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Dean's Update, April 2021

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Dear Members of the New York Medical College (NYMC) Community,

Spring is always an exciting time at the NYMC School of Medicine (SOM). Our fourth-year students celebrated the next step on their path to becoming physicians on Match Day when they learned where they were matched to their residency programs and will continue their training for the next several years in their chosen specialty. This year, we were pleased to have more than 200 of our students match at 104 institutions, including our local affiliates, Westchester Medical Center, NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan, NYC Health + Hospitals/Lincoln, Lenox Hill Hospital, Greenwich Hospital and Phelps Hospital, as well as many top-tier, research-intensive, academic medical centers across the country. The top career choices for the Class of 2021 were internal medicine, emergency medicine, pediatrics, general surgery, family medicine, anesthesiology, psychiatry, obstetrics and gynecology and radiology.

We look forward to again celebrating the achievements of the Class of 2021 during Commencement in May. While the main ceremony will be virtual, we are looking into the possibility that the SOM hooding and awards ceremony will be hybrid with some in-person

activities, while adhering to COVID-19 safety guidelines. We are also pleased to see our first-, second- and third-year students progressing well towards their completion of a successful year.

LCME Accreditation

I am pleased to share positive news with you regarding the accreditation status of the NYMC SOM. NYMC SOM's M.D. Program is fully accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) and on an eight-year cycle, with our next survey visit anticipated during the 2023-24 academic year. Currently, the SOM's performance in 91 out of 93 accreditation elements is deemed satisfactory. This result signals that the SOM has made significant improvements over the past year and implemented new initiatives to provide our students with outstanding training in a supportive learning environment.

The two areas that will require continued monitoring and follow-up are self-directed/lifelong learning and career advising. This follow-up report will be required by August 2022. The SOM continues to innovate in these areas to make improvements and assess student satisfaction through surveys, evaluations and other communication channels. Opportunities to further discuss the SOM initiatives and our LCME accreditation status will be made available through upcoming committee meetings and town halls.

Achieving this level of compliance with LCME accreditation standards and elements is a major accomplishment that reflects the hard work and true team effort and dedication of our faculty, students, administrators and staff.

Graduate Medical Education (GME) Update

For 2021, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Institutional Review Committee commended NYMC for its substantial compliance with all institutional requirements. All NYMC GME programs have received initial or continued accreditation, and the following programs were commended by their respective residency review committees for meeting all program requirements: Dermatology – New York Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan (MET); Internal Medicine – MET; Nephrology – MET; Pediatrics – MET; Internal Medicine – Saint Michael's Medical Center (SMMC); Gastroenterology – SMMC; Hematology/Oncology – SMMC.

The two NYMC graduate dental education programs – General Practice Residency Program and the Oral Maxillofacial Surgery Residency Program – both received continued full accreditation without reporting requirements, which is the equivalent of commendation from the Council on Dental Accreditation.

NYMC has collaborated with SMMC in Newark, New Jersey, to establish two new ACGME-accredited fellowship programs in cardiovascular disease and hematology/medical oncology. Both programs received initial accreditation from ACGME's Review and Recognition Committee for Internal Medicine and will begin training new fellows in July 2021.

In addition, in the 2021 National Resident Matching Program, NYMC-sponsored programs filled all positions in all programs in the main match for a 100 percent match rate. This outstanding result for our residency programs was one of the most successful matches in the College's history.

2022-2027 SOM Strategic Plan

Preliminary steps to develop the 2022-2027 SOM Strategic Plan have been initiated. During the next several months, we will undertake a school-wide, collaborative planning process to engage stakeholders and solicit input from across the NYMC community, including faculty, staff, students, alumni, our affiliates and the general community at large. Creating a comprehensive plan will provide the SOM with a framework for our goals and direction over a five-year period.

By identifying opportunities for collaboration and strategic investments in academic programs, technology, research and facilities, the SOM will continue its success in effectively preparing our students for their future careers and contributing to advances in medical science and patient care. As we plan for the future of NYMC SOM, it will be vital that we hear from you. I look forward to sharing more information as we move forward with this important process.

Importance of Student Feedback from Surveys

In February, the annual Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) medical school graduation questionnaire (GQ) for fourth-year medical students (MS4s) was launched. I am extremely pleased that we have had a great response rate to date. I encourage all MS4s to share their feedback by completing the GQ, which is open until the first week of June. In addition, the annual NYMC SOM Student Report Card survey for all SOM students was just released and will be open for several weeks.

In the SOM, we are continually working to improve our academic programs and the services that we provide to students to ensure they are fully prepared and supported as they work to become the next generation of outstanding physicians. The feedback we receive from these surveys, as well as other communication channels, supports our efforts to continuously enhance our programs and address any areas of student concern.

Each year, the SOM incorporates student feedback to make improvements to the M.D. program and student support services. For example, changes that were implemented across the curriculum last year included the introduction of several new and/or enhanced educational themes (e.g., health system sciences, anti-racism/anti-bias, evidence-based practice, culinary medicine and nutrition), significant revision to the medical physiology course, integration of telehealth education and modifications to the third-year student schedules, which increased elective time and added a floating vacation block to enhance personal wellbeing. In addition, student feedback has led to several instructional technology enhancements, including implementation of state-of-the-art wireless monitoring sensors at key exam locations and providing real-time assessment of connectivity performance in advance of and during critical student computer-based exam sessions.

NYMC also committed significant funding to expand the Clinical Skills and Simulation Center, to support Point-of-Care Ultrasound (POCUS) training and is transitioning the current simulation management software to a hybrid cloud platform that will bring scalability and improved access for students' remote training. Student feedback has also informed several focused improvements to the house advisory system, individual career counseling opportunities, overall career planning services and to augment information on medical specialties to meet our students' career exploration and residency application needs.

Speaking on behalf of the NYMC SOM community, we care deeply about the point of view of our students and seek to create opportunities that model how we productively receive and respond to their input and build a culture of feedback.

Diversity and Inclusion

Here at NYMC, the rich diversity of our students, and as a result the varied perspectives and personal experiences they bring to their medical education, are an integral part of our community and we must continue to ensure that we provide a safe, supportive environment to ensure those diverse voices are welcomed and fully heard.

There is no place for racism in society today or brutality towards others in any form, and it is important that we stand strongly and united against it. As physicians and healers, we have a special responsibility to affect change in health disparities and to channel our energy to push for changes in laws and leadership that will address the fundamental problems that have led to these continued inequalities and suffering. Please read more about the recent activities of our Office of Diversity and Inclusion later in this newsletter.

Continued Diligence to Safety Precautions

Over the past year, it has been through the collective dedication and perseverance of the entire NYMC community, that we have kept our campus safe while continuing to deliver quality education. We continue to adhere to all local, state and federal guidelines. We must continue to recognize our collective responsibility to take recommended safety precautions as we work to contain the spread of COVID-19 and protect ourselves, our families and our campus community.

We look forward to a time when we can once again resume normal operations on campus and come together in person as a community. In the interim, it is our hope that you and your families remain safe and healthy.

Sincerely yours,

Jerry L. Nadler, M.D., MACP, FAHA, FACE
Dean of the School of Medicine
Professor of Medicine and Pharmacology

SOM Class of 2021 Celebrates Match Day

Members of the SOM Class of 2021 celebrated the next step on their path to becoming physicians on March 19, as they learned where they were matched to medical residency programs and will continue their training for the next several years in their chosen specialty. Although it was not the traditional in-person envelope opening ceremony, students learned where they matched online and a live stream of the event as well as interactive chat rooms allowed the students to celebrate together virtually and family and friends to join in the celebration.

"I came to medical school in order to become a psychiatrist and I am beyond excited to have matched at Massachusetts General Hospital for my psychiatry residency training. I am jumping for joy," said Ganaëlle Joseph-Senatus, SOM Class of 2021 (top right).

"I am so grateful for this opportunity, it has been a long journey and it's a sweet moment to find out I'll be training at Yale," said Sheba Ebhote, SOM Class of 2021, who matched in internal medicine (bottom right).

"As I sit reading my match result I am still in shock. What was just a childhood dream almost 15 years ago is now coming to life in front of me. I am excited to begin training at such an incredible institution where I may begin dedicating my life to helping others," said Mathias Palmer, SOM Class of 2021, who matched in internal medicine at the Mayo Clinic (middle right).

NYMC medical students will be training in 27 states at 104 different institutions, including several of NYMC's local affiliate hospitals – Westchester Medical Center Health Network's Westchester Medical Center, NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan and NYC Health + Hospitals/Lincoln – as well as at many top-tier, research-intensive, academic medical centers across the country, including three hospitals of the Harvard Medical School System (Brigham and Women's, Massachusetts General, Beth Israel-Deaconess), Brown, Cleveland Clinic, Duke, Johns Hopkins, Mayo Clinic, New York Presbyterian-Columbia, New York University, Stanford, Northwestern, UCLA, Vanderbilt and Yale.

The top career choices for the Class of 2021 were internal medicine, emergency medicine, pediatrics, general surgery, family medicine, anesthesiology, psychiatry, obstetrics and gynecology and radiology. [Read full story about Match Day](#), [watch Match Day highlights video](#) and [watch video of virtual event](#).



Humayun Islam, M.D., Ph.D., Appointed Chair to Lead Newly Combined Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology Departments



Humayun Islam, M.D., Ph.D., has been appointed chair of the newly combined Departments of Pathology and of Microbiology and Immunology at NYMC. Dr. Islam has served as interim chair of the Department of Pathology since 2019. He joined NYMC in 2002 and currently holds a faculty appointment in the SOM as clinical professor of pathology and clinical associate professor of medicine. Dr. Islam is also a member of the faculty of the Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences (GSBMS). He serves as vice director of pathology, chief of anatomic pathology, director of hematopathology and director of the pathology residency program at Westchester Medical Center (WMC), one of NYMC's major clinical affiliated sites.

"The integration of the Departments of Pathology and Microbiology and Immunology will provide new opportunities to leverage the combined educational, clinical and research expertise in these outstanding departments. We fully expect that having closer interactions of clinicians with basic science investigators will lead to major advances in clinical translational studies for our faculty and learners," says Jerry L. Nadler, M.D., SOM dean and professor of medicine and pharmacology. [Read full story about Dr. Islam](#).

Annual NYMed Talks Event Focuses on Access and Excess in Health Care

Focusing on the very timely topic of access and excess in health care, this year's annual NYMed Talks event, which was run entirely by SOM students, was held virtually on March 11. The daylong, interdisciplinary and inter-professional event, which featured a variety of guest speakers, is designed to expose students studying to work in the health care professions to topics outside of their academic curriculum.

"The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the holes and cracks in the American health care system that has persisted for decades," says Katherine Lo, SOM Class of 2024, who was part of the group of students who organized the event. "As future physicians and leaders, it is important to have exposure to topics surrounding access to health care, as well as sources of excess in the American health care system. Through these presentations from industry leaders and other innovators in medicine, we hoped to garner interest in current efforts and strategies being explored to improve access to health care on a large scale and across various demographic groups."

Roy Miller, SOM Class of 2024, also part of the NYMed Talks team, explained, "I hoped that my peers became inspired by leaders and innovators in medicine to learn and take action. A diverse world requires diverse solutions, and our keynote speakers each demonstrated unique approaches to combat problems in our health care system. As medical students and future physicians, we hold a responsibility to advocate for our future patients and the diverse communities within which we practice."

With topics ranging from telehealth and rural medicine and diversity and accessibility of health databases to current issues in health policy and racial inequities in science, medicine and substance abuse disorders, speakers at this year's event included Katherine Blizinsky, Ph.D., policy director for the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) All of Us Research Program; Irina Gelman, D.P.M., M.P.H., commissioner of health for Orange County, NY; Peter M. Rhee, M.D., professor of surgery at NYMC and section chief of trauma and critical care at Westchester Medical Center; Adam Block, Ph.D., assistant professor of public health at NYMC; and Jean Lud Cadet, M.D., a psychiatrist in the Molecular Neuropsychiatry Research Branch at the NIH.

[Read full story on NYMed Talks event.](#)



Update from Office of Diversity and Inclusion

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion is pleased to welcome [Zuleika Cuevas, M.A., M.B.A.](#) to the team in her role as assistant to the vice chancellor for diversity and inclusion. Ms. Cuevas started with the office in February and has hit the ground running. We have had highly successful Black History Month programming throughout the entire NYMC campus.

On May 6, from 12 to 6 p.m., the Office of Diversity and Inclusion will host a Prefaculty Development Conference. This conference will be open to the entire NYMC community to showcase opportunities in academic medicine to our medical students, residents and junior faculty. Women, minorities and members of the LGBTQI community, who are significantly underrepresented in academic medicine, are particularly encouraged to attend. We hope by showcasing the many great opportunities available that a career in academic medicine will be more attractive to our trainees and junior faculty. There will be two plenary sessions and numerous high quality workshops throughout the day.

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion in conjunction with the Offices of Development and of Student Affairs is planning a graduation event on May 25 at 7 p.m. to highlight the accomplishments of Black students and alumni of NYMC. This event will include an overview of the history of NYMC with regards to diversity and inclusion from the College's founding to the present day as well as plans moving forward. The entire campus community is encouraged to attend this splendid celebration.

The Office is also planning a prematriculation program for incoming first-year medical students. The goal of this program will be to ease the transition to medical school for students in order to enhance the students' success in the first-year curriculum. Incoming students will have the opportunity to apply to be a part of this program, which we hope will become a staple at NYMC. We are grateful for the many offices collaborating to make this prematriculation program a success including the Offices of Undergraduate Medical Education, Student Affairs, Academic Support and of Admissions, as well as the first-year course directors.

-- Mill Etienne, M.D. '02, M.P.H., FAAN, FAES
Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion

SOM Names Faculty to Leadership Positions



Yardaena Osband, M.D.

The SOM has named two faculty members to leadership positions to further enhance the curriculum in the M.D. Program. **Yardaena Osband, M.D.**, clinical assistant professor of pediatrics, has been named director of longitudinal curricular themes. **Supriya Jain, M.D.**, assistant professor of pediatrics and radiology, has been named clinical education liaison. “Appointing these talented faculty members expands our capabilities to develop and deliver innovative curricula that is responsive to societal needs and prepares our students to be competent clinicians,” says Jennifer Koestler, M.D., senior associate dean for medical education.

Dr. Osband joined the NYMC faculty in 2007 and is a practicing pediatrician with Boston Children’s Health Physicians. She has served as clinical preceptor for the Pediatric Residency Program at Maria Fareri Children’s Hospital (MFCH) and is the former director of pediatric sub-internships for NYMC. After receiving her medical degree from Tel Aviv University in Israel, she completed her residency in pediatrics at MFCH. She is the recipient of several awards, including Excellence in Teaching and Mentoring from NYMC and the Academic General Pediatrics Research Award from MFCH and Westchester Medical Center (WMC). In her new role, Dr. Osband will oversee longitudinal themes in the SOM curriculum, including medical imaging, interprofessional education, nutrition and culinary medicine, genetics, cultural competency and health systems science.



Supriya Jain, M.D.

Dr. Jain will provide oversight for the fourth-year track program, including the Transition to Fourth Year and Transition to Residency courses. Dr. Jain joined the faculty of NYMC in 2010 and now holds joint appointments in the Department of Pediatrics in its Division of Pediatric Cardiology as well as in the Department of Radiology. She is also an attending physician in pediatric cardiology

and director of Congenital and Pediatric Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance Imaging and of Advanced 3D Cardiovascular Imaging-Virtual Reality at MFCH. After receiving her medical degree in India, she completed her residency in pediatrics at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She went on to do a pediatric cardiology fellowship at the University of California at San Francisco (UCSF) and then an advanced senior fellowship in cardiac magnetic resonance imaging at Boston Children’s Hospital, Harvard Medical School, in Boston, Massachusetts.

Dr. Joseph Mattana Appointed Chair of Medicine at NYC Health + Hospitals/ Metropolitan

Joseph Mattana, M.D., has been appointed Chair of the Department of Medicine at NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan and Professor of Medicine at NYMC. Metropolitan’s affiliation with NYMC — that of a public hospital with a private school of medicine — is the longest-standing affiliation of its kind in the United States. Dr. Mattana was most recently chair of the Department of Medicine and director of the Internal Medicine Residency Program at St. Vincent’s Medical Center in Bridgeport, Connecticut. He also served as professor and chair of medicine and assistant dean at the Frank H. Netter M.D. School of Medicine at Quinnipiac University.

“In Dr. Mattana we have brought to our organization an accomplished scholar, clinician and researcher with a vision to transform an internal medicine department that is vital to the wellbeing of the East Harlem community,” said John T. Pellicone, M.D., chief medical officer at Metropolitan and assistant professor of medicine.



“We’re excited to welcome Dr. Mattana to the faculty at NYMC in his role as chairman of the Department of Medicine at Metropolitan Hospital,” says Neil W. Schluger, M.D., the Barbara and William Rosenthal Chair and professor of medicine at NYMC. “Dr. Mattana has a distinguished academic background both as a nephrologist and as a medical educator. His presence on our faculty will continue the important historical relationship between NYMC and Metropolitan Hospital in a manner than provides great benefits to patients and students alike.”

After receiving his undergraduate degree from New York University, Dr. Mattana’s introduction to medicine began at NYC Health + Hospitals/Kings County, while he was a student at SUNY Downstate. He completed an internal medicine residency and then a fellowship in nephrology at Long Island Jewish Medical Center (LIJ). He subsequently held various positions at LIJ, Winthrop-University Hospital, NYC Health + Hospitals/Kings County, and SUNY Downstate.

Dr. Mattana credits his experiences with the NYC public hospital system with providing him with his perspective on improving care for underserved communities and training physicians who are prepared to provide expert and compassionate care for their patients in a challenging health care environment.

Faculty Promotions

The Office of the SOM Dean wishes to congratulate our faculty who have achieved promotion in rank in their respective departments/disciplines.

MEDICINE

Michael D. Goldberg, M.D.

Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine
Westchester Medical Center

Lisa N. Hirsch, M.D.

Assistant Professor of Medicine and
Family and Community Medicine
Good Samaritan Hospital

Jonna O. Mercado, M.D.

Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine
NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan

Savi Mushiyev, M.D.

Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine
NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan

PEDIATRICS

Matthew G. Pinto, M.D.

Clinical Associate Professor of Pediatrics
Westchester Medical Center

EMERITUS

Donald Phillibert, M.D.

Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology

SOM Students Produce Academic Journal Focused on Health Policy

Inspired by recent events, including the COVID-19 pandemic and major social unrest surrounding race equity in the United States, several students in the NYMC SOM sought to provide an outlet to share their perspectives on these broad range of issues by producing their own student-run academic journal. The resulting fall 2020 edition of the [Roundtable Journal on Health Policy](#) (RJHP) comprises a multi-disciplinary collection of commentaries and papers by SOM students on a wide range of issues in politics, society and health care from telemedicine and vaccination efforts related to the COVID-19 pandemic, to the importance of implicit bias training in medical education.

“RJHP stemmed from discussions we had as part of Health Policy Roundtable, an elective for first- and second-year medical students that meets monthly to discuss pertinent topics in health policy,” says Rajkumar Pammal, SOM Class of 2023, who served as editor-in-chief of the fall 2020 issue of the journal. “The medical field does not exist in a vacuum, and it is crucial for today’s physicians to understand the social, economic and political factors that influence the health of their patients and their ability to care for them. As such, we re-launched RJHP, with the goal of providing medical students a platform to engage with these issues.”

The Health Policy Roundtable, which started at NYMC in 2010, and RJHP are supported in part by the generosity of the Sidney E. Frank Foundation and are representative of the continued growth of the Sidney Frank programs at NYMC. The initial funding from the Foundation supported summer fellowships for first-year students to work with clinicians and since has grown to support both the Roundtable and now the RJHP. Two editions of the RJHP were previously published in 2017 and 2018 under the leadership of Evan Einstein, M.D., M.P.H. '18 and Anurag Saraf, M.D. '18.

Joseph English, M.D., the Sidney E. Frank Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, serves as director of the Sidney Frank programs at NYMC. “Mr. Frank was a successful businessman about to start a family foundation and a good friend of Michael Blumenfield, M.D., professor emeritus of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, medicine and of surgery at NYMC,” says Dr. English. “Over a lunch meeting, Mr. Frank was particularly taken with our idea that medical students were taught well at the bedside but did not always appreciate the importance of their advocacy through professional initiatives beneficial to the public. He subsequently made a gift to NYMC of \$5 million. His generous gift enabled us to launch a broad range of initiatives, including the student programs with the Journal being the most recent. Mr. Frank’s gift remains the largest gift from a private donor our medical school has ever received.” [Read full story on academic journal.](#)

THE ROUNDTABLE JOURNAL ON HEALTH POLICY

POLITICS
SOCIETY
HEALTHCARE

FALL 2020

VOLUME 3 | ISSUE 1

Faculty Appointments (December 9, 2020 through March 26, 2021)

Welcome to our new faculty from across our affiliate sites.

Mohammed T. Al-Juboori

Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine
NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan

Svetoslav Bardarov, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology
Richmond University Medical Center

Samuel P. Bechmann, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine
Wyckoff Heights Medical Center

Sharath S. Bellary, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine
St. Michael's Medical Center

Mariya Belyayeva, D.O.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine
Wyckoff Heights Medical Center

Carina Biggs, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery
Wyckoff Heights Medical Center

Ama Buskwofie, M.D.

Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology
Westchester Medical Center

Logan W. Carr, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery
Westchester Medical Center

Lovely Chhabra, M.D.

Assistant Professor of Medicine
Westchester Medical Center

Christina M. Ciraco, D.O.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine
NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan

Sarav G. Daid, M.D.

Instructor of Medicine
NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan

Randy D’Amico, M.D.

Adjunct Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery
Wyckoff Heights Medical Center

Pasquale Fonzetti, M.D., Ph.D.

Adjunct Assistant Professor of Neurology
Westmed Medical Group

Shari Friedman, M.D.

Clinical Associate Professor of Radiology
Westchester Medical Center

Melissa D. Gans, M.D.

Assistant Professor of Pediatrics
Westchester Medical Center

Rebecca Glassman, M.D.

Assistant Professor of Medicine
Westchester Medical Center

Diana Goldenberg, M.D., M.P.H.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine
Westmed Medical Group

Gayotri Goswami, M.D.

Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine
Westchester Medical Center

Sadiqa Karim, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology
Westchester Medical Center

Karen Karsif, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery
Good Samaritan Hospital

Sharon Koehler, D.O.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery
Wyckoff Heights Medical Center

Philip W. Lebowitz, M.D., M.B.A.

Clinical Professor of Anesthesiology
Westchester Medical Center

Ernest B. Lee, Ph.D.

Instructor of Cell Biology and Anatomy
New York Medical College

John Loike, Ph.D.

Adjunct Professor of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology
New York Medical College

Daniel G. Lorch III, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine
Westmed Medical Group

Dominique Malacarne-Pape, M.D.

Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology
MidHudson Regional Hospital

Joseph Mattana, M.D.

Professor of Medicine
NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan

Jacqueline M. Maxwell

Instructor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Westchester Medical Center

Alexander C. Meyers, D.O.

Instructor of Emergency Medicine
NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan

Anita Mikkilineni, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology
MidHudson Regional Hospital

Emmeline M. T. Ngo, M.D.

Instructor of Medicine
NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan

Lauren M. Paish, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine
Wyckoff Heights Medical Center

Patrick M. Popiel, M.D.

Assistant Professor of Urology and Obstetrics and Gynecology
Westchester Medical Center

Lauren A. Plante, M.D.

Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology
Westchester Medical Center

Lil Ofelia Rodriguez, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Pediatrics
NYC Health + Hospitals/Lincoln

Blossom P. Samuels, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Rehabilitation Medicine
Westchester Medical Center

Nupur R. Shah, M.D.

Instructor of Medicine
NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan

Sumir U. Shah, D.O.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine
Wyckoff Heights Medical Center

Setareh Shams, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology
NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan

Rand Stack, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Radiology
Westmed Medical Group

Rachana Tyagi, M.D.

Associate Professor of Neurosurgery
Westchester Medical Center

Christopher B. Whitehurst, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology
New York Medical College

Health System Science Intersession Series for First-year Students Introduced

A new series of Health System Science Intersession mini-courses for first-year medical students has been implemented for the 2020-2021 academic year. The second intersession in the series focusing on population and social determinants of health took place during the first week in January. Previously, SOM first-year students attended a session during orientation in August of 2020 on the introduction to the health care system and collaborative practice, which included elements of implicit bias. Future sessions are planned on research fundamentals and evidence-based medicine and, during the students' second-year, on quality and leadership in teams, health care economics, policies and structures and in patient safety and high-value care.

"We developed the Health System Science Intersessions to ensure that our students are prepared to function in the increasingly complex health care system of today and in the future so that they can provide optimal, personalized, high value care to patients and populations," said Pamela Ludmer, M.D., M.M.E.L., associate dean for curriculum integration and clinical assistant professor of medicine and pediatrics. "We chose the intersession format to ensure students could focus fully on these critical topics without the distraction of their required biomedical science courses. The content reflects both the framework on health system science from the American Medical Association, as well as a recognition of current events and issues."

For the January intersession on population and social determinants of health, a diverse group of faculty and health care workers were involved in the development and delivery of the content, which included a mix of large and small group sessions, panel discussions and standardized patient encounters -- all conducted virtually. Topics included social and medical history of tuberculosis, ableism, neighborhood and physical environment, hot topics in COVID-19, ethics, and social determinants of health, as well as panels on food instability, maternal and child health and the prison pipeline. [Read full story about Health System Science Series.](#)

Resiliency Curriculum Aimed at Combating Medical Student Burnout Continues to Grow and Evolve

According to numerous studies, medical students are much more likely to experience burn out—emotional exhaustion associated with work-related stress, feelings of detachment toward patients and a low sense of personal accomplishment. In addition, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention reports that medical students are three times more likely to commit suicide than their peers outside medical school. At NYMC, a student-led initiative in 2018 to respond to this national mental health crisis resulted in the introduction of the Resiliency Curriculum. The program, which continues to be organized by SOM students, aims to teach the foundational skills necessary to promote wellbeing and resiliency among the students, so that they are better trained to care for themselves and their colleagues and ultimately better able to serve their patients throughout their careers.



"The path to becoming a physician is a truly wonderful journey, but it is one of long hours, hard work and many emotional experiences. Medical students face significant stressors during their four years, from intense study hours to difficult clinical events, all of which can lead to emotional exhaustion," says Susan Rachlin, M.D., FACR, associate dean for student affairs and associate professor of radiology. "Fostering resilience is a way to mitigate the negative effects of stressors, prevent burnout and help students succeed after difficult experiences. However, resiliency like the rest of their education must be learned and practiced."

"System-level changes like a pass/fail curriculum were initiated at NYMC to help to combat some of the stress and burnout but more needed to be done," says David A. Stern, M.D., co-director of student mental health and wellness and assistant professor of psychiatry. "That's why we gladly supported the student-led initiative of the Resiliency Program."

Initially introduced as part of the curriculum for first-year medical students, the program has continued to grow and evolve over the last few years. Currently, several sessions are offered throughout the year for both first- and second-year medical students and plans are underway to expand the curriculum for third- and fourth-year medical students.

"We know that physician-wellness is an issue that's been long unaddressed. But in the context of practicing as physicians to balance all the demands of 21st century health care, we believe that formally training future doctors how to navigate challenges like stress, conflict and failure is a core component of a holistic medical education," says Tom Kim, SOM Class of 2021, who directs the program. "Much like how we can and need to learn how to take a good history or do a good physical exam, we can and must teach our fellow students how to recognize and handle burnout and other challenges that will inevitably come with being a doctor." [Read full story on Resiliency Curriculum.](#)

Faculty Publications and Updates

NYMC faculty are notable scholars and researchers who are recognized for their accomplishments and published in leading journals across a wide range of health science disciplines. This listing represents just a small sample of recent highlights.

The Department of Ophthalmology highlights the recent accomplishments of **Abha Amin, M.D.**, clinical associate professor of ophthalmology and chief of Complex Anterior Segment Surgery at Westchester Medical Center. According to **Kelly Hutcheson, M.D.**, M.B.A., professor and chair of the Department of Ophthalmology, “Dr. Amin has become the local ‘go-to’ person for other surgeons with complicated cases or unexpected post-operative outcomes. She recently repaired an iris dehiscence that occurred during cataract surgery in a complicated reconstruction, with successful reattachment of the iris.” Dr. Hutcheson and **Sankara Mahesh, M.D.**, assistant professor of ophthalmology, work together as a team to remove developmental cataracts from children and infants. “The very small incision surgery, ultra-high-speed cutting devices and delicate techniques allow for precision surgery with minimal trauma to the developing eye,” says Dr. Hutcheson. “Careful post-operative management, including eye patching and glasses, yields good visual outcomes for these difficult cases.”

Mitchell S. Cairo, M.D., professor of pediatrics, medicine, pathology, microbiology and immunology and of cell biology and anatomy, published [“Haematopoietic progenitor cell transplantation in adults with symptomatic sickle cell disease: the time has arrived”](#) in the *British Journal of Haematology*.

Eric Feldstein, SOM Class of 2021, **Michael G. Kim, M.D.**, instructor of neurosurgery, **Michael E. Tobias, M.D.**, assistant professor of pediatrics and neurosurgery, published [“Porencephalic cyst after endoscopic third ventriculostomy and Ommaya reservoir placement: case report and review of the literature”](#) in *Child’s Nervous System*.

Melissa D. Gans, M.D., assistant professor of pediatrics, published [“COVID-19 infection in 10 common variable immunodeficiency patients in New York City”](#) in the *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology: In Practice*.

Philip Overby, M.D., clinical associate professor of pediatrics and neurology; **Ramandeep Sahni, M.D.**, clinical associate professor of neurology; **Edwin Gulko, M.D.**, assistant professor of radiology; **Gurmeen Kaur, M.D.**, assistant professor of neurology and neurosurgery; **Justin Santarelli, M.D.**, assistant professor of neurosurgery; **Chirag D. Gandhi, M.D.**, professor and chair of the Department of Neurosurgery and professor of neurology and radiology; and **Fawaz Al-Mufti, M.D.**, assistant professor of neurology, neurosurgery and radiology, published [“Cerebral Venous Sinus Thrombosis in COVID-19 Infection: A Case Series and Review of The Literature”](#) in the *Journal of Stroke & Cerebrovascular Diseases*.

Andrew A. Fulvini, Ph.D., research assistant professor of microbiology and immunology; **Jianhua Le, Ph.D.**, research assistant professor of microbiology and immunology; and **Doris J. Bucher, Ph.D.**, associate professor of microbiology and immunology and of pediatrics, published [“HA1 \(Hemagglutinin\) quantitation for influenza A H1N1 and H3N2 high yield reassortant vaccine candidate seed viruses by RP-UPLC”](#) in *Vaccine*.

Marinella D. Galea, M.D., adjunct assistant professor of medicine; **Vincent P. Galea**, SOM Class of 2023; **Stephen Kornfeld, D.O.**, clinical assistant professor of rehabilitation medicine; **Swapna R. Johnson-Kunjukutty, M.D.**, clinical assistant professor of medicine; and **Gang Li, M.D.**, clinical assistant professor of rehabilitation medicine, published [“COVID-19 in spinal cord injury patients at a veterans administration hospital: A case series”](#) in the *Journal of Spinal Cord Medicine*.

Tamar Gomolin, SOM Class of 2021, and **Bijan Safai, M.D., D.S.C.**, professor and chair of the Department of Dermatology, and professor of microbiology and immunology, published [“Scar tissue I wish you saw: Patient expectations regarding scar treatment”](#) in the *Journal of Cosmetic Dermatology*.

Christopher Nabors, M.D., Ph.D., assistant professor of medicine; **Stephen A. Lobo, M.D., M.S.**, clinical assistant professor of medicine; **William H. Frishman, M.D.**, professor of medicine and pharmacology; and **Abhay Dhand, M.D.**, associate professor of medicine, published [“Characteristics and Outcomes of Patients 80 Years and Older Hospitalized With Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)”](#) in *Cardiology in Review*.

Peter Rhee, M.D., M.P.H., professor of surgery; **Kartik Prabhakaran, M.D.**, clinical associate professor of surgery; **Abbas Smiley, M.D., Ph.D.**, research assistant professor of surgery; **Joshua Klein, D.O.**, clinical assistant professor of surgery; **Anthony Policastro, M.D.**, assistant professor of surgery; **Gary G. Lombardo, M.D.**, assistant professor of surgery; and **Rifat Latifi, M.D., FACS, FICS**, professor and chair of the Department of Surgery, published [“Firearm Deaths are Increasing and Endemic in the USA: It is a Problem of Suicides and Not Homicides”](#) in the *World Journal of Surgery*.

Aditya Safaya, M.D., instructor of surgery; **Kalyani Bhuta, M.D.**, assistant professor of surgery; and **Heena Rajdeo, M.D.**, assistant professor of surgery, published [“Considerations for Long-Term Dialysis Access in Patients with Left Ventricular Assist Devices”](#) in *Annals of Vascular Surgery*.