa Chen**, MD: “A Pilot Survey on Increasing Access of Health Education with Social Media in a Student-Led Free Clinic” and “Collaborating

with Community Partners to Connect with Underserved Populations”

- **Varsha John**, CMS '24; **Leo Kelly**, MD; and **Melissa Chen**, MD: “Improving Quality Improvement: Addressing Resistance and Promoting QI Culture in a Student-Led Free Clinic” and “Telehealth 2.0: A Four-Pronged Quality Improvement Initiative to Optimize Telemedicine in a Student-led Free Clinic”
- **Jennifer Vu**, CMS '24, and **Melissa Chen**, MD: “Demystifying Health in Minoritized Communities Through Direct, Informal Conversations”
- **Patrick King**, CMS '24, and **Melissa Chen**, MD: “Effect of a Pre-clinic Orientation on Clinic Efficiency in an Interprofessional Student-led Free Clinic.”

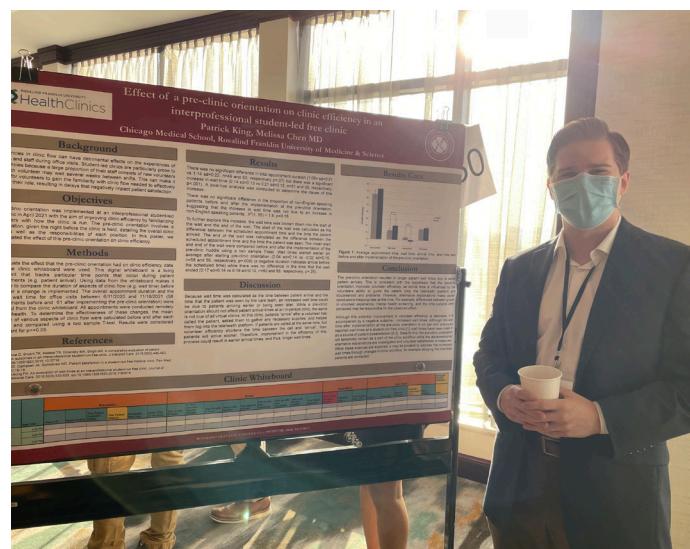
In addition to the conference presentations, **Dr. Melissa Chen**, along with colleagues from the College of Pharmacy (Khyati Patel, PharmD; Danielle Candelario, PharmD; and Ateequr Rahman, PhD, MBA) co-authored the article “Impact of an Additional Immunizing Pharmacist at an Interprofessional Student-led Clinic for the Underserved,” published in the *Journal of Student-Run Clinics*. ■



Opposite page: ICC students at the National Society of Student-Run Free Clinics Conference.

◀ Jennifer Vu with her poster.

▼ Patrick King with his poster.



Graduate Medical Education (GME) News

Welcoming Our New Residents and Fellows

Internal Medicine Fellows



Dr. Harsha Gondi
Cardiovascular Disease



Dr. Elda Mullaj
Cardiovascular Disease



Dr. Anish Munagala
Cardiovascular Disease



Dr. Gaurav Sharma
Interventional Cardiology



Dr. Raeda Alshantti
Endocrinology



Dr. Ummara Rafat
Endocrinology



Dr. Sarah Khan
Hematology & Medical Oncology



Dr. Swetha Paduri
Hematology & Medical Oncology



Dr. Arslan Chaudhry
Infectious Disease



Dr. Madeeha Banu
Pulmonary Disease



Dr. Hina Yousuf
Pulmonary Disease



Dr. Adam Kedzia
Pulmonary Disease

Internal Medicine Residents — Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center



Dr. Azka Ali



Dr. Mubbashira Aziz



Dr. Manisha Devi



Dr. Anahita Ghazi



Dr. Hekmat Khoukaz



Dr. Zakaria Maat



Dr. Sarah Rabbani



Dr. Induja Rajendran



Dr. Neda Svrakic



Dr. Vian Taqi

Graduate Medical Education (GME) News

Internal Medicine Residents — Northwestern Medicine McHenry Hospital



Dr. Bilal Al Kalaji



Dr. Faisal AlAli



Dr. Maram AlAshoor



Dr. Nasibul Alam



Dr. Amulya Dwaram



Dr. Ruba Ghalayni



Dr. Ahmad Harb



Dr. Ummarah Jaffar



Dr. Saad Khan



Dr. Nikolas Mantikas



Dr. Yuliana Petryshyn



Dr. Sumaya Rasheed



Dr. Abdelraouf Salah

Psychiatry Residents



Dr. Ria Datta



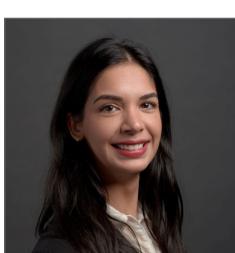
Dr. Nithin Edara



Dr. Obaada Elhomsy



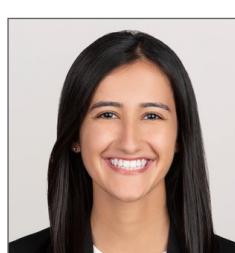
Dr. James Estaver



Dr. Sidra Parveen



Dr. Hamed Shafiuddin



Dr. Shermeen Sheikh



Dr. Jeremy Wolfe

Graduate Medical Education (GME) News

Resident Appreciation

The staff members supporting our residency programs are always looking for opportunities to show our residents how much they're appreciated by CMS and the hospitals where they're completing their training.

Thank a Resident Day

The Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC) and Northwestern Medicine McHenry Hospital celebrated their residents on National Thank a Resident Day (February 25), an annual day to celebrate resident physicians and fellows.

CMS staff provided baked goods for the FHCC residents, along with a poster board display collecting comments from hospital administration

as well as attendings from our various sites. At McHenry, CMS staff provided chocolates and pastries for the residents, while the hospital leadership staff sent gratitude messages and provided comments of recognition and appreciation from patient comments and staff:

- “The physicians and nursing staff were A+! Dr. Ali and Dr. Prasad were outstanding, as well as her GI surgeon.” (2/20/22)
- “Everyone was very professional and knowledgeable! We really were pleased with our doctors: Dr. Kohn, Dr. Taber, Dr. Yaremko, and Dr. Khatri.” (9/24/21)
- “Dr. Skinner, Olivia, and Julia provided excellent care in the ER. The attending physician, Dr. Yaremko, and the Senior Resident, Dr.



Graduate Medical Education (GME) News

Vemireddy, provided excellent care and counsel on the cardiac floor." (7/21/21)

- Dr. Grace Ying was awarded a "Lifesaver" award in October 2021 from the Onc/MedSurg nursing team for taking extra time to support the patient and team in patient care.
- Each of you are valued team members. Thank you for all you do!

National Doctor's Day

On March 30, Northwestern Medicine McHenry Hospital thanked its internal medicine residents on National Doctor's Day. The day was celebrated with custom-made white coat cookies.

Chicago Medical School and all our sites are thankful for our residents' hard work and dedication to patient care. ■



Graduate Medical Education (GME) News

Psychiatry Poster Session

CMS psychiatry residents presented their research at the annual **Psychiatry Poster Session** on April 7. Residents displayed 28 posters, and 14 faculty members were present to judge the posters. The winners will be announced during the upcoming psychiatry graduation dinner this summer. ■

Clockwise from top: All the presenters with their posters; Dr. Loveleen Khehra, R '22; Dr. Won-He Lee, R '25; Dr. Sherin Vachaparambil, R '22.



Graduate Medical Education (GME) News

Other News

Two residents in our internal medicine program at Northwestern Medicine McHenry, **Sonika Prasad**, MD, R '23, and **Nayha Tahir**, MD, R '22, were chosen as delegates to attend the 2022 American College of Physicians (ACP) Leadership Day on Capitol Hill on May 17-18. Their essays were chosen from many submissions, securing them spots as Illinois chapter delegates.

Leadership Day is the ACP's annual two-day advocacy event in Washington, DC that enables members from across the country to bring issues of concern to U.S. lawmakers. It's a great opportunity to bring policy priorities to Congress, increase visibility to issues of common concern, and try to influence the legislative process on behalf of internal medicine. Participants receive a comprehensive orientation and briefing on ACP's top legislative priorities and then have an opportunity to meet with legislators and the staff on Capitol Hill. Delegates also are provided with in-depth briefings from White House officials, Capitol Hill staffers, and members of Congress, all of whom are among the top health care decision-makers. They will learn about policy issues that impact the medical profession and will learn advocacy skills that they can use throughout their career.



Dr. Sonika Prasad



Dr. Nayha Tahir

Jashan Gill, MD, R '23, and **Richard Orji**, MD, R '24, two of our McHenry internal medicine residents, attended the American College of Cardiology national conference in April. They had collaborated on two projects and presented their posters:

- “Mortality and Arrhythmia Prevalence in Hospitalized Patients with Obstructive Sleep Apnea: A Nationwide Analysis”
- “In-Hospital Mortality and Outcomes of Preexcitation Syndrome with Comorbid Arrhythmias: A Nationwide Analysis”

“It was an amazing experience,” said Dr. Orji. “We learned a lot, presented our posters, and got to network. In summary, after interacting with other residents during the conference, I honestly believe that our program provides us with the opportunity to succeed. Thank you so much!” ■



Dr. Jashan Gill (left) and Dr. Richard Orji (right)

Alumni News

Dennis Vickers, MD '82: Building Trust in Vaccines

Dennis L. Vickers, MD '82, presented "Building Trust to Achieve Vaccine Confidence" in April in an event organized by RFU's College of Pharmacy students. Dr. Vickers, a pediatrician and Regional Medical Scientific Director affiliated with Merck Research Laboratories, spent his early years with Merck working on vaccine improvement projects. The first half of his presentation focused on vaccine hesitancy, and the second half focused on how physicians can work to overcome it by building vaccine confidence in the community and as a healthcare provider.

The key to vaccine confidence is building trust with the patient, Dr. Vickers explained. Some methods of building trust include listening to patients and understanding their concerns, providing educational materials, and addressing misinformation strategically.

"Healthcare professionals can make a huge difference," Dr. Vickers said, "so everybody sitting here in this lecture can make a difference." ■



Jesse Viner, MD '76, Shares His Experiences



In an event hosted by the Students Interested in Psychiatry group, **Jesse Viner**, MD '76, gave a presentation to students titled "Meaning in Psychiatry." Dr. Viner, a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst who is a national expert in the areas of trauma recovery, eating disorders and severe personality disorders, discussed what it means to be a physician in psychiatry. Dr. Viner has over four decades of experience in clinical psychiatry and research, helping to create meaningful and effective treatment programs.

Alumni News

Dr. Viner is the founder of Yellowbrick, a national referral center for the treatment of troubled emerging adults that offers intensive outpatient treatment, a residence, and a center for clinical neuroscience. He created Yellowbrick in recognition of the specialized needs of emerging adults and their families, and the necessity for a treatment system that addressed the unique challenges of the transition into adulthood. The program's approach to treatment uses a developmentally specialized, research-based clinical model that integrates current contributions of

neuroscience, innovative psychotherapies, strength-based life-skills acquisition and wellness medicine.

As the Founder of Yellowbrick, Dr. Viner is the recipient of the Illinois Psychiatric Society Award for Excellence and Innovation in Clinical Services. He is a Distinguished Life Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association. ■

Other Alumni News

Kwan Kew Lai, MD '79, DMD, was a featured voice in the Alumnae-i Network of Harvard Women's "Celebrate 31 Voices." In honor of Women's History Month, Dr. Lai talked about her path to becoming a physician, the women who inspired her, and her international humanitarian work – including fighting HIV/AIDS in Africa and providing disaster relief all over the world during wars, famine, epidemics, the Syrian and Rohingya refugee crises, and the COVID-19 pandemic in New York.

Jerrold B. Leikin, MD '80, was awarded the GPF Foundation's (GPFF) Harm Reduction Award in recognition of his work in medical toxicology, public health and medical education. The GPFF is a Lake Forest, Illinois-based nonprofit dedicated to saving lives through awareness about the dangers and risks of recreational drugs.

Jennifer Schneiderman, MD '98, MS '94, co-authored the article "Betibeglogene Autotemcel Gene Therapy for Non- β 0/ β 0 Genotype β -Thalassemia," published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

Jordan C. Tasse, MD '07, MS '03, joined the scientific advisory board of TriSalus Life Sciences®, an immunotherapy company developing innovative therapies targeting liver and pancreatic tumors.

Esther M. Tan, MD '04, was the featured speaker at a meeting of the Thomasville Chapter National Society Daughters of the American Revolution in Thomasville, Georgia.

Morteza Sadeh, MD '18, MS '14, PhD, presented "Neurosurgery Residency Pearls and Pitfalls" to the Students Interested in Neurosurgery group.

Martin M. Wrobel, MD '18; **Vanessa S. Rose**, MD '20; **Samuel R. Bunting**, MD '21, MS '21; and **Scott R. DeVogelar**, MD '21, MS '17, participated in panel discussions and networking activities during CMS Admitted Student Days. ■



Gina deJoseph

Senior Research Associate,
Center for Neurobiology of Stress Resilience and Psychiatric
Disorders

Time at CMS: 34 years

Gina deJoseph spent 11 years working at Penn State/Hershey Medical Center, working as a senior research technician in the lab of Dr. Richard Hawkins. When Dr. Hawkins came to Chicago Medical School in July 1988 to be chair of the Department of Physiology and Biophysics, Gina came with him.

"I thought that I would give it a few years and head back to Pennsylvania," she said, "but 34 years later I am still here!"

In 1999 Dr. Hawkins moved to an administrative position, and Gina began working with Dr. Janice Urban, also in the Department of Physiology and Biophysics. Today, Gina is still working in Dr. Urban's lab, now part of the Center for Neurobiology of Stress Resilience and Psychiatric Disorders. The

research she does involves working with rats to study stress and how it affects the brain, using both male and female rats because they tend to react to stress differently. Gina performs all sorts of behavior testing, as well whatever else needs to be done to complete the lab's experiments. She is also responsible for ordering all the lab supplies and keeping the lab organized and running.

"When I look back on our over two decades of working together, it's not necessarily what Gina does, but what she brought to the position," said Dr. Urban. "Gina has always been a team player and willing to help people no matter where or who you are in the university. There are many things that I have appreciated over the years, and while I could list a number of tasks, it has been her overall support, willingness to do whatever is needed with a positive spirit, and just being a great human being. Most importantly, she has had a tremendous impact on dozens of students and postdocs who have had her assistance in the lab, whether it be giving advice on the best way to slice a brain or rolling up her sleeves to make the experiments go easier. I am excited for Gina as she transitions to a very active retirement, but as the day draws near the impact that her leaving will have on me and the center is palpable."

"I feel that I have been very fortunate in having bosses that treated me like family," Gina said when asked about her favorite part of working at CMS. "I love working in research as I get to do a variety of things. I especially enjoy showing/teaching students how to do things in the lab. It keeps me on my toes and I also learn from them."

Outside of work, Gina enjoys golfing, skiing, biking, hiking, and hanging out with friends. She also loves to read. ■

School & Department News

Awards & Accomplishments



Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD, Dean of Chicago Medical School and Vice President for Medical Affairs, RFU, was recently appointed to the AAMC Council of Deans (COD) Administrative Board for the 2022-2023 term. The COD is an organization comprising deans of AAMC member medical

schools in the U.S. and Canada to address issues affecting academic medicine and develop strategies to achieve excellence in medical education, research, and patient care. The COD Administrative Board is elected from the membership of the COD and manages the affairs of the Council.



Efforts by RFU's **Community Care Connection** to provide health services and expand COVID-19 vaccination outreach to underserved communities were honored as a top runner-up for the Association of American Medical Colleges 2022 Innovations that Bolster Community Trust in Science Award. The nomination, titled "A Pivot to Reduce COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy and Improve

Health Equity," highlighted the work of **Martin Yorath**, DPM, medical director, RFU Health Clinics, and **Lupe Rodriguez**, APN, director of community care, both of whom provided leadership on COVID mitigation programs throughout the pandemic. The nomination was authored and submitted by **Judy Potashkin**, PhD, professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology, and Chad Ruback, Shella Blue, and Pamela Lowe from RFU's Division of Institutional Advancement.

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Raúl J. Gazmuri, MD, PhD '94, FCCM, professor of physiology and biophysics and director of the Resuscitation Institute, received a one-year, \$98,000 grant from Zoll Medical Corporation for his research study "Translationally Relevant Swine Model of Lipopolysaccharide-Induced Septic Shock to Assess a Perfusion-Centered Approach for the Management of Septic Shock."



Michelle Hastings, PhD, director of the Center for Genetic Diseases and professor of cell biology and anatomy, received a \$240,000 grant from the ForeBatten Foundation for her research project "Assess the Relationship Between CLN3 and Alzheimer's Disease in a Severe Mouse Model of CLN3 Batten Disease."

Dr. Hastings was also quoted in the article "COVID's Positive Legacy Might Come in Chronic Disease

School & Department News

Breakthroughs,” published in the “Health Pulse” section of *Crain’s Chicago Business* on March 21.

Congratulations to **Eliza Hofman**, MFA, CMS ’25, who was chosen for the American Psychiatric Association Foundation’s Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Summer Medical Student Program. The award



provided all expenses to attend the APA conference in New Orleans at the end of May, and Eliza will then participate in a month-long educational program to help develop her interest in psychiatry.

The SAMHSA Summer Medical Student Program provides medical students who are interested in serving underserved communities the experiential learning, training, and professional development they need to be leaders in the field of psychiatry. This month-long program gives participants the opportunity to learn from world-renowned psychiatrists, receive invaluable academic resources, explore content in the award-winning APA Learning Center, and partake in the organization’s annual meeting.



Kuhn Hong, MD, assistant professor of medicine, had a solo exhibition of his paintings at the Palette and Chisel Academy of Fine Arts in downtown Chicago from April 15-25. The exhibit, titled “Ethiopia and Chicago”

displayed artworks inspired by Dr. Hong’s time as a volunteer physician in Ethiopia.



Holly Hunsberger, PhD, assistant professor of neuroscience, Center for Neurodegenerative Disease and Therapeutics, received a three-year, \$747,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health for her research study

“The Sex-Specific Impact of Anxiety on Alzheimer’s Disease Progression.”

EunJung Hwang, PhD, assistant professor of cell biology and anatomy, Stanson Toshok Center for Brain Function and Repair, was awarded a Sloan Research Fellowship from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.



This year marks the first time an RFU faculty member has received a Sloan Research Fellowship. Dr. Hwang was one of 16 scholars honored for their work in neuroscience and one of 118 total researchers from U.S. and Canadian institutions selected for the 2022 fellowship cohort. This fellowship is one of the most competitive awards available to early-career researchers and is often seen as a marker of the quality of an institution’s science faculty.

Ashwini Mokashi, manager of medical education, and **Courtney Muir**, coordinator of global health and special

School & Department News

projects, received a Winter 2022 GEM Award from the university. GEM Awards are quarterly awards that recognize RFU staff members who “Go the Extra Mile” to make the university a better place.



Ashwini Mokashi



Courtney Muir



Janice Urban, PhD, director of the Center for Neurobiology of Stress Resilience and Psychiatric Disorders and professor of physiology and biophysics, was inducted as a Fellow of the American Physiological Society (FAPS). Fellow status is reserved to

honor distinguished leaders who have demonstrated excellence in science, have made significant contributions to physiological sciences and related disciplines, and have a record of service to FAPS.

Jim Zhang, CMS '22, has been selected to receive a 2022 Excellence in Public Health Award from the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) Physician Professional Advisory Committee. This award was established



to recognize medical students' contribution to public health. It honors graduating medical students whose leadership and hard work demonstrate passion and dedication to public health and public health practice within the medical profession.

Presentations & Publications

Michael Allswede, DO, assistant dean of clinical education, presented “Crisis Standards of Care: Las Vegas Harvest Festival Mass Casualty Event” on March 23 as part of the Clinical Science Department’s medical grand rounds series. Dr. Allswede, who came to CMS from Las Vegas, was a responder to the October 1, 2017, Harvest Festival Mass Casualty Event and regularly speaks on crisis standards of care.



Maureen Benjamins, PhD, and three CMS students — **Peter Lorenz**, CMS '22; **Paulina Pys**, CMS '23; and **Andrew Schulz**, CMS '23 — co-authored a new publication on racial inequities in kidney disease mortality, titled “Black-White Inequities in Kidney Disease Mortality Across the 30 Most

Populous U.S. Cities.” The study, published in the March issue of the *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, found that kidney disease mortality rates were higher for Black populations compared to White in all of the 30 biggest U.S. cities. An editorial about the study came out in the same issue, from three physicians who said that Dr. Benjamins and her co-

School & Department News

authors “make an important contribution to the literature by providing mortality rates from kidney disease for the largest US cities. To date, such information has only been available at the national, state, and county levels. These findings may guide city health departments in their efforts to achieve health equity.”



Peter Lorenz



Paulina Psy



Andrew Schulz

including “Fully Booked” by Kirkus Reviews and “Chatter.” The book was featured as “Book of the Week” by the *Daily Mail*, a national newspaper in the United Kingdom, and has been endorsed by Kathy Reichs, author of the bestselling *Bones* series, and Kathryn Harkup, author of *A is for Arsenic*.



Virginie Bottero, PhD, research associate, and **Judy Potashkin**, PhD, professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology, Center for Neurodegenerative Disease and Therapeutics, along with colleagues from NeuroHub, LLC, and Q Regulating Systems, LLC, co-authored “Key Disease Mechanisms Linked to Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis in Spinal Cord Motor Neurons,” published in *Frontiers in Molecular Neuroscience*.



Dr. Virginie Bottero



Dr. Judy Potashkin

Neil Bradbury, PhD, professor of physiology and biophysics, Center for Genetic Diseases, has authored the book *A Taste for Poison: Eleven Deadly Molecules and the Killers Who Used Them*, released in the United States on Feb. 1. Dr. Bradbury discussed his book on podcasts



Archana Chatterjee, MD, PhD, dean of Chicago Medical School, participated in the “Lessons Learned from the COVID-19 Pandemic” virtual town hall hosted by WBEZ Chicago and Illinois Latino News on March 30. Dr. Chatterjee and other local health and community leaders answered viewers’ questions about COVID-19 and discussed the pandemic’s lasting effects on Chicago’s Latino communities.



Melissa Chen, MD, associate professor of medicine and clinical director of the Interprofessional Community Clinic, presented “Challenging the Model Minority Myth” on May 6, in an event hosted by the Asian Pacific Asian American Medical Student Association to celebrate the start of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Dr. Chen talked about the history of the model minority myth and its impact on healthcare.

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Lisa Ebihara, MD, PhD, associate professor of physiology and biophysics, Center of Proteomics and Molecular Therapeutics, authored an article titled “Molecular Mechanisms Underlying Enhanced Hemichannel

Function of a Cataract-Associated Cx50 Mutant,” which was recently published in *Biophysical Journal*.

Dr. Ebihara also authored another article titled “Mechanical Stress Modulates Calcium-Activated-Chloride Currents in Differentiating Lens Cells,” which was recently published in *Frontiers in Physiology*. In addition, she collaborated on an article titled “Cataract-Linked Serine Mutations in the Gap Junction Protein Connexin50 Expose a Sorting Signal That Promotes Its Lysosomal Degradation” which was recently published in the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*.



William Frost, PhD, director of the Stanson Toshok Center for Brain Function and Repair and professor and discipline chair of cell biology and anatomy, participated in the university’s Biomedical Education Seminar series on

April 26, presenting during the virtual event on “Non-Dilutive Funding: What Is It and Why Is It So Important for a Start-Up?”

Dr. Frost also delivered a presentation titled “Neural Mechanism of Drug-Induced Hallucination in an Invertebrate Model” during Chicago Medical School’s Clinical Sciences Medical Grand Rounds series on February 23. Dr. Frost discussed how to examine and identify the neural triggering mechanisms for hallucinations.



Several CMS students gave virtual presentations at the National Collaborative for Education to Address the Social Determinants of Health (NCEAS) annual conference:

- **Sahand Golestan**, MPH, CMS ’24; **Emily Terlap**, CMS ’23; **Anna Gomez**, CMS ’24; **George Duncan**, CMS ’24; **Christina Khouri**, MPH, CMS ’23; **Nahae Kim**, MPH, CMS ’23; **Maria Mercurio**, CMS ’23; **Faustina Adams**, CMS ’24; **Vanessa Fan**, CMS ’24; and **Favour Oladipupo**, CMS ’24, contributed to the presentation “Antiracist Public Health Week: Curating an Educational Series.” **Melissa Chen**, MD, associate professor of medicine and clinical director of the Interprofessional Community Clinic, and **Heather Kind-Keppel**, EdD, assistant professor of humanities and health care and RFU executive director of



Adriana Fresquez



Dr. Carl White

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diversity and inclusion, along with SGPS student Viral Mistry, also contributed.

Congratulations to all the contributors — this presentation was chosen as one of the NCEAS Conference Oral Presentation Winners! **Sahand Golestan** presented the group's work at the conference.



Sahand Golestan



Emily Terlap



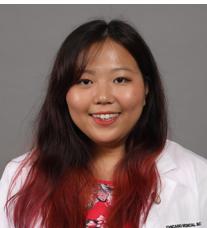
Anna Gomez



George Duncan



Christina Khouri



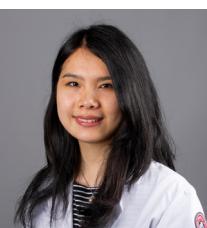
Nahae Kim



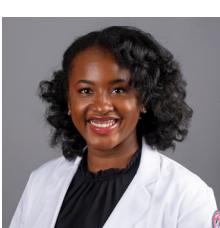
Maria Mercurio



Faustina Adams



Vanessa Fan



Favour Oladipupo



Dr. Melissa Chen



Dr. Heather Kind-Keppel

- **Cole Roblee**, CMS '24, and **Joseph Rumenapp**, CMS '25, presented a workshop titled "Case Discussions

Depicting Communication Barriers Facing Transgender and Gender Diverse Patients."

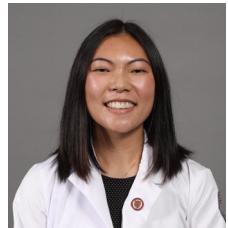


Cole Roblee



Joseph Rumenapp

- **Jaina Chu**, CMS '23, along with Shashank Sandu, an undergraduate student at the University of Illinois Chicago, presented "Exploring the SDOH [Social Determinants of Health] in an Anti-Racism Workshop with a Historical Lens."



Jaina Chu

- **Guhan Krishnan** and **Stephanie Yohay**, both CMS '23, presented "Near-Peer Facilitation of Cultural Humility Workshop Supports Sustainable Curricular Improvement."



Guhan Krishnan

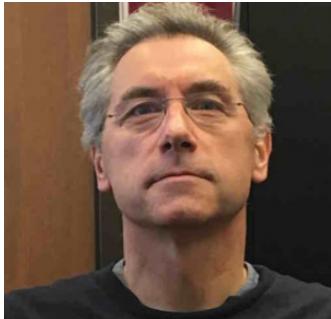


Stephanie Yohay

As part of an international consortium of pediatric clinical geneticists and human genomicists from Spain, Canada, and the United States, **Adrian Gross**, MD, associate professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, and **Marc Glucksman**, PhD, director of the Center for Proteomics and Molecular Therapeutics

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and professor and discipline chair of biochemistry and molecular biology, collaborated on the article “Novel FGF9 Variant Contributes to Multiple Synostoses Syndrome,” published in the *American Journal of Medical Genetics*.



Dr. Adrian Gross



Dr. Marc Glucksman

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, supports the use of short, RNA-like molecules, called antisense oligonucleotides (ASOs), in combination with approved CF modulators as an effective treatment option for CF patients with class I mutations in the disease-causing gene. The study was funded in part by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

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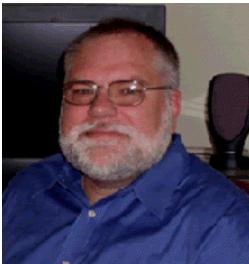
Eliza Hofman, MFA, CMS '25, was invited on *The Short Coat*, a podcast for medical students by the Carver College of Medicine at the University of Iowa. In the March 17 episode of the podcast, Eliza spoke about working while in medical school as a nontraditional student and the financial challenges of being a parent med student. The discussion focused on financial equity and how working can potentially disadvantage students who might want to go into more competitive specialties.



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Dr. Michelle Hastings



Dr. Robert Bridges

The “Health Pulse” section in the Feb. 9 edition of *Crain’s Chicago Business* featured a recently published study by **Michelle Hastings**, PhD, director of the Center for Genetic Diseases and professor of cell biology and anatomy; **Robert Bridges**, PhD, professor of physiology and biophysics; and post-doctoral fellow **Wren Michaels**, PhD '20, Center for Genetic Diseases, that details the development of a promising new therapeutic approach for the treatment of cystic fibrosis, a devastating lung

and multi-system disease caused by mutations in a gene called CFTR.

The study, titled “Open Reading Frame Correction Using Splice-Switching Antisense Oligonucleotides for the Treatment of Cystic Fibrosis,” published in the



Sandra LaBlance, PhD, Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs, was invited to present a poster at the AAMC’s 2022 Group on Student Affairs, Careers in Medicine, Organization of Student Representatives National Meeting, held in Denver, CO, April 7-9. Dr. LaBlance presented on the topic “Building Community Through Coffee and Conversations: Lessons Learned from the COVID-19 Pandemic.”

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Judy Potashkin, PhD, professor of cellular and molecular pharmacology, gave a virtual presentation titled “Alzheimer’s Disease, Dementia and Diet” on March 23 as part of Healthy U’s programming for National Nutrition Month.



Hector Rasgado-Flores, PhD, director of diversity, outreach and success, and professor of physiology and biophysics, gave a presentation on May 5 titled “The Real History of Cinco de Mayo.” Dr. Rasgado-Flores discussed the meaning of Cinco de Mayo and why we celebrate it today. The presentation was hosted by the Latino Medical Student Association as part of a program of Cinco de Mayo events.

Yanhan Ren, CMS '22, presented his poster “Indications and Outcomes of Surgery for High Myopia: STAAR Implantable Collamer Lens vs. LASIK” at the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology national conference in May. He also presented “Nomenclature in the Multidisciplinary Care of Thyroid Eye Disease: A Longitudinal Analysis from 2010 to 2020” at Mayo Clinic’s Grand Rounds, with his mentor Dr. Lilly Wagner.



Lawrence Robbins, MD, associate professor of neurology, recently co-wrote a new book titled *Stuff You Should Know: for Doctors, NPs, and PAs — Clinical Pearls in Medicine, Office Practice, Neurology and Psychiatry*. The book contains a section of general advice, followed by sections on advice specific to neurology (including the mental status exam), psychiatry, and evolutionary medicine. Proceeds from the book will go to the free neuro and psych clinic that Dr. Robbins runs in Honduras.

Neelam Sharma-Walia, PhD, MS, associate professor of microbiology and immunology, Center for Cancer Cell Biology, Immunology, and Infection, participated in a virtual event titled “Empowering Women



Panel,” hosted by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and the College of Pharmacy Student Leaders on March 29 in honor of Women’s History Month. The event also featured Jamie Holmes Dillig, PharmD, from the College of Pharmacy, and Kristine Burgess, MS, PA-C, CLC, from the College of Health Professions.



Heinz Steiner, PhD, professor and chair of cellular and molecular pharmacology, Stanson Toshok Center for Brain Function and Repair, was appointed Series Editor for the book series *Handbook of Behavioral*

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Neuroscience by the publisher Elsevier, together with Joseph P. Huston, Director, Center for Behavioral Neuroscience, Heinrich-Heine Universität Düsseldorf, Germany. The *Handbook of Behavioral Neuroscience* series covers compelling topics in the latest neuroscience research.

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Beth Stutzmann, PhD, director of the Center for Neurodegenerative Diseases and Therapeutics and professor and discipline chair of neuroscience, co-authored the study “Frequency- and Spike-Timing-Dependent Mitochondrial Ca²⁺ Signaling Regulates the Metabolic Rate and Synaptic Efficacy in Cortical Neurons,” published in *eLife*.



Events and Other News



CMS welcomed **Toya Richardson** to its staff in April, as Coordinator in Clinical Affairs assisting Dr. Brenda Affinati, Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs. In her role, Toya will be supporting Dr. Affinati with maintaining and growing clinical rotation sites for our students.

She will also oversee CMS contract management with our affiliate partners.

Most recently, Ms. Richardson was associated with IPC, a global trade association for the electronics industry, in Bannockburn where she was the technical programs coordinator. She brings twenty-two years of broad administrative expertise to CMS, and we are excited to have her as part of the CMS family.



Dr. Nutan Vaidya



Katie Stanutz

Two individuals from CMS served on an NBME or USMLE committee in 2021. Individuals who contribute to NBME exams and the USMLE program support the design and development of the highest quality assessments of competencies relevant to health professions practice in the U.S. and around the world. We thank them for their contributions.

Nutan Vaidya, MD, vice dean for faculty affairs and equity, served in the Forms Review and Remote Pool Review Group. In this role, she was responsible for reviewing items on NBME Subject Examination forms to ensure that individual items are accurate and current, and that the finalized exam forms are balanced in terms of content breadth and depth, in light of changing trends in medicine.

Katie Stanutz, director of curriculum management, served as the Executive Chief Proctor for CMS. The Executive Chief Proctor is responsible for interacting with NBME on all matters pertaining to the security and administration of NBME's Examinations. This individual oversees all administrative tasks for the provision of examination services to their school, including the selection of proctors and the arrangements for suitable testing space.

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The CMS Office of Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion (OEDI) hosted an event on March 31 that explored medical insights into the case of George Floyd, the man who was killed in police custody on May 25, 2020. The event, titled “Insights into Medical Expert Testimony:

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The Mr. George Floyd Case,” featured attorney **Antonio Romanucci**, medical examiner **Dr. Allecia Wilson**, and CMS faculty member **Dr. Ricardo G. Senno**, assistant professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation.

The OEDI also hosted a follow-up event with Dr. Wilson on May 11. Dr. Wilson spoke again on her role in the George Floyd civil case via Zoom, with a presentation titled “Forensic Pathology: Insight into the George Floyd Autopsy and In-Custody Deaths.”



Attorney Antonio Romanucci



Dr. Allecia Wilson



Dr. Ricardo Senno addresses the room



Chicago Medical School Women in Medicine and Science (CMS-WIMS) hosted an event on March 22 in honor of Women’s History Month. **Diana M. Lautenberger**, MA, Director for Gender Equity Initiatives at the AAMC, was invited to present “Understanding Gender Bias Today: Debunking Cultural Myths and Strategies to Address Them.” Ms. Lautenberger directs projects related to workplace issues specifically focused on diversity and inclusion, gender equity, and culture and climate that impact learners, faculty, and leaders. She is part of the AAMC’s integrated team dedicated to unconscious bias training and education, as well as microaggressions, allyship, and bystander intervention training to faculty.



Phi Delta Epsilon hosted several events for the CMS community. The group hosted Mark Pfister, the Executive Director of the Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center, on April 25 during the annual **Aaron Brown Memorial Lecture**. He presented a talk on “Income Disparities and Their Effects on Healthcare for Low Income Populations in Lake County.”

Phi Delta Epsilon also organized their annual **“Pie a Phi” fundraising event** for the Children’s Miracle Network and Lurie Children’s Hospital in Chicago. Students were invited to donate \$3 to pie classmates and faculty members who had volunteered for the cause. ■

Campus Events



The Executive Student Council held a vigil for Ukraine on March 3. Participants lit candles and observed a moment of silence led by Student Counseling Services.



CMS faculty, alumni, students, and potential students attended a day of activities for admitted students who were visiting the RFU campus.



Dr. Lise Eliot presented the Rosalind Franklin Award for Excellence in Teaching to Dr. Gordon Pullen at the annual university faculty awards ceremony.



As part of LEAD Week (celebrating student leaders), the CMS 2025 Class Council hosted an appreciation luncheon to thank the M1 class leaders and course reps for their hard work throughout the year.

CMS Student Leadership



Chicago Medical School student leaders attended the Faculty and Friends Recognition Dinner in April. From left to right: Juan Medina-Echeverria, CMS '25, M1 Class Council President; Victor Barragan, CMS '24, M2 Class Council President; Timothy Bauer, CMS '23, M3 Class Council President; Ashley Schaefer, CMS '22, M4 Class Council President; and Rachel To, CMS '23, Student Dean.

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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