

VIDYA



Renaissance
School of Medicine
Stony Brook University

UNDERGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

MAY 2021

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DEAN'S MESSAGE

William Wertheim, MD, MBA, FACP

Interim Dean, Renaissance School of Medicine
Professor of Clinical Medicine



It is my honor to say hello to all of you in writing, whether you are reading this digitally or on a real piece of paper, for my first VIDYA column as Interim Dean of the Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University (RSOM). I began my tenure as Interim Dean on Feb. 1, 2021, trying to fill the sizable shoes of Dr. Kaushansky, and it has been a pleasure to start meeting (virtually) each of the classes.

Many in the RSOM classes do not know me, so I thought I would say a few words about myself. I arrived at Stony Brook in January

1996, working as a General Internist doing both inpatient and outpatient medicine and teaching residents and medical students. Over the years, I have worn a lot of different hats in the school, including having directed the Primary Care Internal Medicine Residency track, the Internal Medicine Residency Program, and most recently having served as the Vice Dean for Graduate Medical Education.

Though in my career as an educator I have predominantly focused on residency and fellowship training, I am committed to

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UPDATE FROM THE OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION

Andrew Wackett, MD

Vice Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education
Director, Clinical Simulation Center
Clinical Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine



Congratulations to the Class of 2021 on their graduation from the Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University. They have done very well academically, continuing to excel at all the national standardized exams, and have successfully matched into very competitive residency programs. We have no doubt that many of them will end up as chief residents and future leaders in medicine.

During our students' training, their world was turned upside down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. On a personal level, the pandemic

temporarily interrupted their training. On a national level, the pandemic exposed our healthcare system for the disparities of care that are endemic.

Our students rose to the occasion. They returned to their clinical responsibilities and fearlessly treated their patients, never questioning the risks they might be taking. Despite their busy schedules, they volunteered to help patients, faculty and staff cope throughout this difficult time. In fact, they were instrumental in vaccinating many people throughout our county.

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Dean's Message *continued from cover*

education at all levels, and I view our school through that lens. It is clear to me that there have been significant challenges to delivering education this past year as COVID has ground on, and it's equally clear to me that the outstanding educators at all levels – Deans' office, individual faculty, support and administrative staff – have done amazing things to overcome any obstacles and make sure all the students have an educational experience equal to pre-pandemic.

Given my long interest in Graduate Medical Education, it was exciting for me to be a part of Match Day this year, and seeing the anxiety before the envelopes open melt away into excitement at the results. I am hoping that future Match Days will be in person again, of course, but it was wonderful

to see everyone on the screen, and share their destinations. I continue to be so impressed with the terrific matches all the students secured, both for the breadth of outstanding programs, and the consistency with which the students are able to secure spots in even the most competitive programs. It is a testament to the esteem in which RSOM students are held across the nation, and to the hard work and dedication of RSOM students to their studies, to their community, and to their selected specialties.

Graduation is here, and we are in between a normal graduation and the virtual graduation of 2020 in the depths of the pandemic. It will be gratifying to have our graduates in person, but disappointing that some of our usual festivities are curtailed. We all wish

fervently for a return to full graduation pomp and circumstance, but we are not alone in providing a modified celebration.

Our pride in the accomplishments of the students is, if anything, even more than usual because of the challenges of the year. In the meanwhile, lots of great learning and activity continue for all of you. I would be remiss if I did not also acknowledge all the many RSOM students who have helped out during the pandemic – particularly those who helped with employee testing and our numerous vaccination pods. It is through efforts like these that we are able to make progress in taming the COVID-19 pandemic and getting back to the normal cares of life. •

Update from the Office of Undergraduate Medical Education *continued from cover*

They challenged our healthcare system and our medical school curriculum and pointed us in the direction to eliminate healthcare disparities. We are listening. When it came time to organize our Match Day Celebration, they embraced the virtual format without a degree of self-remorse, and despite the challenging virtual interview season, they secured residency training amongst the most competitive specialties and at the most competitive programs. Congratulations, we are so proud of you all!

Our faculty has served as beacons of hope throughout this challenging time. They rose to the challenge of delivering a hybrid education, including both outstanding remote education and safe in-person face-to-face clinical training. The Administration also stepped up their game when it came to maintaining open lines of communication, and they have gone out of their way to serve the needs of our students.

Our resilience was tested, our resolve tried, but we remained strong and steady. Now

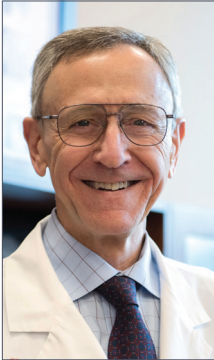
after more than a year of darkness and despair, we are finally reaching a hopeful place. Our Class of 2021 graduates will continue to care for COVID-19 infected patients, and vaccinate those who have not yet been. They will also be ready to lead us through the next healthcare crisis as they start their residency training. We wish them great success in their journeys ahead. We will miss them for their outstanding energy and commitment. •



VIDYA, the name chosen for this newsletter, is a Sanskrit word meaning knowledge.

Since the newsletter is devoted to covering the educational aspects of the Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University, this name is especially meaningful. Part of a student's education during medical school is the pursuit of knowledge and learning. Published twice a year in May and August, VIDYA is available as a printed piece and can be viewed online.

REFLECTIONS ON A DEAN'S EXPERIENCE



Kenneth Kaushansky, MD, MACP

Senior Vice President for Health Sciences
SUNY Distinguished Professor, Stony Brook Medicine

Dear Members of the Renaissance School of Medicine, with this, my last "article" for Vidya, I write to express extreme gratitude to the entire student body, faculty, staff and leadership of the Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University (RSOM), for the past 11 years of our commitment to advancing the well-being of humanity. I depart Stony Brook with an incredible sense of what is possible in modern academic medicine when a group of intelligent, devoted and compassionate people come together to leave the world a better place. And while these might seem hyperbolic, bold statements, consider for a moment the impact that your school has made over the past decade in research, education, clinical care and community outreach. All members of the RSOM should be extremely proud to have trained, worked or cared for here.

Scores of members of the School have been instrumental in moving the science of medicine forward. Ramin Parsey, Anissa Abi-Dargham, Lily Mujica-Parodi, Chrissy DeLorenzo and Alfredo Fontanini and their colleagues have greatly advanced our understanding of depression, schizophrenia, cognition and perception, and with our development of one of the finest imaging infrastructures in the nation, are very well positioned to make even greater breakthroughs in the neurosciences in the coming decade.

The creation of a cross-campus department of biomedical informatics, and recruitment of its founding Chair, Joel Saltz, and a talented faculty have driven the blossoming of quantitative medicine at Stony Brook, with major advances made in deep learning within numerous disciplines of medicine the result. Informatics at Stony Brook has impacted medical image analysis (pathological and radiological), the use of cardiovascular monitoring devices and public health, with the outcomes being better diagnostics and prognostication of diseases from cancer to COVID-19, and knowing where in Suffolk County to combat opioid abuse disorder.

The creation with Fotis Sotiropoulos, Dean of Engineering, of our Institute of Engineering-Driven Medicine with a focus on tissue regeneration, being led by Sandeep Mallipattu, holds great promise to construct highly realistic cellular models to understand the pathophysiology of kidney diseases, test new therapies and, ultimately, construct transplantable kidney tissue for patients with renal failure.

And in the human tragedy that is cancer, led by Stony Brook University Cancer Center Director Yusuf Hannun, along with RSOM faculty members Ute Moll, Vince Yang, Lori Chan, Ken Shroyer, Jingfang Ju, Wei Zhao and Yupo Ma, amongst many others members, the Stony Brook Cancer Center has generated over \$50 million in external funding, and altogether, when last assessed over a two-year period, penned nearly 600 distinct scholarly publications in cancer biology.

The RSOM has also been an innovator in medical and graduate student and resident education, which has made measurable improvements in the training of medical professionals and biomedical scientists. Launched by our former Vice Dean for Medical Education and Academic Affairs, Latha Chandran, and now advanced by our Vice Dean for Academic Affairs, Stella Tsirka, the Academy of Clinical Educational Scholars (ACES) seeks to understand best educational practices and implement them. Our new four- and three-year medical curricula were launched within the ACES, and have resulted in greater satisfaction and higher achievements of our students. Amongst our innovations have been creation of translational pillars, in which the basic science of clinical conditions are reinforced after a student witnesses that disorder firsthand, a time when the basic science makes far more sense and is more likely to be retained.

One of many laudable outcomes of our educational innovations is greater success in residency matching. For the past three years amongst our ~99th percentile residency match rate, an average of 34 percent of our graduates have placed in a top 20 residency program in the US. For graduate students, we created and have now been funded by the NIH for our Scholars in Biomedical Sciences program, in which PhD students in various STEM disciplines from all across campus, from engineering, to computer sciences, to chemistry and physics, along with pharmacology and microbiology, are given medical experiences, to help guide their future careers in the biomedical sciences.

Within the Class of 2021 we will graduate our first cohort of our three-year medical school curriculum, and by all indications thus far, will also be a spectacular success. But the RSOM educational program is not just about the science of medicine. For example, we are quite proud of having recently received the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor

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NEWS FROM ALUMNI RELATIONS

By Mary Hoffmann, Assistant Director, Alumni Relations
Stony Brook Health Sciences Schools

This has been an extraordinary year in many ways. The Renaissance School of Medicine Alumni board remained vigilant and supportive of the students and our alumni throughout this pandemic. Understandably, all programming was done virtually to keep everyone safe. The board remains extremely proud of students who have had to adjust to the virtual learning, wearing PPE for their transition to clinicals and rotations.

Because the fourth-year students were unable to travel for their residency interviews, many of the students were matched up virtually with alumni in the cities and hospitals from around the country where they were interviewing. Additionally, our Black and Latinx students and alumni formally formed a network for mentoring, career advice and congeniality at the start of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Since the White Coat Ceremony was postponed this year, the first-year students only received their stethoscopes in January this year. As one student noted, "Because of our online start to medical school, receiving this stethoscope at our first in-person class made me finally feel like a medical student"

This year's class reunions posed challenges as well, but luckily, we were also able to hold the Classes of '90 and '80 virtually this year.

The Renaissance School of Medicine Alumni Board is proud of how our students and alumni faced adversity and helped heal the country throughout this unprecedented pandemic. If you have any questions, please contact **Mary Hoffmann** at mary.hoffmann@stonybrook.edu.

Laurence D. Higgins, MD '92, MBA, and Sarah E. Stumbar, MD '12, MPH, were named this year's Distinguished Alumnus and Outstanding Recent Graduate, respectively.



Class of '90 30th anniversary reunion



This year's class reunions posed challenges as well, but luckily, we were also able to hold the Classes of '90 and '80 virtually this year.



Class of '80 40th anniversary reunion



SUMMER RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP AWARDS

Cordia Beverley, MD, Assistant Dean for Community Health Policy, Clinical Associate Professor; Family, Population and Preventive Medicine



New York Academy of Medicine's competitive Fellowships: Class 2022

Eve Ameen reflected on the importance of the NYAM grant.

"Thanks to the generous grant from the David E. Rogers fellowship, I had the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create and execute a two-month research project in the Peruvian Amazon: evaluating the efficacy of smartphone point-of-care diagnosis by training healthcare workers for soil-transmitted helminthiasis in the rain forest of Peru," she said. "We were able to enroll hundreds of participants and eventually presented our findings at a national conference in Washington, DC. I will be forever grateful to the David E. Rogers committee for this life-changing experience."

David E. Rogers Fellowships: Class 2019

Jaydon Kiernan and Koeun Choi - Stony Brook University Global Health Institute. Identifying the Cultural Practices that Perpetuate Cysticercosis in Infandiana, Madagascar

Class 2020

Emilie Redwood and Annabelle Jones - Stony Brook Global Health Institute. Bridging the gap: Assessing the efficacy of prototype Tuberculosis therapy technologies in rural Madagascar

Class 2021

Ariel Yang and Nahid Bakhtari Evaluating an Artificial Neural Network Smartphone Application for Point-of-Care Diagnosis of Soil Transmitted Helminthiasis in Madagascar

Lai Yu Tsang and Christine Pando - A Social Network Analysis to TB Transmission and Redefining TB Screening through the Assessment of Indoor Air Pollution in Remote Communities. Research conducted at Centre Valbio U.S. Headquarters, Madagascar

Class 2022

Simrat Dhaliwal - Barriers to Screening of Hepatitis B Infection in a Community-based Screen of Asian Populations on Long Island

Eve Ameen - Evaluating the Efficacy of Smartphone Point-of-care Diagnosis by Training Healthcare Workers for Soil-transmitted Helminthiasis in the Rain Forest of Peru

The Ferdinand C. Valentine Research Grant in Urology: Class 2021

Sina Mehraban Far - A Randomized Controlled Trial Comparing the Efficacy of a Condensed Six-week Protocol to the Standard 12-week Protocol of Percutaneous Tibial Nerve Stimulation (PTNS) in the Treatment of Overactive Bladder

Glorney-Raisbeck Medical Student Grant in Cardiovascular Research: Class of 2022

Michael Wolek - Optimizing Inpatient Cardiac Rehabilitation Referrals •

The New York Academy of Medicine (NYAM) is a community of distinguished professionals, elected by their peers, who share NYAM's commitment to achieving health equity. The Academy tackles the barriers that prevent every individual from living a healthy life. Each year, NYAM awards grants and fellowships to medical students, seasoned physicians, and investigators to support the advancement of healthcare studies.

The Academy's student fellowships allow medical students the opportunity to gain direct, hands-on experience in a research environment, as well as exposure to health policy and leadership development, which enhances professional development and the goals of the Academy.

The David E. Rogers Student Fellowship Award is a national fellowship for medical and dental students to support a 10- to 12-week mentored project initiated during the summer between the first and second years of medical or dental school. Up to five are awarded annually. The Fellowship is meant to enrich the educational experiences of students through projects that address the human needs of underserved or disadvantaged patients or populations.

The Ferdinand C. Valentine Medical Student Research Grant in Urology and Glorney-Raisbeck Medical Student Grant in Cardiovascular Research are awarded to medical students, who are either enrolled in a New York-area medical school or plan to conduct research at a New York-area institution, to pursue a 10- to 12-week mentored summer research project. Up to three grants in each category are awarded annually. Students receiving grants are required to present their research findings to a committee comprised of invited Fellows of the Academy. Each student receives a stipend of \$4,000 for the summer fellowship. Students apply for these fellowships during January of the research year, and the requirements are found on the NYAM website.

Several Renaissance School of Medicine students have been recipients of New York Academy of Medicine's competitive fellowships:

MATCH DAY CELEBRATION 2021



Thirty percent of students matched to Primary Care residencies (medicine, pediatrics, family medicine, med/peds), while others matched in other specialties such as anesthesiology, dermatology, emergency medicine, general surgery, neurological surgery, neurology, OB/Gyn, ophthalmology, orthopaedic surgery, otolaryngology, PM&R, plastic surgery, psychiatry and child psychiatry, radiation oncology, radiology (diagnostic and interventional), urology and vascular surgery. •



This year's Match Day Celebration was once again held virtually on Friday, March 19, 2021. We had another successful Match this year, with 99 percent of the graduating class matching to a residency program (149 students).



MATCH DAY CELEBRATION 2021 (CONTINUED)



Emily Leong / Roy Qu / Ulisses Perdomo-Argueta

MATCH DAY CATEGORICAL LIST

SPECIALTY	# STUDENTS	LOCATIONS
Internal Medicine	33	UPMC Medical Education, UC San Diego Medical Center, NYU Grossman School of Medicine, ISMMS Mount Sinai Hospital, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Montefiore Medical Center/Einstein, NYU Grossman School of Medicine, NYU Long Island School of Medicine, Olive View-UCLA Medical Center, Oregon Health & Science University, Rutgers-RW Johnson Medical School, Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University, Temple University Hospital, Tufts Medical Center, UMass Medical School, University of Miami/Jackson Health System, University of Rochester/Strong Memorial, UC Irvine Medical center, UC San Diego Medical Center, UPMC Medical Education, Yale-New Haven Hospital, Zucker School of Medicine-Northwell North Shore Long Island Jewish Medical Center
Interventional Radiology	1	UC Davis Medical Center
Med/Peds	4	University of Miami/Jackson Health System, University of Rochester/Strong Memorial, University of Texas Medical School, Vanderbilt University Medical Center
Neurological Surgery	1	Emory University School of Medicine
Neurology	9	Emory University School of Medicine, Massachusetts General Hospital, Mayo Clinic School of Graduate Medical Education, Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University, UC San Francisco, University of Rochester/Strong Memorial, Yale-New Haven Hospital
Obstetrics-Gynecology	5	Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, Medical College of Wisconsin Affiliated Hospitals, Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University, University of Alabama Medical Center-Birmingham
Ophthalmology	6	Georgetown University/Washington Hospital, Oregon Health & Science University, SUNY Upstate, Temple University Hospital, University of Kansas School of Medicine, Yale-New Haven Hospital

To watch the entire Renaissance School of Medicine Match Day event, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BaF1cu2gQwg> or scan QR code.



Orthopaedic Surgery	4	Orlando Health, Penn State Hershey Medical Center, Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University
Otolaryngology	3	Albany Medical Center, ISMMS Mount Sinai Hospital, Loma Linda University
Pediatrics	7	Baystate Medical Center, Case Western/University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, New York Presbyterian Hospital-Weill Cornell Medical Center, Zucker SOM-Northwell Cohen Children's Medical Center
Physical Medicine Rehabilitation	2	Ohio State University Medical Center, Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University
Plastic Surgery	1	University of Chicago Medical Center
Psychiatry	16	New York Presbyterian Hospital-Weill Cornell Medical Center, Barnes-Jewish Hospital, Baylor College of Medicine, Maimonides Medical Center, New York Medical College-Metropolitan Hospital Center, Oregon Health & Science University, Rush University Medical Center, University of Rochester/Strong Memorial, University of Texas Medical School-Houston, UC San Francisco, UC San Francisco-Fresno, University of Virginia, Westchester Medical Center, Zucker SOM-Northwell Mather Hospital, Zucker SOM-Northwell Zucker Hillside, Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University
Radiation Oncology	1	Yale-New Haven Hospital
Radiology	5	Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University, Temple University Hospital, Yale New Haven Hospital, Zucker SOM-Northwell North Shore Long Island Jewish Medical Center
Urology	3	Rush University Medical Center, Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, Wayne State University
Vascular Surgery	1	MedStar Washington Hospital Center



MATCH DAY STUDENT EXPERIENCE

By Megan Cosgrove
Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University, Class of 2021

Everything about this past year was not what we expected.

As fourth-year medical students, COVID restrictions affected more than our ability to go out with friends and take that coveted month-long vacation abroad before beginning residency. Our entire residency application process was virtual, from attending virtual "meet-and-greets" with programs before submitting our applications to completing interviews over Zoom.

The Class of 2021 waited patiently, hoping that Match Day celebrations would go on as planned. Pre-COVID Match Day was an in-person event, where students received their individual match results in an envelope that everyone opened up together after a 10-second countdown. It is a day that every medical student looks forward to; it's a day that says, "You did it!" and lets you know where you will be spending the next three to seven years for residency training.

I might be the only person in the class who was happy that the in-person Match Day event was canceled. My friends who know me well knew that I never planned to attend my own Match Day, so this cancellation was actually quite convenient for me. It's kind of a weird day; some people are ecstatic to find out they matched at one of their top programs, others are disappointed to find out they didn't, and these people can be feet away from each other as they discover this news. Even though I was very comfortable with my rank list and knew that I would be happy at any of the programs I ranked, I wanted to process this news in private.

I applied for residency in neurological surgery this past year. My decision to apply for this specialty was not an easy one for me. I came into medical school with a strong research background and wanted to pursue a specialty in medicine, with the goal of becoming a physician-scientist. I first encountered the field of neurosurgery in my pre-clinical neuroscience class when I learned about the use of deep brain stimulation (DBS) for Parkinson's Disease. I remember thinking, "I'm

not sure which specialty I want to pursue, but that is the coolest thing I have ever seen!"

I went on to shadow a neurosurgeon to see DBS firsthand and did a formal rotation with the service during my third year. When the time had come to decide on a specialty, I felt conflicted in my decision making. I envied my classmates who knew from before even beginning clerkships they would pursue a certain specialty, and those who had the "aha" moment at some point during third year when they realized this was the specialty they wanted to pursue.

During the first part of my fourth year, I rotated with both neurosurgery and hematology and wanted so desperately to experience that "aha" moment. For me, it was more of a culmination of all my experiences and my realization that I could satisfy all the aspects of a career I desired from a career in neurosurgery.

I spent a lot of time thinking about the rigorous training I would have to complete, the sacrifices that would have to be made, and the fact that most of my mentors and future colleagues would be men. I ultimately decided that it would all be worth it, that my tenacity for my goals would help me get through the training and that my delicate balance of strength and grace would help me navigate what has traditionally been a "boy's club."

I still had one hesitation: was I competitive enough to match into this specialty? I had completed a rotation in neurosurgery at Emory – which I absolutely loved – but felt my chance at matching at a program like Emory was low because it is a top training program. I decided to pause and take a year for research to ensure I had the most competitive application possible. What followed was quite possibly one of the most pivotal years of my life, where I gained experience and exposure to the field I would pursue. More importantly, it was the year I found confidence within myself to pursue my dreams despite any challenge or obstacle I might encounter. I believe this life

lesson will prove to be very important in my residency training.

Fast forward to Match Week 2021, which begins on a Monday where you receive an email as to whether or not you matched to a program, but gives no indication where you will be training, if you did match. The whole match process is a bit confusing to people not going through it (Heck, it is even confusing to most who are going through it!), so I didn't even bother explaining to my parents that Monday was an important day. I texted my friend, a current neurosurgery intern, that "I matched!" We made plans to spend the night before Match Day at Chili's drinking \$5 margaritas, a plan he assured would help ease my pre-Match Day anxiety.

Finally, Match Day was upon me. I woke up leisurely, made myself a nice breakfast, and did my hair and makeup, because I love doing my hair and makeup. Instead of putting on a dress and heels (I also love dressing up), I put on my new Figs scrubs because they are comfortable and because I would be spending my morning watching TV from my bed instead of meeting up with everyone at the hospital for Match Day. About 10 minutes before noon, I decided to come out of my room. Until then I was still unsure of whether I would log into my email from my laptop or my iPhone. I ended up deciding on the laptop. My mom was with me, but she could sense that I was a bit anxious, so she gave me space to look at the email first alone but was ready right next to me to receive the news.

At 11:58 AM, I saw the NRMP email appear in my inbox. I opened it and scrolled quickly down to the only part of the email I actually cared about: "Program Name: Neurological Surgery, Institution Name: Emory Univ-SOM-GA." The specialty and program I feared might only be a dream was now my reality! About five minutes later, my new chairman called to congratulate and welcome me to the program, which was the "pinch" I needed to realize I wasn't still dreaming.

(continued on page 11)



REFLECTIONS ON THE THREE-YEAR MD EXPERIENCE

By Justin Bell, Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University, Class of 2021

People seem to have very strong opinions about Long Island. There's a vocal crowd of "The winter sucks and there's nothing to do here" people, and there's an equally vocal crowd of "The beaches are amazing and my entire family lives here" people. I fall into the latter group and will honestly probably die here.

Aside from our beaches, backyard barbeques and fire pits, one of Long Island's biggest attractions to me was Stony Brook University. As a high school senior who always dreamed of becoming a doctor, imagine my excitement upon realizing that just 30 minutes east of my family home was a world-class research university that could act as a one-stop shop to transform me from a wide-eyed college freshmen to a physician.

After getting accepted to Stony Brook University School of Medicine, I specifically remember one day working in my research lab when my PI pulled up out a faculty email he received about Stony Brook starting up this new three-year MD program, one of only a few in the country. I recall being excited; this was a big opportunity to set up my entire future. There was only one problem: I had no idea what specialty to choose. "Psychiatry? No... that's way too much talking. Radiology? No... I already stare at screens too much at home." All the options continued to swirl through my mind as I started MS1.

As the deadline to apply loomed, I started shadowing various specialties trying to find a home. Anesthesia was never really on my radar growing up; I didn't really know what they did other than "put people to sleep." That all changed when I attended an Anesthesia interest group meeting. To

be honest, the free lunch is what brought me in. I was just there to grab a quick bite and leave. However, the attending's talk piqued my interest. After the meeting, he agreed to let me shadow him.

My first ever time in the OR was both daunting and fascinating. Machines buzzing, monitors beeping and people moving around with incredible confidence and efficiency. After our first few cases and some further discussion with the attending, I knew I had found my specialty. The mixture of medical management, procedures and the privilege to guide patients through an incredibly stressful day in their lives was perfect for me.

After applying, I found myself in the peculiar situation of sitting for my residency interview as an MS1. While everybody I met in the Anesthesia department radiated kindness and warmth, I was still incredibly nervous, as the interview could change my entire life. The days after the interview passed as slow as molasses as I awaited the final decision. One day, two days, three days, and finally, "Congratulations! We are delighted to offer you a position in our department."

Soon after my acceptance and completion of MS1, I completed a 10-week summer immersion, similar to clerkship, between MS1 and MS2. I fondly remember getting to meet all my future attendings and senior residents. Most importantly, I fell even more in love with the specialty. I may have chosen Anesthesia based on but a single day of shadowing, but my subsequent experiences increased my confidence that I made the right choice.

While I felt secure in my early match, there was still much work left to be done. I still had



to become a doctor now on a compressed timeline, which included strict academic guidelines to make sure I would be able to handle intern year. This timeline was only further thrown out of whack by COVID. My schedule included summer and night classes, certain requirements for clerkship grades, taking step one and step two back-to-back, two sub internships, CPX, several more weeks of electives, and begrudgingly very little vacation time. In fact, I have a whopping six days between the end of electives and my first day of residency orientation. Talk about no chill!

Nonetheless, I'm overall really happy with my decision. My fellow three-year MD classmates and I have become great friends. The director of the three-year MD program, Dr. Lisa Strano-Paul, has been very supportive of us all as we worked through the kinks of being in a completely new program. My future residency director, Dr. Joy Schabel, has also been incredibly supportive. Soon after my acceptance, I distinctly remember her letting me know, "I consider you one of my residents now; please let me know if there's anything I can do to help." She has since lived up to that promise and beyond!

I am excited to soon begin my first-ever day at work with those two important letters "MD" on my ID badge. To all my fellow graduates who have matched at wonderful institutions around the country, I say, "Bon voyage and good luck!" And to all those who elected to stay at Stony Brook for another three to seven years, I'll see you on July 1! •

Match Day Student Experience *continued from page 10*

My favorite part of Match Day and the days and weeks after is the overwhelming support and congratulations I have received from people I have met in all different parts of my life. I feel incredibly honored and humbled by this entire experience. A program director at one of my other top programs reached out to me a couple of hours after Match to congratulate me on my "stellar match" and said, "You're all set; bask in the glow!" And that is exactly what I have been doing. •



SCHOLARLY CONCENTRATIONS PROGRAM

Annual Research Day Goes Virtual

Howard B. Fleit, PhD
Assistant Dean for Curriculum, Associate Professor and Vice Chair for Education
Department of Pathology, Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University

STUDENT REFLECTIONS

The Scholarly Concentration Program Experience



By John Krstacic
Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University, Class of 2021

I had an extraordinarily positive experience as a student in the Scholarly Concentration Program (SCP). I was fortunate enough to work under the mentorship of Dr. Annie Laurie Shroyer, whose guidance over

the years has undoubtedly made me into a better researcher and clinician.

Participating in this program afforded me opportunities that I otherwise would never have had, including working with and receiving mentorship from some of the nation's top physicians from a variety of institutions, such as Harvard University and the Mayo Clinic. Our team

worked on a myriad of projects that spanned many different subjects and specialties, meaning that it is easily possible to cater your SCP experience to your interests.

For example, we worked on projects ranging from cardiovascular surgery to gender disparities in top biomedical journals. Most importantly, I felt that our work was truly meaningful and had an impact each time we published. Regardless of one's individual goals, there are mentors who can cater to each individual student and the subjects they hope to investigate. Anyone who is interested in expanding his or her skills and experience with research should seriously consider participating in the SCP. •



By Robert Hutnik
Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University, Class of 2021

Transitioning from my undergraduate biomedical engineering studies to medical school as part of the B.E./M.D. Engineering Scholars for Medicine program, I knew that my educational goals not only included

expanding my medical knowledge, but also learning the ins and outs of clinical research. The Scholarly Concentrations Program Research Track, under the leadership of Dr. Laurie Shroyer, has provided me an excellent opportunity to do just this.

With the help of my PI Dr. Lukasz Czerwonka, I investigated the impact of simultaneous parathyroidectomy at the time of thyroid

surgery for chronic kidney disease (CKD) and end-stage renal disease (ESRD) patients, utilizing the national Cerner Health Facts database. With a higher incidence than the general population of both thyroid nodules and secondary hyperparathyroidism due to underlying kidney dysfunction, CKD and ESRD patients were an ideal population to investigate the impact of the relative timing of thyroid and parathyroid surgeries on clinical outcomes.

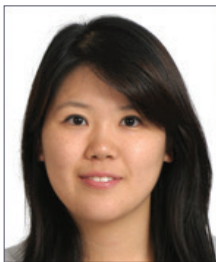
Our analysis focused on a variety of factors impacting patient well-being before and after these procedures, including the rates of surgical complications such as vocal cord paralysis, temporary and long-term calcium derangements, and patient use of calcium modifying

(continued on page 14)

Due to continuing COVID restrictions this year, the Scholarly Concentrations Program Annual Research Day was held as a one-week virtual event. Our graduating medical students prepared voiceover PowerPoints summarizing their work. These presentations were available for viewing asynchronously by students, faculty and staff. Viewers could comment or ask questions. •

AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

Christopher Mazzeo	Award for Excellence in Basic Science Research
Rachel Chu	Award for Excellence in Translational Science Research
Courtney Balgobin	Award for Excellence in Clinical Science Research
Marissa Ayasse	Award for Excellence in Global Health Research
Alexander Hoogland	Award for Excellence in Humanistic Studies
Britney Dhautal	Award for Excellence in Innovation in Medical Education



A Personal Journey

Joanna (Chang) Kim
Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University, MD/PhD Student, Class of 2021

"Did you make a mistake when you accepted me?" I asked Dr. Markus Seeliger, Co-director of the Stony Brook MSTP. I was in my sixth year of MSTP training and tired of assuming a well-worn persona, one of competence,

confidence and cheer. My true self was seeping out, one wracked with inadequacy, depression and confusion, and I was terrified that soon everyone would find out.

My greatest strength entering the program was my passion for research. I always wanted to become a scientist, and my attraction to the field was augmented when I became curious about human biology and medicine after my aunt's cancer diagnosis. My undergraduate research advisor, Dr. Raz, once asked me if I even dreamt about my experiments, because that's what you do for something you are passionate about. I knew then that research was my calling.

In graduate school, self-consciousness and insecurity were two major obstacles to that calling. At the time, I had a colleague who greeted me with, "Hey, Korean girl" every time. Where I grew up in Los Angeles, you don't call someone like that, because multiple heads would turn. But here, I saw myself the way other people seemed to see me, a meek Korean girl, and I thought it wasn't good enough. I was in a constant mental battle to pretend the persona I created to fit in. As a result, I acquired an odd affect.

"Excuse me, I am very sorry to tell you this, truly, but your data interpretation is all wrong and you should revise your hypothesis." I twisted up my words in an effort to be innocuous, but then became aggressive in a split second.

A Korean postdoc once told me "my sprouts are yellow," meaning my leaves will fall off and that I had no future. "At least pretend you don't speak Korean," he said, offended by a perceived discrepancy between my external appearance and the way I acted.

And then there was a piece of startling, unsolicited advice from someone I respected: because I am a female Asian scientist, I ought to work harder to be recognized. Well, it was not enough to fight my internal battles every day, devote extra hours and weekends for

stronger publications, and compete desperately for awards, just to prove that I belonged. I never felt good enough. My experiments were failing, my relationships were suffering, and I was afraid for my career. I began to blame my "Asian" timidity and foreign appearance for making the situation worse, and I developed a form of self-hatred similar to the one writer Cathy Park Hong describes: "Your only defense is to be hard on yourself, which becomes compulsive, and therefore a comfort, to peck yourself to death."

I had imposter syndrome, a common problem that affects many people. Since I didn't see myself as the persona I created, I was an imposter. Certainly, my insecurity has motivated me to work harder in the past, but it also fed from my passion and happiness. After learning more about imposter syndrome and the huge toll it took on my well-being, I worked to focus on positive and happy things in my life and celebrated achieving small goals. In the end, what ended up helping me the most was the support I received from the people who were important to me.

In my sixth year, the MSTP developed a day-long leadership workshop for female MSTP students in collaboration with the Alan Alda Center. I was the most senior student in the group, and I wanted to portray a strong, confident persona. But when it was my turn to speak, memories of my struggles and fear for my career flooded my mind so suddenly that I burst out crying. Looking at all the underclassmen, I saw my younger self, so full of passion that there wasn't any room for self-doubt in me. Now, the passion was exhausted, overwhelmed by a deep sense of inadequacy. After I shared my struggles with imposter feelings with my friends in the MSTP, I was surprised to learn that many of us suffered from it. Ironically, we were all grinding ourselves to fit in, when none of us saw each other as frauds.

Towards the end of my graduate years, I walked into Dr. Seeliger's office to ask him the long-dreaded question. He simply said, "No, we wanted you in the program." He described how he sees me, which aligned with the persona I played. As I was moving on from graduate school, my thesis advisor, Dr. Vincent Yang, told me that he sees potential in me to become a successful physician-scientist. I wondered that since all these people saw me as the persona I played, was it really necessary to try to

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Reflections of a Dean's Experience *continued from page 3*

Society Award for Professional Identity Formation, which highlights best practices in medical professionalism education, a consistent part of our medical school curriculum, from the initial white coat ceremony to graduation.

In addition to understanding the biological basis of health and disease and translating this information to the clinic, and training outstanding cohorts of physicians and biomedical scientists, our faculty have also made a major, favorable impact on the clinical care of the residents of Suffolk County. Over the past decade our clinical footprint has more than doubled, and we now offer clinical care at over 200 sites throughout the county, delivering more than a million patient visits each year.

But it is the quality of our care of which we are particularly proud. With the guidance of Carol Gomes, CEO of University Hospital, and Peggy McGovern, Vice Dean for Clinical Affairs, Stony Brook Medicine has begun to receive recognition for our high clinical quality of care.

For example, for the past three years we were deemed a top 100 hospital in the nation by Healthgrades, which determines quality based entirely on the outcomes of the 34 most common reasons for admission to an acute-care hospital. And for the past seven years we have also been determined to be a top 100 hospital in cardiac care, coronary intervention and stroke care. Kudos in these realms go to Dave Fiorella and Michael Guido and colleagues, who lead our stroke program, and Hal Skopicki and Henry Tannous, Co-Directors of the Stony Brook University Heart Institute. And most recently, *US News and World Report* placed us in the top 50 programs nationally for orthopaedics, neurology and neurosurgery. Many thanks to Larry Hurst, Mark Halterman and Raph Davis, current chairs of the three departments.

Finally, reaching out to the community is within our DNA. As the "safety net hospital" for Suffolk County, we care for more underserved individuals than any other hospital in the county. In leading the five-year Delivery System Reform and Incentive Payment (DSRIP) program in Suffolk, we spearheaded successful efforts to improve access, improve quality and reduce the cost of care for patients enrolled in Medicaid. And in our SB HOME student-run free clinic, led by Jedan Philips, both

our students and the underserved patients they care for are greatly impacted for the better.

As a final source of pride for our faculty, residents and students, let me share our experience in the past year+, with COVID-19, as it illustrates how the combination of excellence in research, education, clinical care and community outreach can greatly impact a healthcare disaster. Over the past year, faculty members at Stony Brook have penned over 160 distinct scholarly publications on everything from the structural biology of the virus, to translating biomarker data into improved care, to the sociological impacts of both developing the disease, and the fear and isolation which the pandemic forced upon society. In the midst of the pandemic we launched the COVID-19 Database and Analytic Environment, to allow our faculty and students to pose important hypotheses of disease origin, prognostic features and treatment options, and obtain clean answers.

Our faculty and students adapted to the risk, and maintained our educational programs throughout the pandemic. And our clinical care, as measured by patient survival rates, was second to none in the New York City metropolitan region, including that in our patients who are traditionally underserved, and especially in the sickest of the sick, those patients admitted to intensive care units.

From my foregoing illustrations of RSOM successes, I most certainly sound like a proud parent, which, in a way, I am (and now, in reality, a four-time grandparent!). My experiences as Dean of the Renaissance School of Medicine have been nothing short of personally transformative and inspiring.

It is my firm belief that when a torch of leadership is passed in any organization, the measure of lasting impact can be summarized in one word: people. The leaders, the faculty and the students that one brings to and nurtures in your organization is the most important impact one can make. And from the foregoing (only partial) listing of outstanding people within the RSOM, I truly hope and believe that the School will continue to thrive, no matter the obstacles that present, as like the examples cited, RSOM challenges will continue to be turned into opportunities.

The very best of success to all the faculty, residents, students and staff of the Renaissance School of Medicine. •

The Scholarly Concentrations Program Experience *continued from page 12*

medications. As an early glimpse into the clinical management of these patients prior to starting our third-year clerkships, I had the opportunity to scrub in to a variety of thyroidectomy and parathyroidectomy cases with Dr. Czerwonka. The opportunity to work with patients with these same clinical characteristics as the deidentified patients in the national database served as a fantastic way to put "a name to a face" and grasp the importance and impact of our research for this patient population.

Dr. Wei Hou of the Biostatistical Consulting Core served as another amazing mentor throughout this process, spending countless hours guiding me through data cleaning and analytical methods useful for our project. Dropping by his office, Wei was gracious and patient in

refreshing my memory on statistical principles I had learned during my undergraduate years, only this time with a real-life data set on which to apply them. His immense support throughout the analysis and writing process of this project was greatly appreciated, and I'm glad to call him a friend.

The skills I have learned through the Scholarly Concentrations Program have made a significant impact on my other research endeavors during my medical school years, and I anticipate these experiences and my developing analytical mindset will serve me well in my career as a physician and clinical researcher. •



AFRICAN DIASPORA

By Maame Yaa Brako
Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University, Class of 2024

On March 12, the Stony Brook chapter of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) hosted its tent-pole cultural event, the African Diaspora Celebration.

Each year, first-year medical students organize a fun, exciting night to uplift and shine a light on Black cultures throughout the diaspora and fundraise for causes they are passionate about. This year, in light of the ongoing pandemic, the event was virtual, which presented a unique opportunity to have more people partake in festivities without being local to Stony Brook.

The students took advantage of the Zoom platform by showcasing a range of art media and performances from artists from New York and Bermuda all the way to South Africa. This year's festivities, particularly

in light of the social isolation the past year has wrought, were centered heavily on community – and what better way to celebrate community than communal cooking and eating!

Thus, the symbol for the 2021 African Diaspora event was a cooking pot – reminiscent of the potjie/“Putu” pots used extensively throughout the African continent – to commemorate the key event for the night, to celebrate the unapologetically colorful and vibrant melting pot of various Black communities, and to symbolize opening the space for all people of all colors to celebrate Black communities. •

Stony Brook University's SNMA and LMSA Present

AFRICAN DIASPORA NIGHT

FRIDAY, MARCH 12TH

CELEBRATING THE MELTING POT OF VARIOUS BLACK COMMUNITIES

A Virtual Event from 5:30PM to 8:00PM

Poetry | Performances | Afro-Caribbean Food | Cocktails | Social Networking

And More!!!

~~ All are welcome to join in this event ~~

AFRICAN DIASPORA 2021

MANGÚ

by Robert Simmons-Perez

WATERMELON JUICE
WITH LIME, GINGER,
AND MINT

From Hawa Hassan's In Bibi's Kitchen: Camaros



CLASS OF 2021 HONOR SOCIETIES

ALPHA OMEGA ALPHA (AOA) HONOR SOCIETY

Samuel Akhnoukh	Vasilis Hristidis	James Peter
Kyle Albagli	Thomas Hays	Roy Qu
Aviva Beleck	Dishaw Holiprosad	Christopher Rosenberg
Jason Carter	Jessie Huang	James Schurr
Lauren Chan	Asha Job	Stella (To) Tsui
Danling Chen	Sonia Joshi	Mark Verburg
George Chen	Christopher Mazzeo	Jessica White
Rachel Chu	Spencer Mossack	Andrew Wylie
Jonathan Dounel	Japbani Nanda	Ariel Yang
Richard Grey	Christine Pando	Aaron Zlatopolsky
Mathew Hakimi	Brittany Perzia	

GOLD FOUNDATION HUMANISM HONOR SOCIETY

Kyle Albagli	Richard Grey	Gina Polizzo
Jully Araujo	Mathew Hakimi	Roy Qu
Courtney Balgobin	Steven Ham	Christopher Rosenberg
Lauren Chan	Laura Kenyon	Alisa Rybkin
George Chen	Mark Levine-Weinberg	Ryan Schum
Megan Cosgrove	Christopher Mazzeo	Jessica White
Jheison Giraldo	Chineze Nwebube	Ariel Yang
Monica Giraldo	James Peter	

A Personal Journey

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distinguish myself as someone else. Perhaps I played it so long that it became a real part of me.

After I returned to medical school, I saw my passion for research restored on the floors. I have been truly humbled by patient encounters, as they constantly remind me of the limits of medical knowledge. When I met IBD patients, I thought about how the disease impacted their quality of life and about which potential therapies in the pipeline could help them the most. When I met cirrhotic patients, my mind was filled with dreams about targeting these biological mechanisms to cure irreversible injuries. Every interaction renews my calling for research, and I cannot think of anything more rewarding than witnessing my best efforts translated into improvements in patient outcomes.

I still fight my internal battles and moments of insecurity. However, I am more comfortable wearing my persona. More importantly, I will always have the support of my loved ones and mentors to remind me that I am on the right track.

In a few weeks, I am going to UPMC for a research track residency, as are my colleagues to their respective programs. I am nervous and excited. This is the real game, and I must make the most out of it. But this time, I tell myself to enjoy the process because I am not alone and I belong. •

GIVE BACK

We thank the Renaissance School of Medicine Alumni for their continuous support.

For further information or to make a donation, please visit stonybrook.edu/SOM-AlumniSupport or contact Mary Hoffmann at mary.hoffmann@stonybrook.edu.

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