



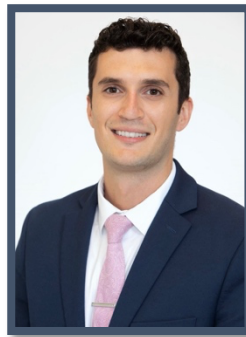
Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs
John & Valerie Rowe Endowment Fund

*2025 Bridge to the Future Health Career
Pathways Mentoring Conference*

Saturday, October 25, 2025 | 8:00 a.m.

Keynote Speaker

Klair Lubonja, M.D.
UConn School of Medicine
Class of 2022



Klair Lubonja, M.D. is an alumnus of the University of Connecticut School of Medicine Class of 2022. He was born in Tirana, Albania and immigrated to the United States in 2001. Dr. Lubonja completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Connecticut with a major in Molecular and Cell Biology and a minor in Political Science. Dr. Lubonja was a member of the highly selective Honors Program and a John and Valerie Rowe Health Professions Scholar. During his undergraduate years, Dr. Lubonja held several leadership roles and took part in multiple research endeavors. Prior to matriculating to medical school, he conducted research at the National Institutes of Health and Yale School of Medicine as a Post-Graduate Research Fellow. Dr. Lubonja received his medical education at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. While in medical school, he received several awards relating to his research and his community outreach. He completed a preliminary year in surgery at Dartmouth School of Medicine prior to continuing his training at the University of Massachusetts School of Medicine, where he is currently a 3rd year surgery resident. When asked what motivated him to pursue a career in medicine, Dr. Lubonja remarks that although several factors led to the selection, his participation in the Health Career Opportunity Programs ultimately solidified his decision. His involvement with the Department spans all the way back to his first year in high school where he was a member of the High School Student Research Apprentice Program in 2010. Subsequently, Dr. Lubonja took part in the Pre-College Research Program in 2011, College Enrichment Program in 2012, and the Medical/Dental MCAT Preparatory Program in 2014, leading him to be recognized for his contributions. Outside of work, Dr. Lubonja enjoys spending time with family and friends. He and his wife try to go on as many day trips as possible to try new foods and experiences.