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The Synapse

Students

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8-2022

## **NYMC Synapse Issue 35**

School of Medicine Student Senate, New York Medical College

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# NYMC Synapse

Transmitting news to the students of New York Medical College  
August 2022, Issue 35

The NYMC Synapse is a newsletter published by the NYMC Student Senate for our classmates, faculty, administration and other students at NYMC. We highlight news from student senate, medical education, student affairs, and financial planning, give important updates for each class and highlight big events, outstanding students, and extraordinary professors.

Keep an eye out for these newsletters about once a month and don't miss out on the amazing things that are happening at NYMC!

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## Upcoming Senate Initiatives and Updates:

- **Annual Club Fair will be Thursday, September 15th, 5pm to 7pm in the MEC- NYMC currently has over 75 clubs! Contact Harry at [hharan@student.nymc.edu](mailto:hharan@student.nymc.edu) with any questions.**
- **Stay tuned for "NYMC Community Partnerships" survey and database being developed to increase awareness and access to outreach opportunities**
- **The next monthly Senate Meeting will be occurring on Wednesday, September 14th at 5PM**

## Welcome to the 2022-2023 Academic Year

By Roy Miller

Welcome All New and Returning students!

On behalf of the student senate, please allow me to express our excitement in starting off another great year here at NYMC, and to welcome the Class of 2026 to our community!

NYMC is constantly progressing, remaining adaptable to changing times and pushing ourselves to pursue new initiatives. A major change this year, the transition from the "Legacy" curriculum to our redesigned curriculum! You can check it out below!

Class of 2023, as you approach the finish line and enter interview season we wish you the best of luck and success in this great challenge. We look forward to celebrating all of your accomplishments as you move on from NYMC to make an impact in your respective fields , just as so many alumni have gone on to do.

Class of 2024, we have finally culminated from our pre-clinical education, and have begun roaming the halls of the hospital with confidence and determination. Remember, the experience is what WE make it, and our future patients care depends on the skills and habits we develop now.

Class of 2025, just a year ago you may have wondered, “how will I learn everything?”. You overcame that doubt, learned ways that best complement your studying, and a long lecture or reading assignment is no longer as daunting. As an MS2, you'll dive deep into the pathology of disease. Be investigative and curious.

Class of 2026, you made it! The connections you make with your new colleagues are those of a lifetime. Reach out to one another, because that support is critical to your success as a class. Always know that in addition to your class peers, the thing that distinguishes NYMC is that across all 4 years and in all faculty, you will find someone willing to help, so just ask!

Let's make the 2022-2023 academic year one for the history books. Please reach out to senate for with any suggestions or concerns, we are here for you!

Best,  
Roy Miller  
Student Senate Outreach Coordinator  
[miller28@student.nymc.edu](mailto:miller28@student.nymc.edu)

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## **Curriculum Redesign**

**Creating change is no simple task, especially when the task is to create a drastic change in a long-standing academic curriculum. Through persistence and collaboration, the Curriculum Redesign Steering Committee composed of faculty, administrators, and students have launched the new program starting with the Class of 2026.**



**Year 1**

JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
	TTM IS	FUNDAMENTAL PROCESSES OF LIFE			Break
JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
IS	INTRO TO SYSTEMS: Host Defense/Bugs and Drugs/Heme and Neoplasia		IS	SYSTEMS 1: Brain and Behavior	
Summer					

**Year 2**

JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
Summer	SYSTEMS 2: Cardiorespiratory		IS	SYSTEMS 3: Renal/Reproduction/Endocrine	
Break					
JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
Break	SYSTEMS 4: GI/Derm/MS/Rheum		STEP 1	Transition to Clerkships	Medicine
Elective					

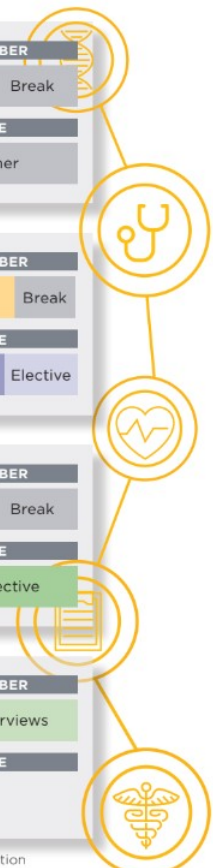
**Year 3**

JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
Flex	Neurology/Phys Med and Rehab	Psychiatry	Elective	IS	ObGyn
Family Medicine					
Break					
JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
Pediatrics		Surgery		TTF	STEP 2
Sub-Internship			Track Elective		

**Year 4**

JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
Track Selective	Track Selective	Elective/Research	Elective/Research	Elective/Research	Interviews
Interviews					
JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
Interviews	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	TTR
GRADUATION					

**KEY** TTM Transition to Medical School TTR Transition to Residency Flex Variable Time For Elective or Vacation  
TTF Transition to Fourth Year ISI-5 Health System Science Intersections Curriculum subject to change.



**Dr. Pamela Ludmer, MD, MMEL, Associate Dean for Curriculum Integration** explains that, "In the new curriculum, we have completely integrated the traditional courses of anatomy, cell biology, biochemistry, physiology, pathophysiology, etc so they no longer exist in isolation. The new courses incorporate the basic foundational principles from these different disciplines, as well as patient care, ethics, nutrition, medical imaging, health system science and more. In year 1, students will take Fundamental Processes of Life, Introduction to Systems: Host Defense/Bugs and Drugs/Heme and Neoplasia, and Systems 1:Brain and Behavior. Year 2 will be Systems 2:Cardiorespiratory, Systems 3: Renal/Repro/Endo, and then Systems 4: GI/MS/Derm/Rheum. Phase 1 will end in February of the M2 year, which means that students will ultimately start clerkships 3 months earlier than previously. "

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## Why Do Residencies Care About Research?

By Timothy Sullivan

Have you wondered why it is important for medical students to complete research projects for residency? Is this just an arbitrary way to separate applicants from the rest of the pack? It may seem that way when you hear from a dermatologist that a competitive dermatology applicant should have roughly 50 publications by the time they apply to a program (this is real advice I heard in my M1 year). I am sure that somewhere there is a medical

student that has accrued that many publications, but that number is unrealistic to achieve, even if you decide to take a research year.

But do not fear: according to an NIH published paper in 2021, the average student graduates medical school with 5.8 publications. This number includes abstracts, poster presentations, and journal publications. Of course you must keep in mind that this number is an average, but this is good news for students who feel an overwhelming pressure to crank out 20+ publications.

Still, the question remains: why is research important for residency? Through my two years at NYMC, I have heard three main reasons why this is the case:

1. **Doing research for a specific specialty shows interest in that specialty.** For example, if you love neurosurgery and find yourself doing a Summer Research Program and taking a research year in neurosurgery, a neurosurgery residency program will be able to understand that you have a strong interest in their specialty. The time and effort you put in shows that you are serious about becoming a neurosurgeon, and it would be unlikely that you would deviate from that path.
2. **Name recognition is very important for all organizations, especially residency programs.** Recruiting strong research-oriented physicians from medical school will increase the chances that those physicians will continue their research in residency. Programs like to maintain a strong research ethic because it is important for their accreditation and name recognition at conferences. One of the best ways to get your name out there is to produce work that is admired in academic journals and in prestigious conferences. This will further result in grants and more funding going to that program for future use. It also bolsters the recruitment of future research-oriented physicians to that program, which will ideally continue the success of the program.
3. **Last but possibly the most important: research ensures that a specialty does not go stagnant.** Think about all the advancements that have been made in medicine over the last decade. Countless new drugs and procedure techniques have been invented to help physicians combat illnesses and injuries in ways never thought possible. Research in residency helps to further clinical medicine by determining the most optimal way to treat conditions. By comparing surgical techniques or the efficacy of drugs in specific diseases, valuable information is formed that will help to inform treatment decisions for years to come. Residency programs want to be on the cutting edge of this research to make sure their specialty stays relevant.

As you can see, research requirements that residency programs have are not arbitrary benchmarks, but useful measurements for the success of the student and the residency program. While it may not seem like it, the research you accomplish in medical school is setting the foundation for you to be successful in residency. If you find yourself interested in a particular competitive specialty, it is never too late to build your research resume to impress the residency directors.

If you have been inspired by this article, the Specialty Fair, or otherwise want to investigate our complicated biologic mechanisms, and are interested in finding a project, do it! The sooner you get involved, the more time you have to figure out what projects you are interested in. There are plenty of faculty at NYMC and WMC who are willing to take on medical students in their labs or in their clinics to work on a project. There are also a plethora of research opportunities that can be found at other institutions that can help to set you up for future success as well. It may seem awkward approaching people who you have never met and asking to work on projects with them, but the benefits outweigh the risks. It is very rewarding to have the opportunity to work with world-class scientists or physicians on projects and those meaningful connections will serve you well come time for residency. Your next opportunity is only an email or phone call away.

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# A Conversation with NYMC's Mathias E. Palmer, MD '21

By Chris Hoke

Dr. Mathias Palmer, NYMC '21, was extremely involved within the NYMC community. From the organization of NYMC volunteerism at the height of the pandemic, all the way to technical support for several school events, Dr. Palmer is an embodiment of what makes NYMC great. Please enjoy this interview which took place a month prior to graduation.

*Where are you calling in from and also while we're at it where are you from originally?*

Mathias: I'm currently in Washington at home before we officially close out the year.

*Oh awesome has your family always been in Washington?*

Mathias: Yeah I actually grew up in the house that my grandparents built, so it's a nice little legacy and I lived there until I went to college.

*Incredible! Any idea on where they were before that?*

Mathias: That's actually something I've been trying to figure out with my family now. My family is from a little bit of everywhere; some of my family is from North Dakota, some of them are from Alaska, and some I have no idea where they're from. It's weird being on the east coast where it seems everyone knows their family heritage. On the west coast, it's kind of like you just are who you are. So I know on my grandmothers side my cousins did some tracking and we have family from the civil war on the Union side and we have immigration paperwork from the 1700s so we're trying to track down everything but we shall see.

*We don't even need to jump into the medicine stuff just yet, tell me more about what it was like growing up?*

Mathias: Sure! So I grew up in a pretty small tight knit family. I have one younger sister. My dad's an electrician so I was supposed to be a third generation electrician (my grandfather was also an electrician) but I decided to be the rebel and go to college instead. My mom is a lunch lady for an elementary school about a mile from where I grew up. So, first in my family to go to college, first in my family to go into medicine.

*Wow. So when did you decide to go into medicine?*

Mathias: So growing up basically like "A Little House on the Prairie" (but a 2018 version), I always had an interest in the sciences. First, I thought I wanted to go into Zoology. I always liked being outdoors, and then reality hit in about 6th or 7th grade and I realized that's not really what I want to do, I like people. So starting in 7th grade, I decided I wanted to go into medicine and fortunately that path has turned out alright.

*Where did you go to undergrad?*

Mathias: I went to Whitman College which is a very small liberal arts college in Washington. It's pretty much in the middle of nowhere, but for me it was a wonderful experience. It was similar to New York Med in that there was a lot of support from the faculty and the administration.

*And what did you study?*

Mathias: Lets see, I have to remember... It was biophysics, biochemistry and molecular biology. It was basically a biochemistry major with a couple little flourishes on it haha. It fit really well with being premed because it basically encompassed all of those classes and had the bonus of being fun to say.

*That seems intense! I love the nonchalant take on those super difficult subjects.*

Mathias: Definitely. The hardest class to date I have ever taken was my bio-physics course. I remember having to spend 8-12 hours on just answering one single math problem. I remember one problem where we had to prove how long it would take milk to separate in the fridge vs. at room temperature... THE MOST DRY QUESTIONS EVER.

*Do you have any hobbies for when you're trying to get away from running the show here at NYMC?*

Mathias: Yeah, I really have an interest in music and sound/video work. I played the french horn starting in 6th grade, and played it all the way till the end of college. Coming to med school, I left my instrument behind to move across the country and I got more involved in the recording/mixing/writing of music. In college, I did all of our live sound production so I was the person on the soundboard doing all the live mixing and working with the band which is pretty great and I continued that in med school. So when I'm not studying medicine, often I can be found writing music, or if I had my way, going to nightclubs and doing all the soundboards in the background. (Obviously here I had to tap in and pick his brain because I love music! At the end of the talk he showed me an awesome picture of a live jam session he held at his house a couple of weeks before COVID hit!)

*You are going to Mayo Clinic for residency! Congratulations!*

Mathias: I feel so blessed and so fortunate. I could never imagine that I'd have the opportunity to be going to my number one program. I remember having conversations with people my first year of medical school when asked "Where would you go if you could pick anywhere in the country for residency?" and Mayo Clinic has always been a hopeful dream so I can't express how incredibly fortunate I feel.

*This is our first time having a 1-on-1 conversation but I can say without a doubt in my mind that it is well deserved. What will you be studying?*

Mathias: I will be doing Internal Medicine and then my plan is to go into Hematology and Oncology.

*Now, I'm no expert, but I think Mayo should set you up nicely for fellowship opportunities. Do you see yourself coming back to the NYMC community at some point in the future, maybe even in a teaching role?*

Mathias: I'm actually listed as faculty for Immunology, so next year you will see me in the Immunology course (taken M2 year. I give a review lecture at the end, and I made 10 supplemental animations for the course. We don't know if the course will be virtual or in person but Dr. Geliebter has already expressed that he would like for me to be doing that for the foreseeable future. So yes, I will be around.

*I love it, big win for NYMC! What advice would you give to students reading this?*

Mathias: I think that's a tough question because I think there's very little advice that is universal to everyone. If I had a piece of advice I suppose it would be, for one, to give it everything you have in everything you do and also that it's often the smallest actions that make the biggest differences. And so we often overlook the value of the tiny things in life, [for instance] how we greet someone, remembering the details about a conversation you had with someone the last time you spoke. So my advice universally would be to take a second and try to pick up on the small nuances of life that make it really enjoyable for everyone and try to bring those small nuanced parts of life into your everyday interactions through friendships, your family and especially in the clinic.

And shoot your shot, go for your dreams! If an opportunity doesn't exist somewhere and you want it to exist, make it happen. I don't believe that there's many closed doors out there, I think sometimes it just takes some knocking on those doors and other times pounding and breaking down the doors. But if you have a dream, make it happen.

*Wow that was great. I had follow up questions but I think you really nailed down the essence of what I was trying to get into. I guess the last question I have, so I'm not taking up too much of your time, would be a personal one from me. Throughout medical school, as I sought leadership opportunities, I often found myself searching for the right things to say and the right things to do, but I'm not really positive on how to be the best leader. You touched on it in the last question but do you have any follow up for me?*

Mathias: I think my biggest follow up and what I try to encourage people to do [stems from] how do you become a leader if you've never had a leadership role before? And this question can come up in the clinic, still as leadership, but it can be framed as how do you become a good teacher if you've never taught before? How do you become a good clinician if you've never been a clinician before? And at the bottom line at some point you have to start. And so the concern of never having done it before is completely valid in every way, shape and form. But I think recognizing that the only way to get better at it and the only way to really improve on it is to take the chance and go for it. I think a lot of us are held back not by our inadequacies or our inabilities but



[rather] our fear of failing and our fear of being inadequate. And being a leader is recognizing where you have assets to offer and sometimes where those assets can help in other ways. So my advice for someone who wants to be in a leadership role is first don't be afraid to put yourself in a role of leadership. And second, that being a leader is practicing and recognizing how you can best help. Sometimes that's taking the front center stage and other times the best leaders are those that learn how to take a step back and recognize when to let someone else step into a role. So if you want to get involved, take a chance, find something you're passionate about and start getting involved.

With COVID I feel like I did that in a lot of ways where I had some leadership experience but I had never coordinated students in a clinical setting, coordinated with hospitals and definitely never did any of the medical legal stuff. But this last year with COVID as soon as we were pulled out of the clinic and I recognized that students were wanting to volunteer, I reached out to all the clubs involved and all the administration in the hospital sites and asked "can I set up a centralized system of volunteering? Our school doesn't have a system. Can I make it happen?" and I took that chance and I'm glad I did. It was a huge learning experience but it's terrifying stepping up and trying to make a change. So for students who want to get involved, if you see somewhere that needs to have improvement, really put yourself in there and try to make that improvement.

- Fin -

*After a few tears and goosebumps I think that was a great conversation. I think anyone reading this even outside of medical school and the NYMC community can benefit from that advice.*

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## **Professionals of NYMC Awards, Spring 2022**

The Peer 2 Peer (P2P) Committee is excited to announce the latest winners of the "Professionals of NYMC" Award. This spring, students were eager to recognize their peers for their contributions to the community - we received many nominations from members of all class years! We want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who was nominated for working hard to make the NYMC community an even better place, and uplifting their peers while doing so. The winners of the Spring 2022 Professionals of NYMC Award are:

### ***Class of 2022: Jordana Gross***

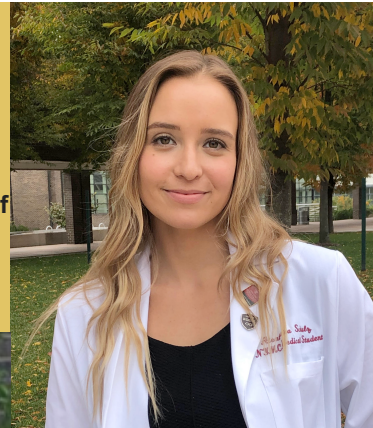
"When Jordana walks into the room, she instantly brings a smile to your face. She is a loving and caring friend and has been there for me in multiple instances when I needed someone to talk to. She is a role model of a professional, always treating everyone with the utmost respect and dignity. She has the ability to instantaneously connect to a person - peer, patient, or supervisor - that is both welcoming and reassuring. Not only is she a fantastic medical student and friend, but she is also very passionate about advocacy and changing the face of medicine for the better through her work on the longitudinal disabilities awareness and inclusion curriculum. She has truly made my medical school experience a memorable one, and I have no doubt that she will be an exceptional pediatrician and friend for life."

### ***Class of 2023: Ali Schulz***

"Ali truly cares about the well-being and success of those around her. As Co-Chair of the Liaison Committee this past year, she devoted much of her time to working with classmates and helping to improve their clerkship experiences and the broader clinical education at NYMC. In this role, Ali was often placed in difficult situations but did a fantastic job of navigating them with tactfulness and grace. Her involvement in Liaison Committee is consistent with her continual effort to give a voice to her peers in the larger context of the medical field even

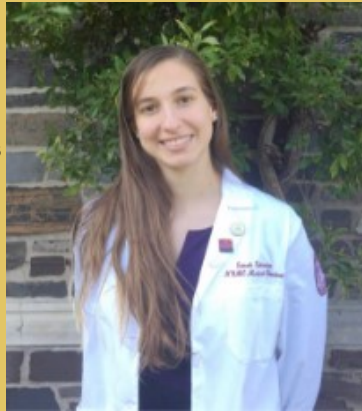


from the outset of medical school, as she has held leadership positions in the NYMC AMA Chapter and participated in Medical Society of the State of New York. I could go on and on about Ali's professional accomplishments, but personally I think what makes her special is that she is willing to drop everything to come to the aid of a friend in need, even when the rigors of medical school make that tough. For these reasons, Ali deserves to be recognized as a true 'Professional of NYMC.'"



***Class of 2024: Sarah Solomon***

"Sarah worked extremely hard as co-president of NYMC Donate Life Club; so far this year, Sarah has spearheaded 4 drives, with a total of 235 units of blood donated! Sarah communicates with our contact at New York Blood Center and is always incredibly professional, informative, and organized in her communications. Furthermore, she has been training me as her replacement for next year, and she is so warm and passionate about the job! She is a great teacher and has also



helped me out many times during my M1 year as a mentor, which I really appreciate. Sarah has put a lot of work into helping the NYMC and greater Westchester community, and she deserves to be recognized for it! In addition, although she has her own stress of coursework and studying to keep up with, she is always thoughtful and willing to help fellow students with questions and studying. She puts others first, and makes others feel ensured that they're getting the help they need. Sarah is an incredible teacher and friend."

***Class of 2025: Timothy Klufas***

"I have never met someone that works so hard and is so willing and eager to help those around him succeed. Whenever I had Anatomy, Biochemistry, Physiology, or Neurology questions, it didn't matter what time of the day or night it was, he would respond to me promptly with detailed explanations. He often shares helpful tips and mnemonics to help others memorize concepts, and hosts review sessions with groups of students to help everyone study. For these reasons, he has been an inspiration to me, and I am very thankful for all that he has done for me, even during the most stressful parts of the school year."



P2P would also like to recognize the following students who were nominated for the award:

**Class of 2022:** Menachem Greenberg, Shloimy Gold, Justine Hung, Isidora Monteparo, Amanda Scudder

**Class of 2023:** Bruno Alonso, Deepika Dhawan, Rosalind Dick-Godfrey, Eliana Jacobson, Christopher Katchis, Savannah Kumar, Victoria Levy, Antonio Lobao, Mariah Fontanez-Lutsky, Lara Mattei, Christopher McNeill, Anisha Mahat, Emanuel Mordechaev, Justin Nathan, Forouhid Peyvandi, Faria Rahman, Shravya Raju, Ariel Sasson, Joshua Shin, Kedar Trivedi, Grigori Vaserman

**Class of 2024:** Adrienne Bielawski, David Bitterman, Joon Chung, Oliver Gonzalez, Moe Hakim, Chris Hoke, Margot Lurie, Terry Nguyen, Talia Segal, Gurvinder Singh, Eris Spirollari, Tim Sullivan, Katie Yang, Alice Zhang

**Class of 2025:** Shawn Afvari, David Collet, Michaela Dickson, Lauren Grobois, Harry Haran, Miriam Katz, Maryia Kazlouskaya, Joshua Lee, Sarah Rubin

**Congratulations to all of the winners and nominees; thank you for all that you do to enrich our community! Additionally, thank you to those who took the time to nominate and recognize the outstanding efforts of your peers.**

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