

UConn HEALTH

HEALTH CAREER
OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

Health Professions

Aetna HPPI Pipeline

Partnership Initiative

December 2019



Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs

Read about the Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative and Pipeline Programs at:

health.uconn.edu/hcop



A message from...

Sharon M. Gordon, D.D.S., M.P.H., Ph.D.

Dean, UConn School of Dental Medicine

Congratulations on another year of accomplishments! The School of Dental Medicine enjoys its strong partnership in the many rich opportunities offered through the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs and the Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative (Aetna HPPI) Pipeline. These pipeline programs enable us to enrich our applicant pool and empower underrepresented minorities to pursue dental school.

UConn Health's Health Career Opportunity Programs serve as a model for professional schools to emulate. In fact, there are few dental schools that directly participate with similar pipeline programs. In order for our profession to represent the patients we treat, we need to inspire students to unlock their potential and pursue a career in the health care field. The Health Career Opportunity Programs and the Aetna HPPI Pipeline programs are very successful in meeting the challenge.

These programs are made possible by the talent of faculty, staff, and mentors who serve as the backbone of this initiative. I know firsthand the importance of such opportunities. I was a first generation college student. As part of a vocational tech program in high school, I worked at a dentist office. That experience opened my mind to the possibility of a career in dentistry. The encouragement of the dentist, Dr. Johnson, led me to join the pre-health society in college, and that experience helped me to prepare to apply and become accepted to dental school. Without that and other opportunities, I would not have accomplished my dream of being a dentist. The same can be said for the many students who have successfully completed the pipeline program and graduated as health care professionals.

The students in the program never fail to inspire me. They make tremendous sacrifices—during the summer and on weekends—in pursuit of reaching their professional goals and following their passions. This level of dedication and intellectual curiosity at such a young age

is not only admirable, but a surefire way to pave a road to success.

Thank you for allowing the UConn School of Dental Medicine to be a strong partner of the program. I look forward to seeing some of the program's brightest and best in the School of Dental Medicine clinics!



Welcome from...

Bruce T. Liang, M.D., FACC

Dean of UConn School of Medicine

Director of the Pat and Jim Calhoun Cardiology Center

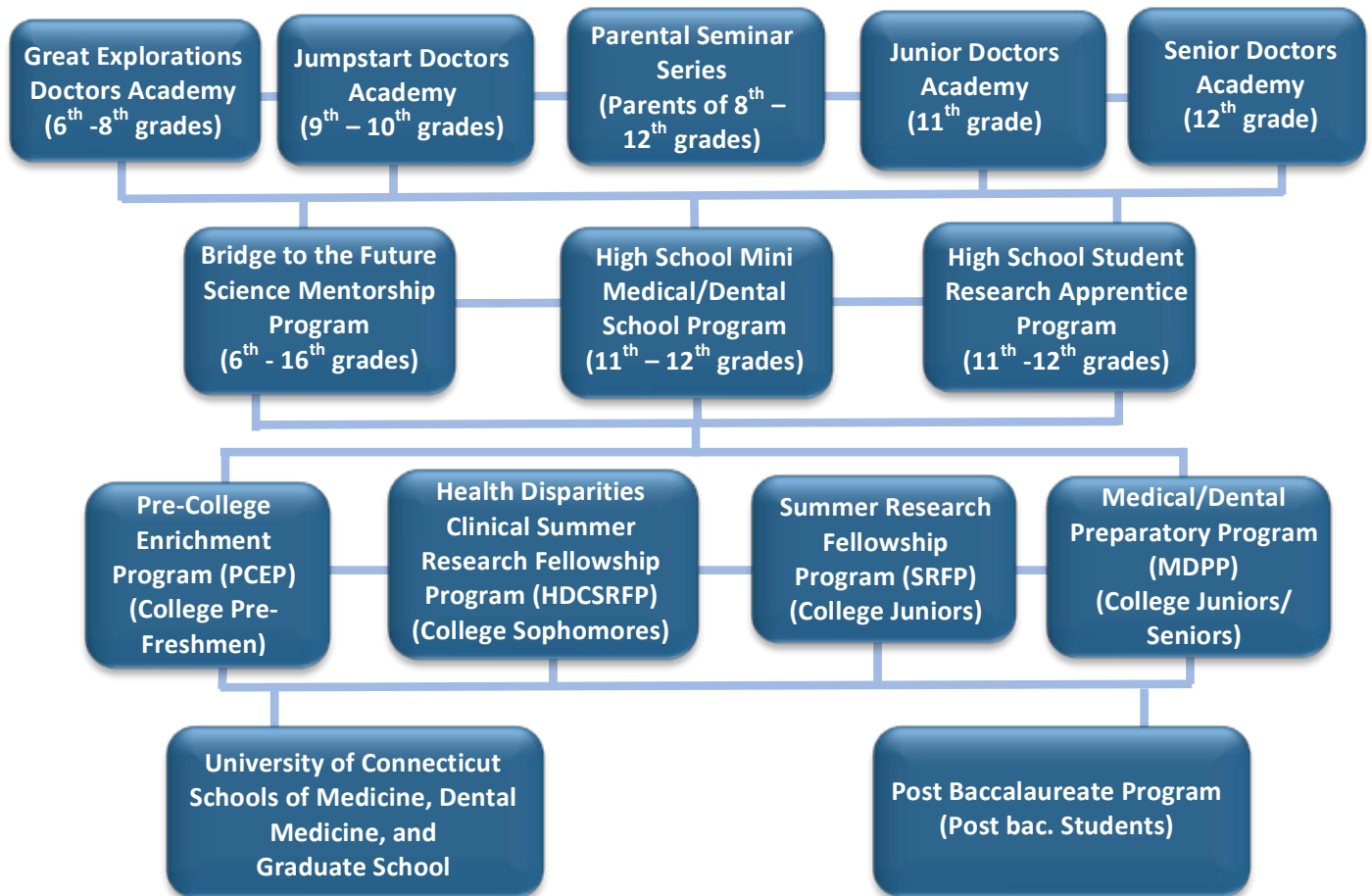
Ray Neag Distinguished Professor of Cardiovascular Biology and Medicine

I am so proud that the Health Career Opportunity Programs call UConn Health home including our UConn School of Medicine. Founding Director Dr. Marja Hurley and her team's nearly two decades of efforts, along with the generous support of the Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative, have been truly incredible and transformative for the youth of Connecticut and the future of medicine.

These programs have been critical in getting more young people from across the state, of all ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, interested in medicine and science and to go on to enter the health professions. It has served as a continuous pipeline for middle school, high school, and college students of diverse backgrounds to realize their dream of becoming future doctors, dentists and health professionals. In fact, of the nearly 900 youth from the state's elementary, high school and colleges participating in the programs since 1996, more than 500 have successfully gone on to enter medical, dental school, or other health profession schools. For our medical school's Class of 2019 alone, 66% of the African American graduating students participated in one or more of the programs.

Also as a result of the program's efforts, this year U.S. News & World Report recognized UConn School of Medicine as one of the 10 medical schools nationwide with the most African American students. Thanks to Dr. Hurley, while many medical schools struggle to create a diverse student body, UConn has been leading the way forward with significant efforts and successful strides. This has been very good recognition for our UConn School of Medicine, and is an excellent outcome from the work done by Dr. Hurley, her Aetna HPPI programs, and our medical school.

Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative Pipeline





Welcome from...

Marja Hurley, M.D.

Professor of Medicine and Orthopaedic Surgery

Associate Dean of Health Career Opportunity Programs

Founding Director of Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative

UConn Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine

This has been another eventful and highly successful year for the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs and its Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative Programs (Aetna HPPI). The department is an integral part of the Schools of Medicine, Dental Medicine and Graduate educational community at UConn Health. The Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine are actively committed to the recruitment, retention and graduation of diverse medical and dental students who are capable of providing culturally competent health care. Additionally, the Biomedical Science Graduate Program is also committed to supporting graduate students from diverse backgrounds who will discover the medical cures of tomorrow.

The department continues to support currently enrolled medical, dental and graduate students of diverse backgrounds and has expanded its programs for middle school, high school and college students to realize their dreams of becoming health professionals. The Aetna HPPI programs and activities are designed, coordinated and implemented through this department. They have proven to be top-notch because the participants in the programs have successfully completed their undergraduate degrees and have actualized their goals of entering medical, dental or graduate school. It is for this reason that the programs and activities sponsored through the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs are recognized as a national model. To date, we have accomplished our goals and continue to develop new programs and fine-tune existing ones. We had 160 middle school, high school and college students participating in our 2019 summer programs sponsored by the department through the Aetna HPPI. During the 2019-2020 academic year, we anticipate approximately 440 students participating in our after-school, partner high school, Aetna HPPI Saturday Academy and college programs. I am gratified that the community recognizes the importance of these programs in promoting diversity in the health

professions and am delighted that State Representative Pat Wilson Pheanious served as our keynote speaker at the 2018-2019 Academic Year Closing and Recognition Ceremony. Dr. Francis Archambault, Jr., professor emeritus at UConn and chair of the Academic Affairs Committee at UConn Health served as our keynote speaker at the closing ceremony of our 2019 summer programs. Dr. Tremane Bartley, orthodontist at Bridgeport Braces, Bridgeport, Connecticut and UConn School of Dental Medicine Class of 2009 graduate, served as our dental alumnus speaker at the summer closing ceremony.

This year, our graduating seniors participating in the high school Aetna HPPI Doctors Academy were accepted into college. Congratulations to all the students for their hard work. I also offer special congratulations to the Health Career Opportunity Programs scholars in the School of Medicine (SOM) and School of Dental Medicine (SODM) graduating class of 2019. In the SOM, 16% of the graduating class are Health Career Opportunity Programs scholars, while 18% of the graduating class in the SODM are Health Career Opportunity Programs scholars. We are also proud that 62% of the underrepresented students currently enrolled in the SOM are Aetna HPPI pipeline students, and 47% of the underrepresented students currently enrolled in the SODM are Aetna HPPI pipeline students.

I thank our faculty, staff, and students at UConn Health and partner institutions for their dedication and support. Also special thanks to our funders including the John and Valerie Rowe Health Professions Scholars Program Endowment Fund that support some of our existing programmatic initiatives.



A note from...

Granville Wrensford, Ph.D.

Assistant Dean and Associate Director

Health Career Opportunity Programs

UConn Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine

This has been another exciting year with the vast array of programs and activities that the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs sponsors. Interest among students, parents and educators alike continues to be strong. We have visited many middle and high schools as well as colleges and universities throughout the state of Connecticut. We have also visited colleges in Rhode Island, Washington D.C., Virginia, Alabama, and Georgia and participated in national recruitment efforts such as the Minority Recruitment Fair at the annual meeting of the Association of American Medical Colleges.

This past year, we also strengthened our collaboration with the Connecticut Science Center. Through the organi-

zation of the Advancement Program Manager, Amy Sailor, a group of our Doctors Academy students participated in a series of hands-on activities at the center. This allowed our students to obtain a more comprehensive and focused experience beyond the regular exhibits at the center.

It pleases me to see such a large number of students excited about the health sciences and careers in the health professions. I am grateful to the many individuals who have contributed to the success of the programs, which can be seen at various stages of the pipeline. At the middle and high school levels, we have seen a high persistence rate from one grade to the next. The graduating high school seniors have consistently performed at a higher level on the SAT compared to other students in the Hartford school district. Each year all of the graduating seniors have been accepted and matriculated in college. Currently, there are several students enrolled in medical and dental school who have participated in our pipeline programs.

As we prepare for another year, I must acknowledge the parents, guardians and students of the programs for their firm commitment. A special thank you to the department's staff, faculty, students, and other professionals here at UConn Health and the larger community who have volunteered their time to mentor and interact with the participants in our programs.



Greetings from...

Kerry-Ann Stewart, Ph.D.

Assistant Director of Health Career Opportunity Programs

Assistant Professor of Public Health Sciences

UConn Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine

It has been a pleasure serving as assistant director for the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs. The community that the department has built is one that will continue to assist students from diverse backgrounds who aspire to be health professionals. It is truly gratifying to observe the growth and development of the students as they transition to the next level of their education. It has been extremely rewarding to see the 2019 graduates of the Senior Doctors Academy and participants of the Pre-College Enrichment Program embark on a new phase of their academic journey as college freshmen. I am also proud of our college participants who have been accepted to the

Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine. I always look forward each year to welcoming the first-year medical and dental class as well as congratulating the fourth-year students as they graduate and go on to residency or practice.

This year, we continued to strengthen the pipeline by expanding our collaborations and increasing our presence at health professions meetings and science events. The department's presence at regional and national conferences have been instrumental in recruiting talented students to UConn Health. Additionally, our participation at the Association of American Medical Colleges' Northeast Group on Student Affairs Spring Meeting has also allowed other professionals in academic medicine to learn more about the Aetna HPPI pipeline.

This year has been very enriching, and I am excited about the future of our pipeline students. Our enrichment programs continue to promote strong connections to students throughout Connecticut and across the US. I thank the UConn Health community for its unwavering support of these programs. I would especially like to thank our program faculty and instructors, medical and dental student mentors, community partners, and research preceptors.

Congratulations to...

Olajide Abiola, M.D.

Physician, Medical Student, Mentor



Dr. Olajide Abiola graduated from UConn School of Medicine in May 2019.

Dr. Abiola is currently training at Stony Brook Teaching Hospitals in Stony Brook, New York. His future career goals include completing a neuro-oncology fellowship following his residency program and working in an academic institution

where he can treat patients with various neurological disorders. In doing so, he also plans to pursue his research interest in diffuse gliomas, as well as train the next generation of neurosurgeons.

Dr. Abiola knew that he wanted to pursue a career in medicine since the age of 12. His inspiration for this career grew from his love of the sciences and further matured through the encouragement of his family who supported his interest from an early age by giving him the book, *Gifted Hands*. Dr. Abiola further explains that this story “encouraged me to pursue a profession that would afford me the ability to use my skills in treating others”.

After graduating from Christian Heritage School in Trumbull, Connecticut in 2009, Dr. Abiola enrolled at UConn, Storrs for his undergraduate studies. He went on to graduate from UConn in 2013 with a Bachelor of Science in biology. While preparing for medical school during his senior year at UConn, he was introduced to the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs through a fellow classmate. He decided to apply for the Medical/Dental Preparatory Program the following application cycle. “It was an amazing opportunity that provided me with the environment, tools, and support I needed to both excel on the MCAT and successfully apply for medical school”, says Dr. Abiola.

During his time at UConn School of Medicine, he continued to be involved with Health Career Opportunity Programs, particularly as a co-mentor for the Jumpstart 9 Doctors Academy during the 2014-2015 academic year. He describes preparing weekly hour long curriculums ranging from enriching discussions on current events to career counselling and college preparation with Dr. Franklin Sylvester as his most fulfilling experience through the department. “It was my most challenging yet rewarding experience throughout my involvement with Health Career Opportunity Programs that provided many memora-

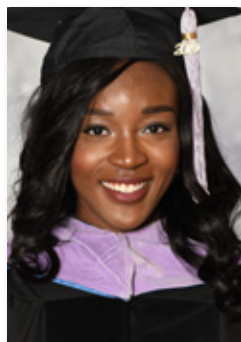
ble one-on-one mentorship opportunities with the students under our tutelage”, states Dr. Abiola.

For the next generation of health professionals, Dr. Abiola encourages them to: a) shadow as much as possible, as it is important to have realistic expectations for what a career in medicine looks like. Reach out to health professionals, and if you have difficulty finding opportunities, be persistent! b) volunteer for causes you believe as it will help you develop an attitude of service and altruism, which are integral to becoming a compassionate health care professional. c) excel in your academic studies and participate in extracurricular activities that excite you. d) reflect on why you would like to pursue a career in medicine as knowing your WHY will keep you motivated even through difficult times.

Congratulations to...

Chidera Amilo, D.M.D.

Dentist, Dental Student, Mentor



Dr. Chidera Amilo graduated from UConn School of Dental Medicine in May 2019.

During her high school years, Dr. Amilo attended the School of the Holy Child, in Rye, New York. After graduating in 2010, she came to Storrs, Connecticut to attend UConn where she majored in Molecular and Cell Biology and minored in Psychology.

In 2014, Dr. Amilo graduated from UConn with a Bachelor of Science degree.

Dr. Amilo knew from an early age that she was interested in pursuing a health career. She mentioned that the seed to pursue a dental career was initially planted her freshman year when she attended a presentation by Dr. Sarita Arteaga, Dr. Granville Wrensford, and a panel of students from UConn Health; but it took her a couple more years until her junior year to really decide that this was the career path for her. During her sophomore and junior years of college, Dr. Amilo also enjoyed the experience shadowing a general dentist in White Plains, New York, which furthered her interest in becoming a dentist. “I chose dentistry because I really liked that it was so procedural and would allow me to mix my love of science with art”, says Dr. Amilo.

The summer before starting dental school, Dr. Amilo participated in the Medical/Dental Preparatory Program Track II-Basic Medical Sciences (BMS) Program. She saw it as the perfect transition from doing an enrichment year of gaining more clinical exposure to doing more of the academic course load of the first year dental curriculum.

Not only was Dr. Amilo involved with Health Career Opportunity Programs through her participation in the BMS Program, but she also mentored high school students in the Doctors Academy on Saturdays for three academic years while in dental school. Dr. Amilo states, “I really enjoyed mentoring the high school students in the Saturday Academy. I started mentoring in the program my first year with the 10th grade class (shout out to the class of 2018!). It was amazing to see how much they had grown as young men and women and how much I had grown as a mentor during our three years together and being able to watch them graduate from high school was truly special.”

Since graduating from UConn School of Dental Medicine, Dr. Amilo is spending a year in a general practice residency at Jacobi Medical Center/ North Bronx Health Care Network in the Bronx, New York. Through this residency program, she is excited to learn a broad range of procedures and to learn about different types of dental cases. She plans to take full advantage of all the opportunities presented to her during her residency program. For the future, Dr. Amilo can see herself practicing in a traditional private practice setting or in a community health center/hospital based setting or a combination of both. She has also considered becoming involved in academia at some point in her career. She is excited about what the future holds.

Dr. Amilo leaves the following words of advice and encouragement to the younger generation of students interested in health professions: “[Do not] focus too much on the small stuff and work on developing good habits early such as learning discipline and how to study effectively. Never be afraid to seek out mentorship/guidance, utilize your resources and be your own advocate. Things will inevitably get tough but, don’t forget to reflect on how far you’ve come; you’re closer to your goals today than you were yesterday.”

Congratulations to...

Lauren Branche-James, M.D., M.P.H.

Physician, Medical Student, Graduate Student, Mentor



Dr. Lauren Branche-James graduated from UConn School of Medicine in May 2019 with dual degrees of Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) and Master of Public Health (MPH).

After graduating from New Rochelle High School in New Rochelle, New York in 2006, Dr. Branche-James enrolled at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts. She graduated

in 2010 with a Bachelor of Science in Clinical Psychology. Additionally, she attended Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston, Massachusetts where she earned a Master degree in Biomedical Sciences in 2012.

In some ways Dr. Branche-James always knew she was destined to become a physician. She believes her inspiration came from learning that her great grandfather, Dr. George Clayton Branche Sr. was one of the first African American psychiatrists in the country. Additionally her grandfather, Dr. Matthew Branche Sr. was also a surgeon “with a great reputation among the [African American] community in New York as a public servant often helping others in need even if it meant not being paid for the work he did”, states Dr. Branche-James.

As a child growing up, Dr. Branche-James’s favorite toy was a small doctor’s bag with accompanying medical instruments. It was not until high school that she was certain that she wanted to pursue a medical degree. Growing up she saw disparities within health and knew she wanted to dedicate her life to doing something about it. She also has a love for science and is fascinated by the human mind and body. She explains, “I figured that if I could help marginalized populations achieve health than everything else would fall into place. For me medicine was the perfect way to combine my love of science and my love for people with my desire to mend the social and economic injustices faced by marginalized populations.”

As a physician, Dr. Branche-James also wants to use her MPH degree to work towards the elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities, which she states, will take a multifaceted systemic approach. Dr. Branche-James mentioned that, “An MPH will allow me to tailor my future career to be able to work toward health equity from all necessary angles.”

Currently, Dr. Branche-James is continuing her training at UConn School of Medicine as a resident in Obstetrics & Gynecology. She hopes to become a generalist, and in addition to practicing clinically she would like to teach at a medical school and conduct public health research and policy work specifically in the field of racial and ethnic health disparities.

During her first year of medical school, Dr. Branche-James was a mentor for the Aetna HPPI Doctors Academy. She describes this experience by stating, “Being able to develop my own mentorship curriculum for my class of students was an enlightening and fulfilling experience. I saw myself in each of my students and took very seriously my opportunity and responsibility to nurture their interest in medicine and their drive to be successful in life. It

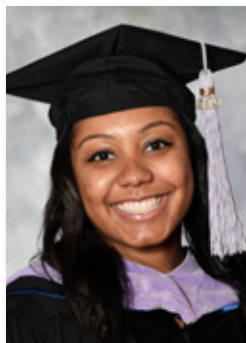
was a great experience to be able to provide support and share my life lessons with them so early in their educational journey.”

When asked what words of advice and encouragement would you like to leave to the younger generation of students interested in the health professions, Dr. Branche-James states: “My mother always told me ‘where there is a will there is a way’. I live my life by this quote. If you are interested in health professions as long as you are willing to put in the work you WILL be able to accomplish that goal. Remember that not everyone’s path to health professions is the same and your journey may be complicated by adversity but if you are sure of your ultimate goal you can find a way to make it a reality. Do not let anyone or anything make you believe that you are not strong enough to succeed. Believe in yourself and use all of the resources available to you.”

Congratulations to...

Candice Logan, D.M.D.

Dentist, Dental Student, Mentor



Dr. Candice Logan graduated from UConn School of Dental Medicine in May 2019.

Dr. Logan grew up in Michigan, where she graduated from Detroit Country Day School in Beverly Hills in May 2011. After high school, she attended George Washington University in Washington DC where she took dental school prerequisites as well as courses in business administration. Dr. Logan graduated in May 2015 with a Bachelor of Business Administration.

Currently, Dr. Logan is attending the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor for its orthodontic training program. This is a 3-year combined program with the dental school and the graduate school including clinical work and a research project. Upon completion of the program, she will also receive a Master degree.

Dr. Logan has known that she’s wanted to be an orthodontist since the age of 15 after she spent a few summers working in her orthodontist’s office. There she learned how to take impressions, develop x-rays, apply and remove brackets, and she learned about the different appliances for various cases. This experience was shortly after her own orthodontic treatment was completed and she expressed her interest in this field to her orthodontist. Her mother

also saw her potential for this career and encouraged her to look for opportunities to shadow dentists. Dr. Logan recounts, “This hands-on experience under the direction of an African American woman orthodontist really solidified my decision to go into orthodontics.”

While in college, Dr. Logan prepared for a career in orthodontics by majoring in business administration in preparation for owning and operating an orthodontics practice. She believes that the blend of her science courses and business courses helped her to be a well-rounded candidate for dental school. In addition to her academic studies in college, Dr. Logan also prepared for a dental career by participating in the Health Career Opportunity Programs pipeline summer enrichment programs. In the summer of 2013, she participated in the Summer Research Fellowship Program and came back to UConn Health the following summer in 2014 to prepare for the Dental Admission Test (DAT) through the Medical/Dental Preparatory Program. Dr. Logan states, “Because of the invaluable experience and resources I gained through these programs, I made it a point to give back during my dental education at UConn in some way.” She had certainly done this in numerous ways, including being a mentor for the Aetna HPPI Doctors Academy. She describes this as one of her best experiences through Health Career Opportunity Programs, stating, “I had the opportunity to mentor impressionable young minds who were interested in health care professions and expose them to a wide variety of possibilities to pursue within health care.”

Through her mentorship and guidance, Dr. Logan advises the next generation of aspiring health professionals not to compare themselves to others. She further states, “Your biggest competition is who you were yesterday and you should always strive to improve yourself for your own gratification. Everybody’s journey is different and there is no right path to achieving your dreams. Never give up! There will be challenges along the way but it’s important to remain resilient and focused and know that there is a light at the end of the tunnel!”

Congratulations to...

William Santiago, M.D.

Physician, Medical Student, Mentor



Dr. William Santiago graduated from UConn School of Medicine in May 2019.

Dr. Santiago attended high school in Connecticut at Central Magnet High School in Bridgeport. After graduation, he remained in-state attending Wesleyan University in Middletown. There he completed a Bachelor of Arts in astronomy and physics. Dr. Santiago also earned a Bachelor of Arts in chemistry and a Bachelor of Science in biology from Florida Atlantic University.

Currently, Dr. Santiago is doing his residency training in internal medicine at Yale New Haven, Hospital, in New Haven, Connecticut. After residency he sees a potential career as a primary care physician, a gastroenterologist, or a hospitalist.

Dr. Santiago's path to medicine began later in his educational journey. Through various events, he was led to explore the emotional side of medicine through empathy, while also exploring the field through academic curiosity. He was interested in understanding one's health and how to better care for people. He was always interested in science and patient care, and thought about a career in various health professions. However, through his experiences, he was always led back to medicine. After being inspired by a physician he had interacted with, he made the decision to strive to be a physician who is empathetic and sincere.

While in medical school, Dr. Santiago became involved with the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs by volunteering his time to meet with pre-medical students interested in UConn School of Medicine. He explains, "I have truly enjoyed speaking with prospective medical students about the wonderful opportunities available at UConn." He has also participated on student panels coordinated by the department to speak to pre-medical students about his journey to medical school and preparation for a career as a physician. Additionally, through his participation in the UConn Chapter of the Latino Medical Student Association, Dr. Santiago has been involved in health policy and community engagement. Specifically, he helped to organize and implement workshops on medical Spanish, acted as a patient instructor, and assisted with fundraisers to help residents of Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria.

Dr. Santiago leaves the following words of advice to the next generation of health professionals: "First and foremost, discover your 'why'. We all have different reasons for entering a given health profession, and we will all struggle to varying degrees at some point. Having a "why" that you can lean on during those hard times is essential to your success. Second, remember who you will be serving. Patients will arrive into your care with all sorts of personal history that will affect their interaction with you. The one thing they will all have in common is that they are in a vulnerable position and you have the power to make a positive impact. Lastly, stay true to yourself and avoid picking up bad habits. Get through your training, get your license and be the professional you initially envisioned yourself being; we will all likely be better for it."

Congratulations to...

Sharon Vincenty-Flores, D.M.D.

Dentist, Dental Student, Mentor



Dr. Sharon Vincenty-Flores graduated from UConn School of Dental Medicine in May 2019.

A native of Puerto Rico, Dr. Vincenty-Flores graduated from Jose Felipe Zayas High School in Coamo in May 2010. She later went on to receive a Bachelor degree in biology from the University of Puerto Rico at Cayey in June 2015.

Growing up, Dr. Vincenty-Flores felt helpless for not being able to relieve the pain of a loved one. During this experience, her dream of becoming a doctor kept intensifying. However, during her third year of college, she realized that she wanted to use her interest in health towards the dental field. What solidified this ambition for her was shadowing her dentist. Dr. Vincenty-Flores explains, "I appreciated how dentists can be skilled, conscientious, civic-minded individuals who can also work as community leaders and educators. I couldn't be happier being able to give back while doing something that can be artistic and fun!" Through pursuing her interest in this field, she saw the larger side of dental medicine including hands-on labs and the basic sciences.

After graduating dental school, Dr. Vincenty-Flores went on to pursue a career in the field of prosthodontics. She is still currently at UConn School of Dental Medicine completing a 3-year prosthodontics program. Through this training she wants to work on anesthetics and complex treatment. "After I finish my residency, I hope to stay in

the Northeast area to practice dentistry. I am mostly interested in sharing a practice with other specialists or general dentists, but I am also considering the option of opening and managing my own practice as a prosthodontist”, explains, Dr. Vincenty-Flores. Additionally, she has learned a great deal from her service trips and hopes to have more opportunities to travel to other countries and provide dental care.

Prior to attending UConn School of Dental Medicine, Dr. Vincenty-Flores was first involved with Health Career Opportunity Program during her fourth year of college through the Medical/Dental Preparatory Programs Track I-DAT Prep. She describes her experience in the program by stating, “This initiative program was a great resource and opportunity that facilitated my acceptance into dental school by improving my performance on admissions

tests and providing professional development workshops.” As a dental student, one of her favorite experiences with Health Career Opportunity Programs was participating in the dental workshops for the Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Conference. She saw this as a “great opportunity to advise students about applications and current health care issues in dentistry”.

In addition to advising pre-dental students who have come to UConn Health, Dr. Vincenty-Flores also leaves these words of encouragement to the next generation of health professionals: “Pursuing a career in healthcare comes with a lot of hard work. However, if you have a dream, fight for it. There is a discipline for passion. It is not about how many times you are rejected or you fail. It is about trying it again and continuing to work hard.”

Congratulations to our Mentors and Past Program Participants — UConn Medical, Dental, and Graduate School 2019 Graduates

Olajide Abiola, M.D.

Chidera Amilo, D.M.D.

Sandra Apenteng, M.D.

Lauren Branche-James, M.D.,
M.P.H

Casandra Bonds Roldan, M.D.

Charity Bouyer, D.M.D.

Evins Clauther, M.D.

Michelle Emmanuel, M.D.

Brittany Flemming, M.D.

Harris Foster, M.D.

Triny Gutierrez, D.M.D.

Willan Jumbo, D.M.D.

Candice Logan, D.M.D.

Jessica Malcolm, M.D.

Andria Matthews, M.D.

Samuel Milbin, M.D.

Mary Ojukwu, M.D.

Adanna Udeh, M.D.

Sharon Vincenty-Flores, D.M.D.

Health Career Opportunity Programs Medical/Dental Student 2019 Bridge Mentoring Award



Chidera Amilo, D.M.D.



Lauren Branche-James, M.D., M.P.H.

The Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs recognized a dental student and a medical student for their continued participation and involvement in the Aetna HPPI Programs with the Bridge Mentoring Award. The 2019 recipients were: Chidera Amilo, D.M.D, general practice residency, Jacobi Medical Center/North Bronx Health Care Network, Bronx, New York and Lauren Branche-James, M.D., M.P.H., obstetrics & gynecology residency, University of Connecticut School of Medicine.

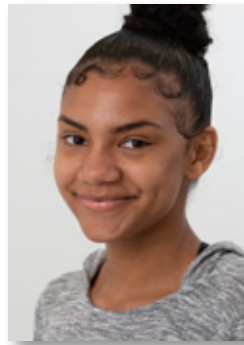
Congratulations to the Senior Doctors Academy Graduating Class of 2019!



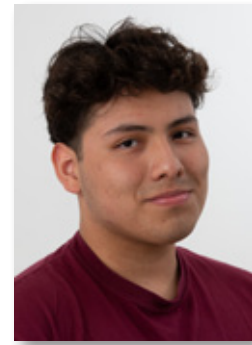
Mary Addy
University of Connecticut



Tiffany Addy
University of Connecticut



Sabrina Diana
University of Connecticut



Angelo Franco
University of Connecticut



Aaron Gordon
University of Connecticut



T'Aja Henry
Southern Connecticut State
University



Zaiba Khan
University of Connecticut



Virtue Leonard
University of Connecticut



Taelor McDonald
Eastern Connecticut State
University



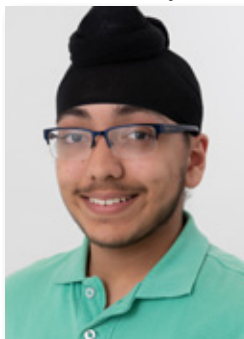
Qristine Owusu
University of Connecticut



Brianca Sailor
Manchester Community
College



Muna Saleh
Smith College



Arundeeep Singh
Tufts University



Zora Valentine
Western Connecticut State
University



Julie-Ann Williams
University of Connecticut

Hard Work
Career-Focused
Optimal Performance
Persistence

John & Valerie Rowe Scholarship Recipients

The Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs provides John & Valerie Rowe Scholarships in the form of book awards to Senior Doctors Academy students from the Aetna HPPI Doctors Academy who will enroll as freshmen at UConn. John D. Rowe, M.D., and Valerie A. Rowe, Ph.D., are longtime donors to UConn, supporting students and institutional advancement. The Rowe Health Professions Scholars Program Endowment has helped hundreds of students from underrepresented populations succeed in UConn's undergraduate, medical, and graduate programs through scholarships, academic, and experiential opportunities.

Dr. John Rowe is a professor of health policy and management at Columbia University and former chairman and CEO of Aetna, Inc. He previously served on the UConn Board of Trustees and the UConn Health Board of Directors. Dr. John Rowe was awarded the Carole and Ray Neag Medal of Honor for his remarkable contributions to medicine and UConn Health in 2012. Dr. Valerie Rowe is a retired clinical associate professor at the Grad-

uate School of Education at Fordham University. "Jack and Valerie Rowe understand that the gift of education transforms lives. We are immensely grateful for their investment in the prestigious Rowe Scholar program, which has assisted dozens of talented students from underrepresented backgrounds succeed at UConn," said Joshua R. Newton, past president and CEO of the UConn Foundation.



Drs. John & Valerie Rowe

The 2019 John and Valerie Rowe Scholarships were awarded to Tiffany Addy, Angelo Franco, Zaiba Khan, and Julie-Ann Williams. The scholarships were awarded to each recipient by Dr. Marja Hurley, professor of medicine and orthopaedic surgery, associate dean for Health Career Opportunity Programs, and founding director of Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative.



Dr. Marja Hurley with John and Valerie Rowe Scholarship recipients Tiffany Addy (top left), Angelo Franco (top right), Zaiba Khan (bottom left), and Julie-Ann Williams (bottom right).

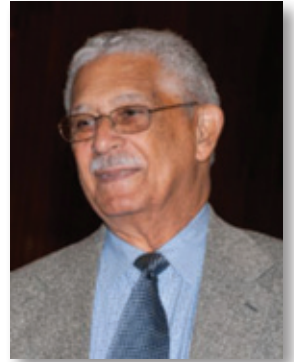
Friends of the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs

Boake L. Plessy, Ph.D. 2019 Scholarship Recipients

In honor of Dr. Boake Plessy's contributions, UConn Health has established a scholarship fund that is used to support educational enhancement for students who participated in the Aetna HPPI Doctors Academy and are planning to continue their education at the post-secondary level.

The Friends of the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs – Boake L. Plessy, Ph.D. Scholarship was awarded to Virtue Leonard and Sabrina Diana at the Academic Year Closing and Recognition Ceremony. Miss Leonard and Miss Diana will be attending UConn.

To contribute to the Boake L. Plessy, Ph.D. Scholarship Fund or for more information about philanthropy to support the Health Career Opportunity Programs at UConn Health, please visit health.uconn.edu/hcop.



Dr. Boake L. Plessy



Dr. Marja Hurley with Boake L. Plessy Scholarship recipients Sabrina Diana (*left*) and Virtue Leonard (*right*).

Aetna HPPI Doctors Academy

The Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative Doctors Academy (Aetna HPPI Doctors Academy) is designed to provide educational opportunities which may otherwise not be available to a number of Connecticut high school students. The Aetna HPPI Doctors Academy consists of the Jumpstart 9 and 10 programs and the Junior and Senior Doctors Academies. The purpose of the Aetna HPPI Doctors Academy high school programs is to provide access and preparation to students interested in health professions who come from backgrounds where they are the first in their family to earn a four-year degree, come from modest family means, and/or are from backgrounds traditionally underrepresented in health care. Students participating in the Aetna HPPI Doctors Academy are generally recruited from the Hartford area schools and strive to become physicians, dentists, biomedical research scientists, pharmacists, nurses and other health professionals.

The Aetna HPPI Doctors Academy has two major components, the summer program and the academic year program. Both components are offered at UConn Health. The summer and academic year programs are designed to advance students' academic skill levels in math, science and English. The programs promote personal growth through extracurricular experiences designed to help students develop the skills necessary to succeed in the Pre-Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), and the American College Test (ACT). Eighty-one high school students participated in the Aetna HPPI Doctors Academy during the 2018-2019 academic year and 56 high school students participated in these programs during the 2019 summer. The students took enrichment trips to the Hartford Stage, the Connecticut Science Center, and the UConn Storrs campus during the 2018-2019 academic year. They also visited the Connecticut State Capitol and Mystic Aquarium during the summer of 2019.



Great Explorations

Great Explorations is an enrichment program designed to provide extracurricular activities in math, science, and language arts to sixth-eighth grade middle school students. A total of 94 students who participated in the Great Explorations Program in 2018-2019 were enrolled in one of six middle schools: Jumoke SMART Academy, E.B. Kennelly School, Sport and Medical Sciences Academy, West Middle School, CREC Two Rivers Magnet Middle School, and CREC Academy of Science and Innovation.

Great Explorations also offers a six-week summer academic enrichment program for rising eighth-grade participants and a 30-week Saturday Academy for current eighth-graders. The summer activities are conducted at the Learning Corridor in Hartford, and the Saturday Academy is held at the UConn Health campus. A total of 17 students participated in the 30-week 2018-2019 academic year component of the program. During the summer of 2019 a total of 20 students participated in the program. Additionally, the Great Explorations students visited the Trinity College campus, the Connecticut Science Center, and Mystic Aquarium during the summer of 2019.



Parental Seminar Series

The Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative's Parental Seminar Series is an opportunity for students and parents to learn more about important health issues affecting their community as well as important tips to prepare for college. Parents are asked to submit a survey on the topics they are most interested in learning about and the series of lectures are then tailored to their needs.

The 2018-2019 Parental Seminar Series commenced with a college admissions and financial aid panel which included Mr. Nilvio Perez, associate director of admissions, Central Connecticut State University, Ms. Sierra Colon, admissions counselor, Eastern Connecticut State University, Ms. Alexis Haakenson, director of admissions, Southern Connecticut State University, Ms. Caroline Mc-

Call, admissions officer, UConn-Hartford campus, Ms. Cassandra Ekelmann, assistant director of financial aid, University of Hartford, and Mr. Anthony Reid, assistant director of admissions, University of Hartford. They discussed college financial aid and the admissions process.

Additionally, the Parental Seminar Series included a presentation on breast cancer by Dr. Iyanna Liles, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Trinity Health of New England Medical Group at Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center. Dr. Niko Broodie-Murray, clinical assistant professor, Internal Medicine, UConn Health, presented information on heart disease and hypertension. The last seminar of the academic year focused on ways to manage stress and anxiety given by psychiatrist, Dr. Thelissa Harris.



College Admissions and Financial Aid panelists



Dr. Niko Broodie-Murray



Dr. Iyanna Liles



Dr. Thelissa Harris

Teens as Teachers

The UConn School of Medicine's Delivery of Clinical Care (DoCC) curriculum is the clinical training component for medical students. The course helps students prepare for the clinical aspects of medicine by training them in history taking, physical examination, utilization of community resources and community collaboration for improved patient care. Part of the course involves training on adolescent health. Medical students learn about the importance and specialized aspects of the adolescent history, and practice their skills with real teens recruited from Sport and Medical Sciences Academy, who act as

patient instructors. The medical students then receive feedback on their performance from the adolescent patient instructors.

Twelve students from Sport and Medical Sciences Academy participated in the 2019 program. Under the leadership of Dr. Stacey Brown, director of Community Based Education, associate professor of Community Medicine and Healthcare, UConn Health, the participating adolescents were given health education workshops and training prior to their participation in the course.

High School Mini Medical/Dental School Seminar Series

The High School Mini Medical/Dental School Seminar Series offers eight weekly lectures and demonstrations presented by faculty members of the UConn Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine. The 2019 seminar series included topics such as molecular biology, gastroenterology, dermatology, cardiology, oncology, and dental medicine. Sixty-seven Connecticut high school juniors and seniors participated in the 2019 program.

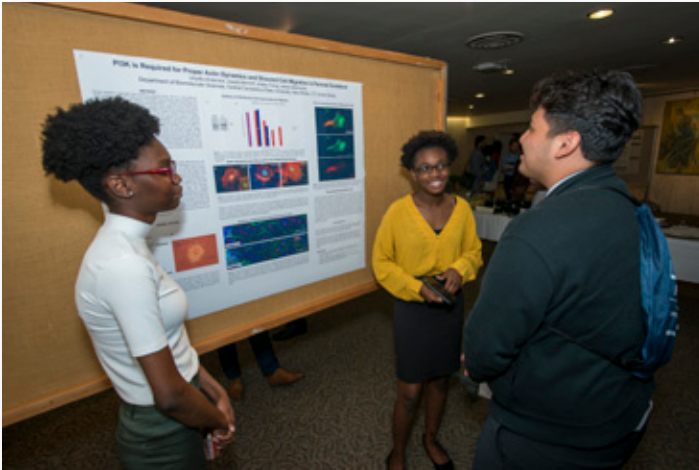
Participants are selected by their school guidance counselors or science teachers. All students have shown a strong interest in pursuing careers in medicine, dental medicine, or the biological sciences. Sessions are also broadcast live to high schools throughout the state of Connecticut. For more information contact Anastasia Rollins at 860-679-3484 or rollins@uchc.edu.



High School Student Research Apprentice Program

Twelve students had the opportunity to be a part of a research team and learn laboratory techniques in the 2019 High School Student Research Apprentice Program. As part of the 2019 program, five students commuted daily to Central Connecticut State University and seven

students commuted daily to the UConn Health campus for their research projects. At the end of the summer, the students gave oral and poster presentations of their research results during a special research symposium.



Pre-College Enrichment Program

The Pre-College Enrichment Program is a residential enrichment program primarily for incoming students at UConn and other four-year institutions. Designed to provide solid development of scientific, mathematical, communications, problem solving, and test-taking skills, it is intended to enhance the preparedness of college freshmen. It allows the students to experience life on a college campus at UConn Storrs or Central Connecticut State University prior to their matriculation to college in the fall. Students participate in the academic track

(completion of academic courses) in collaboration with the UConn School of Engineering BRIDGE Program at Storrs or at Central Connecticut State University.

This past summer, a total of 14 Pre-College Enrichment Program participants along with six BRIDGE Program participants also engaged in numerous enrichment activities at UConn Health including tours of basic science labs in the Department of Biomedical Engineering and the Clinical Skills Lab.



Health Disparities Clinical Summer Research Fellowship Program

The Health Disparities Clinical Summer Research Fellowship Program is a seven-week clinical enrichment experience designed for rising college sophomores, juniors, seniors or recent graduates. In the summer of 2019, nine students participated in the program. The program is designed to provide the following: clinical research and enrichment experiences; an introduction to health disparities across cultures; principles of clinical medicine; public health issues, research and interventions; an overview of cultural definitions; and discussions of specific techniques for working with diverse populations in community settings. All of the participants completed a clinical research project and presented a poster with their results at the end of the program.

The community partners who participated in the 2019 program were:

- The Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity, Saint Francis Hospital-Trinity Health of New England
- Family Life Education
- GoodWorks, Inc.
- Hartford Department of Health and Human Services
- North Central Regional Mental Health Board, Inc.
- Partnership for Strong Communities
- UConn Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (Papapanikou)



Medical/Dental Preparatory Program

Medical/Dental Preparatory Program students are selected from various universities throughout the United States to work on academic skills to prepare for medical school or dental school admission. Participants of the Medical/Dental Preparatory Program Track 1 prepare for either the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) or the Dental Admission Test (DAT), while the participants of the Medical/Dental Preparatory Program

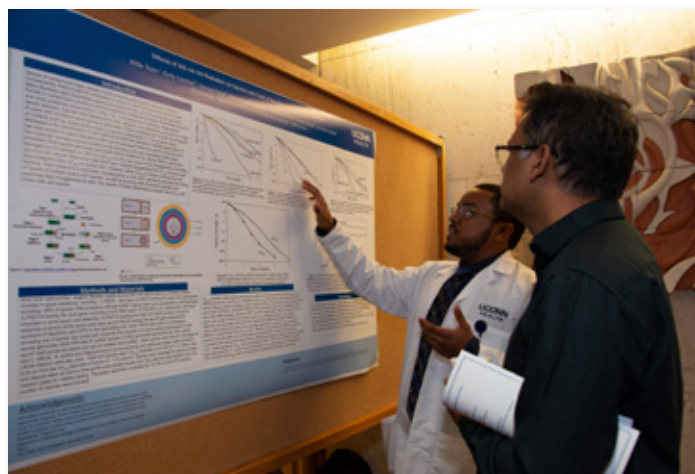
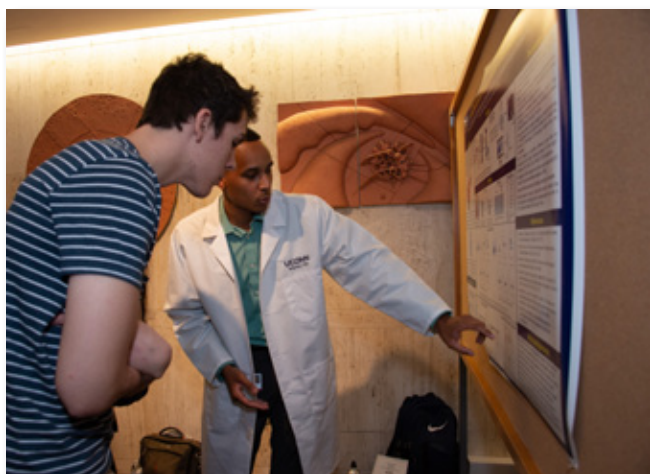
Track 2 take courses in the basic medical sciences to prepare them for the first-year curriculum of medical and dental school. A total of 44 college students and recent college graduates participated in academic classes, seminars, workshops, test-taking strategies, and other enrichment activities at the UConn Health campus during the six-week summer 2019 program.



Summer Research Fellowship Program

The Summer Research Fellowship Program is a nine-week research enrichment experience designed for college sophomores, juniors, seniors, and recent graduates who are interested in a career in medicine, dental medicine or biomedical research and for applicants who have completed some college coursework in biology and chemistry (preferably through organic chemistry). Minority Access to Research Careers (MARC) students are encouraged to apply. A faculty sponsor is identified for each student. The faculty develops and makes available

suitable project descriptions. The student contacts his/her faculty sponsor in April or May and develops a research protocol. Students devote approximately 32 hours per week to a research project and 8 hours per week to clinical experiences. In the summer of 2019, a total of eight students participated in the program. At the end of the summer, the students gave a poster presentation of their research results during a special research symposium.



Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Conference

The 2019 Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Conference was held on Saturday, April 6, with approximately 132 high school and college students participating. The students were brought together with UConn Health faculty, staff, medical, dental and graduate students to interact in a series of activities to raise awareness about health and biomedical science careers and the admissions process for medical, dental, and graduate schools. The Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs, the UConn Chapters of the Student National Medical Association, the Latino Medical Student Association, the Student National Dental Association/Hispanic Student Dental Association, and the John and Valerie Rowe Health Professions Scholars Program Fund sponsored this year's conference. The keynote speaker, Dr. Marcus Moss, UConn School of Dental Medicine Class of 2012 graduate and dentist at Alabama Pediatric Dental Associates and Orthodontics, spoke to the students about his personal journey to a career as a dentist.

During the morning's events, the high school students also participated in a college admissions panel with representatives from Central Connecticut State University, University of Connecticut, and Wesleyan University. Additionally, enrichment activities for high school students included a presentation on the Office of the Medical Examiner made by Jessica Crowson, medicolegal death investigator; a virtual anatomy presentation led by Dr. John Harrison, associate professor, Craniofacial Sciences, UConn Health, and Dr. Dharamainder Choudhary, assistant professor, Department of Surgery, UConn Health; and presentations of networking and skin care, both given by Gian Grant, third-year medical student.

The Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Conference also included hands-on activities for high school students led by members of the UConn Student National Medical Association. These activities were ultrasound and radiology demonstrations with Dr. Harrison and a histology workshop. Additionally, high school students received an opportunity to participate in a dental forensic hands-on workshop presented by UConn dental students.

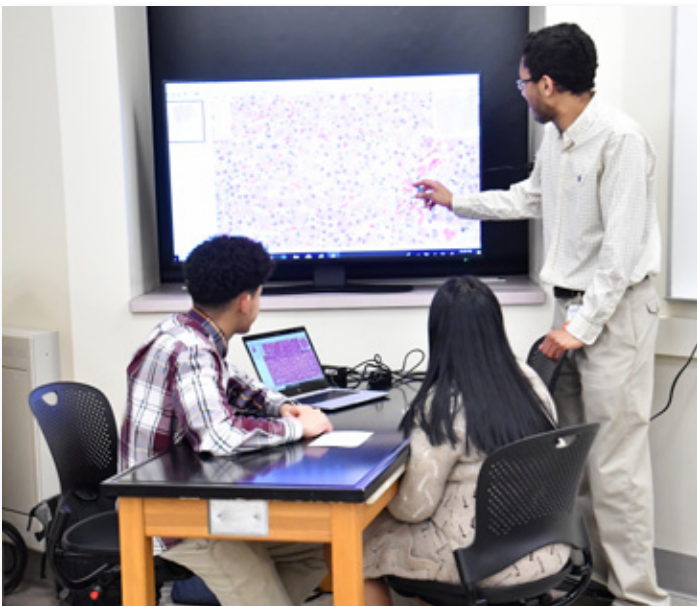
College students interested in a medical degree and combined degree programs learned about the admissions process for medical school and graduate school programs offered at UConn Health. The college students also participated in a mock admissions process where they served as potential Admissions Committee evaluators. Student participants ranked prospective applicants

based on their academic profiles, letters of recommendation and MCAT scores. Led by Dr. Anton Alerte, associate professor, Pediatrics, UConn Health; Klair Lubonja, first-year medical student and Carla Rivera Perez, first-year medical student, the participants engaged in discussions and activities similar to the admissions committees at UConn Health. This process helped the students better understand what admissions committees are looking for in qualified candidates.

For college students specifically interested in dental medicine, the Dental Impressions Program led by Dr. Sarita Arteaga, associate dean for students and associate clinical professor of Reconstructive Sciences, UConn School of Dental Medicine, and current dental students held a series of information sessions which included hands-on activities such as taking dental impressions and touring the dental labs at UConn Health.

Both the high school and college students had opportunities to listen to personal anecdotes from students currently enrolled at the UConn Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine, the UConn Graduate School, and the UConn School of Pharmacy. The professional and graduate students shared their progression through their respective schools and allowed the high school and college students to ask questions.





Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Conference Keynote Speaker



Marcus Moss, D.M.D.

Marcus Moss, D.M.D., grew up in Kansas City, Missouri. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in biology from Oakwood University in 2008. Prior to matriculating to dental school, Dr. Moss participated in the Medical/Dental Preparatory Program Basic Medical Sciences Track the summer of 2008. He received

his Doctorate of Dental Medicine from UConn School of Dental Medicine in 2012. Dr. Moss completed his dental residency at the University of Alabama School of Dentistry with a specialty in pediatric dentistry in 2014. He is a partner at Alabama Pediatric Dental Associates and Orthodontics. Dr. Moss is married to his wife Idelka and they have a one-year old son Lucas. He enjoys playing basketball, landscaping, and traveling with his family.



Dr. Marcus Moss receives recognition from Dr. Marja Hurley.

Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative 2018-2019

Academic Year Doctors Academy Closing Ceremony

The Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs hosted its annual Academic Year Closing and Recognition Ceremony for the Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative (Aetna HPPI) Doctors Academy on May 15, 2019 in Keller Auditorium at UConn Health. The Aetna HPPI is an education consortium offering a comprehensive program of educational enrichment and support activities to increase the competitive applicant pool of diverse students who are interested in careers in the health professions.

This Academic Year Closing and Recognition Ceremony marked the culmination of a very positive academic year enrichment experience for middle and high school students from the Greater Hartford area who participated in the Great Explorations, Jumpstart, and Junior and Senior Doctors Academies. Welcoming remarks were given by Dr. Sharon Gordon, dean, UConn School of Dental Medicine. The keynote speaker was State Representative Pat Wilson Pheanious of the 53rd Assembly District who emphasized the need for health equity in our communities and encouraged the students to continue towards their career goals.

Student reflections were given by Joseph Annan-Kingsley, Junior Doctors Academy participant; Sabrina Diana, Senior Doctors Academy Class of 2019 graduate; and John Garcia, Senior Doctors Academy Class of 2011 graduate, UConn Class of 2015 graduate, and UConn Master of Public Health Class of 2018 graduate.

The evening's festivities also included Special Recognition Awards to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of Great Explorations, Jumpstart, and the Junior Doctors Academy participants. The recipients of these awards were: Audrey Addy and Duke Addy of Great Explorations; Emma Dargenio and Sanyu Ponnala of Jumpstart 9; Sabrina Green and Excel Leonard of Jumpstart 10; and Lloydia Anderson and Elis Diaz of the Junior Doctors Academy. Most of the Senior Doctors Academy graduates have chosen to further their education at universities in Connecticut with nine of them enrolling at UConn. Tiffany Addy, Angelo Franco, Zaiba Khan, and Julie-Ann Williams, were each awarded the John and Valerie Rowe Scholarship, and Virtue Leonard and Sabrina Diana were each awarded the Boake L. Plessy Scholarship. Additionally, five families of Doctors Academy students were also recognized for their participation in the 2018-2019 Parental Seminar Series.



Keynote speaker, State Representative Pat Wilson Pheanious (center) with Dr. Sharon Gordon, dean, UConn School of Dental Medicine (left) and Dr. Marja Hurley (right).



Doctors Academy graduating class of 2019 with mentor and second-year medical student, Ezigbobiara Umejiego (center).

UConn Health Honored for Diversifying STEM Workforce

UConn Health's pipeline program to get more under-represented students into health care and science fields has been recognized by the Connecticut Science Center.

The Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative (HPPI), part of the UConn medical and dental schools' Health Career Opportunity Programs, is the 2019 STEM Achievement Award organization honoree.

"We started this initiative back in 1996 to try to diversify the student body of the medical school, the dental school, and other health professional schools in Connecticut and throughout the United States," says Dr. Marja Hurley, associate dean for the Health Career Opportunity Programs and Aetna HPPI's founding director. "We believe our programs have significantly contributed to STEM workforce diversity. It is really gratifying that the program is getting this type of recognition."

The Aetna HPPI was recognized for its success in establishing a consortium of education enrichment and support

programs to develop a diverse pool of students and open paths to health professions or STEM-related careers.

Activities include research experiences, clinical shadowing, admissions test preparations, and mentoring – not only by faculty and health professionals, but also by students who are further along in the HPPI pipeline. Programs are available for students ranging from middle school through college.

Hurley, who accepted the award on behalf of the program she built, says over the past 15 years, "Approximately half of the incoming medical and dental classes have participated in one or more of our programs."

More than 560 students who participated in at least one of the Health Career Opportunity Programs have gone on to attend medical school, dental school, or graduate school.

Christopher DeFrancesco - University Communications



Dr. Marja Hurley accepts a 2019 STEM Achievement Award from the Connecticut Science Center's Matt Fleury (left) and Amy Sailor (right), and State Rep. William Petit (second from right).

Another Summer of Youth Educational Enrichment Celebrated

Over 200 young students and their families celebrated the end of the 2019 Health Career Opportunity Programs summer enrichment programs on Friday—marking a culmination of weeks of research and clinical internships for aspiring physicians, dentists, and scientists.

Remarks were given by Dr. Bruce Liang, dean of the UConn School of Medicine, Dr. Francis Archambault, chairman of the academic affairs subcommittee of UConn Health Board of Directors and professor emeritus at UConn, and Dr. Marja Hurley, associate dean of the Health Career Opportunity Programs.

Archambault, in his keynote address, shared some of the life lessons he learned from playing baseball. “There’s no substitute for hard work—if you want to achieve a goal, you have to be willing to work rather than play,” Archambault said. “Most importantly, you can’t get a hit unless you get to the plate. You have to be willing to fail if you want to be successful.”

The program alumni speaker, Dr. Tremane Bartley, graduated from the UConn School of Dental Medicine in 2009 and started a dental practice after completing his orthodontics residency at Bronx Lebanon Hospital Center in New York.

Bartley congratulated the students for completing a summer of hard work. “You are one step closer. You have taken an important first step in the long journey to become a physician or dentist,” Bartley said. “The road will be long, there will be stones, but at the end, there’s light. Your sweat, lack of sleep, tears, and sometimes even blood, will only mold you into a stronger, more resilient person.”

The program also included several student speakers who reflected on their experiences, shared light-hearted memories, and expressed gratitude to their mentors. Carlos Flor, a rising 8th grader in the Great Explorations Program and the youngest speaker of the afternoon, said that the program has helped him get ready to apply for college in a few years.

“When it comes time for the college process, I will be able to have the work ethic that I need to start the college process,” said Flor, who attends Global Communications Academy in Hartford. “Thanks to the program, I will be ready and have many new interests.”

Lloydia Anderson in the High School Student Research Apprenticeship Program, noted that sacrificing the summer before senior year of high school was not an easy choice to make, but the opportunity to conduct research made the long days in the lab worthwhile.

“Coming out of this program, me and my fellow participants’ eyes have been opened to the real world of research,” said Anderson, who attends University High School of Science and Engineering in Hartford. “It has been a meticulous and detailed process that includes answers and solutions and sometimes more questions to real issues and problems. I’ve come to enjoy and appreciate the process.”

Muna Saleh of the Pre-College Academic Enrichment Program, heading to Smith College in the fall, said that the enrichment program has been one of the most insightful and beneficial experiences that she has ever had. “This program brings a unique experience that you can’t get from other enrichment activities,” said Saleh of Hartford.

The ceremony honored students in the Great Explorations Program, Jump Start Program, Junior Doctors Academy, Senior Doctors Academy, High School Student Research Apprentice Program, Pre-college Enrichment Program, Medical/Dental Preparatory Program, Summer Research Fellowship Program, and the Health Disparities Clinical Summer Research Fellowship Program.

Earlier in the week, summer research students presented their research findings and posters in Keller Auditorium and in the Academic Lobby.

UConn Health’s Health Career Opportunity Programs aim to raise awareness and proficiency in science among students from diverse backgrounds, provide mentoring and support, and encourage the pursuit of health professional careers. Since 1996, these programs under the leadership of Hurley have sent more than five hundred participants to medical school, dental school, graduate school or other health professional schools.

Courtney Chandler - School of Dental Medicine

Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative Summer 2019 Program Closing Ceremony - Dental Alumnus Speaker

Tremane Bartley, D.M.D. is a native of Jamaica. He graduated from the University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine in 2009. During his tenure at the School of Dental Medicine, Dr. Bartley served as President of the UConn Chapter of the Student National Dental Association/Hispanic Student Dental Association. As a third-year dental student, he was selected to perform free dental work and teach dental education at an orphanage in South Africa. After graduating, Dr. Bartley practiced as a general dentist for several years where his interests in esthetics and working with children lead him to pursue the specialty of Orthodontics. Subsequently, he went on to complete a 36-month residency at Bronx Lebanon Hos-



Tremane Bartley, D.M.D.

pital Center in Orthodontics, where he honed his clinical skills. During his residency, Dr. Bartley learned multiple modalities and orthodontic treatment philosophies, which guide his practice. He was named chief resident for the Department of Orthodontics due to his exceptional leadership skills. His professional affiliations are with the American Association of Orthodontists, American Dental Association, and One Hundred Black Men, Inc. These days, Dr. Bartley continues to learn and expand his knowledge on orthodontic treatment. He regularly takes continuing education courses and attends various meetings to keep abreast of recent advances and technology in the field. Outside of work, Dr. Bartley enjoys spending time with his wife and two daughters. He also enjoys soccer, reading, and traveling.

Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative Summer 2019 Program Closing Ceremony - Keynote Speaker

Francis X. Archambault, Jr., Ph.D. is a professor emeritus at the University of Connecticut. Following completion of his Ph.D. at UConn, Dr. Archambault began his career as an assistant professor at Boston University. Later he was a social scientist at Abt Associates, Inc. in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Dr. Archambault returned to the UConn faculty in 1978. He served the University as a department head and associate dean in the Neag School of Education, interim executive director of Information Technology, and interim vice chancellor. Dr. Archambault has conducted research, evaluations and policy analyses for a variety of governmental agencies and private organizations at the national level at the National Science



Francis X. Archambault, Jr., Ph.D.

Foundation, Department of Education, National Institute of Education, and state and local levels. He is the author and co-author of numerous professional publications. Dr. Archambault is past president of the UConn Alumni Association and a former member of the University of Connecticut Board of Trustees. He is currently a member of the UConn Health Board of Directors where he chairs the Academic Affairs Committee. Dr. Archambault also served as chair of the Region 19 Board of Education and is founding chair of the Edwin O. Smith Foundation. He holds a Bachelor's degree from Providence College and an M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Connecticut. Dr. Archambault has four grown children, two of whom are physicians, and ten grandchildren. He lives in Storrs, Connecticut with his wife, Barbara.

Health Career Opportunity Programs Medical and Dental Students

The Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs plays an integral role in recruiting diverse students from around the country to the UConn Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine and providing support for currently enrolled medical and dental students. At the beginning of each academic year the department hosts a reception to welcome the first-year class. The 2018 Welcome Reception was held on September 24 at UConn Health for the Class of 2022. This was an opportunity for first-year medical and dental students to learn more about department resources, network with each other and upperclassmen, and hear more about research and enrichment opportunities. The medical and dental Class of 2022 was also invited to a holiday reception on November 29, 2018 in Avon where they were able to meet the other classes of medical and dental students, as well as UConn Health alums and faculty.

Over the four years of academic training, Health Career Opportunity Programs' medical and dental students have the opportunity to participate in seminars based on their interest, engage with the wider community, coordinate hands-on activities for younger students, interact with visiting students, faculty, and community leaders, and be mentors or tutors to Aetna HPPI students. The department also provides professional development and career planning for medical and dental students through a mentoring program with community physicians and dentists. The monthly newslines compiled and distributed by the de-

partment also keeps students apprised of externships, fellowships, conferences, scholarships, and residency programs that they are eligible for. Additionally, the UConn chapters of the Student National Medical Association, the Latino Medical Student Association, and the Student National Dental Association/Hispanic Student Dental Association continue to be at the forefront of student life at UConn Health. Health Career Opportunity Programs continues to support the professional and cultural events of these organizations and encourages student leadership at the university, regional, and national levels. The department is proud that 2019 UConn medical graduates, Lauren Branche-James and Brittany Flemming have each served as Region VII president of the Student National Medical Association.

The Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs celebrates the accomplishments of UConn Health students. Each year a dinner is held in honor of the graduating medical and dental students. The 2019 Graduation Celebration was held on May 5th in Avon. Dr. Marja Hurley and the members of Health Career Opportunity Programs wish continued success to the Class of 2019 as they begin their residency programs and professional training. It is a pleasure each year to invite Health Career Opportunity Programs alums to meet with current students, and it is an honor to see their achievements as they continue to make a positive impact on patient care, education, and research.



UConn in Top 10 Medical Schools with the Most African American Students

U.S. News & World Report has recognized UConn School of Medicine as one of the 10 medical schools nationwide with the most African American students.

Why is this news so important? While many medical schools struggle to create a diverse student body, UConn School of Medicine has been leading the way forward for nearly two decades with significant efforts and successful strides to improve the representation of underrepresented groups in medicine including African Americans.

“The lack of African Americans and other underrepresented minorities choosing to enter the fields of medicine and research is a critical and longstanding national issue,” says Dr. Bruce T. Liang, dean of UConn’s medical school. “Our ongoing commitment and efforts are showing progress and we look forward to further helping curb this national issue and building a stronger, more diverse pipeline of future healthcare professionals through our medical educational mission and training initiatives.”

For the 2018-2019 school year, UConn medical school’s African American student population was a high 11.8% of its total student body of 425 medical students. This percentage is well above the latest available AAMC data showing the national average of African Americans matriculating into medical school classes is only 7.1% as of 2016, and unfortunately has not risen much since 1980 when it was 6.0%.

In fact, over the years while UConn School of Medicine’s class sizes have grown so has its student body’s diversity. For more than a decade UConn’s medical school has maintained its overall percentage of African American students and has doubled the number of black males enrolled in its medical school.

“This news is very gratifying,” says Dr. Marja M. Hurley, professor of medicine and orthopedics at UConn School of Medicine and founding director and associate dean for the Health Career Opportunity Programs at UConn Health. These programs have been critical in getting more and more young people from across Connecticut, of all ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, interested in medicine and science and to go on to enter the health professions.

In fact, of the nearly 900 youth from the state’s elementary, high school and colleges participating since 1996



UConn School of Medicine’s Dr. Marja Hurley (center) with Class of 2019 graduates on May 13, 2019.

in UConn Health’s Health Career Opportunity Programs, more than 500 have successfully gone on to enter medical, dental school, or other health profession schools.

Hurley adds: “For the UConn medical school graduating Class of 2019, 66% of the African American graduating students participated in one or more of our Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative programs. I feel very proud of this year’s graduating medical students and those that have come before them.”

For nearly two decades, UConn Health’s Health Career Opportunity Programs have served as a continuous pipeline for middle school, high school, and college students of diverse backgrounds across Connecticut looking to realize their dream of becoming future doctors, dentists, and health professionals. The program has helped quite a lot of students proactively pursue medical and dental school education and also practice as successful doctors in these fields.

It was created by Hurley more than 18 years ago and sponsored by the Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative. It allows young students the opportunity to learn through expert lectures, demonstrations, and research projects more about careers in medicine, dental medicine, biological sciences and various allied health careers. Students are hand-picked for the program by their guidance counselors or science teachers.

“This program at UConn Health offers opportunities for some of our brightest students from all backgrounds to learn about the incredible opportunities available in the health professions,” says Hurley. “We are very proud of the successes in growing the diversity of our student body, and also building a greater pipeline for a more diverse future healthcare workforce.”

Liang added: “This is very good recognition for the UConn School of Medicine, and is an excellent outcome from the work done by our medical school, Dr. Marja Hurley, and her Aetna HPPI programs.”

Lauren Woods - Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine

Student National Dental Association/Hispanic Student Dental Association - UConn Health Chapter Hispanic Heritage Month Event

The UConn Chapter of the Student National Dental Association/Hispanic Student Dental Association (SNDA/HSDA), and the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs continue to celebrate Hispanic heritage and traditions through various activities and programs including an annual event for Hispanic Heritage Month. This event is a way to show appreciation

for the Hispanic culture of the UConn Health community through food, song, dance, and other artistic presentations. Last year’s event took place on October 17, 2018, at the UConn Health campus. The event included authentic Hispanic cuisine, raffle prizes, and music and entertainment. Additionally, salsa performances and lessons were a highlight of the evening’s activities.



Student National Medical Association - UConn Health Chapter Culture Shock Event

Each year the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) hosts Culture Shock, an event sponsored by the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs. The purpose of the event is to celebrate the diversity of the UConn Health community through food, poetry, fashion, song, dance, and other artistic presentations. Participants enjoy a wide array of local and international cuisine through generous donations from many restaurants and medical and dental students at UConn Health. Last year, Culture Shock was held on December 14, 2018, in UConn Health's Keller Auditorium. Proceeds from the event continue to benefit Mercy Housing and Shelter Corporation in Hartford and the mission and efforts of SNMA.

SNMA is a nationally run student organization whose mission is to “support current and future underrepresented minority medical students, to address the needs of underserved communities, and to increase the number of clinically excellent, culturally and socially conscious

physicians.” Mercy Housing and Shelter Corporation is dedicated to “empowering homeless persons to become independent so they may live and work with dignity and respect” by “providing housing, food, job training, access to medical services, and basic human needs.” The UConn Chapter of SNMA chose to donate to Mercy Housing and Shelter Corporation because of its previous relationship with this organization. Additionally, Mercy House’s work with those who are socio-economically challenged within the Hartford community was something that SNMA felt strongly about. SNMA has held several volunteer events at Mercy House, serving its residents. Additionally, SNMA wants to raise awareness concerning homelessness and food instability as a major factor in the development of disparate health outcomes that disproportionately affect marginalized groups such as minorities and individuals with mental health issues.



West Middle School Enrichment Visit at UConn Health

On February 22, 2019, the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs hosted 20 seventh and eighth grade students from Hartford's West Middle School for a day of enrichment at UConn Health focused on dental medicine and oral health. The enrichment workshops were facilitated by Dr. Sarita Arteaga, associate dean for students and associate clinical professor of Reconstructive Sciences, UConn School of Dental Medicine and the members of the UConn Chapter of the Student National Dental Association/Hispanic Student Dental Association.

Throughout the day, the middle school students received an overview of dental hygiene and oral health along with a 2019 calendar of healthy tips. They also visited the Grasso Dental Lab and the Moog Simulation Lab for hands-on activities to learn more about dentistry. In honor of Black History Month, the West Middle students also participated in a presentation on prominent African Americans in medicine, dentistry and science sponsored by the UConn Chapter of the Student National Medical Association. The day's activities ended with a panel of current medical and dental students sharing their stories about their educational journeys and career goals. This event was funded by The Hartford.



Acknowledgement of Funding Sources

Aetna Foundation

Connecticut State Legislative Fund

John and Valerie Rowe Health Professions Scholars Program

The Hartford

University of Connecticut Foundation

Friends of the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs

UConn Health

William and Alice Mortensen Foundation

Acknowledgement of our Parents, Teachers, Peer Counselors, Mentors, Faculty, and Staff

We thank you for your support and continued encouragement
and commitment to the students.

**For more information about the
Pipeline Programs, visit us at:
health.uconn.edu/hcop**

This publication was funded by the Aetna Foundation Fund.

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