



Peer Support Facebooklet 2020-2021





Allison Giroux

Class year: DS 4

Hometown: Vermont

Email: agiroux@uchc.edu

Hobbies: Downhill skiing, cooking, hiking, meeting new dogs, and honestly just getting to the point of gut-wrenching laughter with friends.

Fun Facts/Interests: My fiancé and I love to travel (18 countries in the last three years!) and to dog-sit his family's golden doodle, Bentley. In terms of school, the stress levels definitely rise and we all ride the "struggle bus" some days. I think the things that really helped me through the rough times were leaning on my support system and realizing that it is okay to not be okay at times. Ultimately, we are all in this together. I would be more than happy to talk to any of you about anything that comes up, regardless of whether or not it is related to school. I can be reached by email, phone, or we can meet in person!



Steven Cosgrove

Class year: DS 4

Hometown: El Paso, Texas

Email: scosgrove@uchc.edu

Fun Facts/Interests/Hobbies: Hi everyone! I grew up on the border city of El Paso, Texas for 18 years before attending Arizona State for undergrad. My wife, Fernie, and I have been married for 5 years, with 3 of those being long distance. I enjoy watching sports, movies, and exercising when I can get it in. I am involved in the South Park Inn Dental Clinic, Couples and Conversations, CMDA, and UST. Please feel free to reach out, I'll always make myself available!



Julie Lafen

Class year: DS 4

Hometown: Coventry, RI

Email: lafen@uchc.edu

Fun Facts/Interests/Hobbies: Rollerblading, looking for sea glass, and baking



Pat Lau

Class year: MS 4

Hometown: Farmington, CT

Email: plau@uchc.edu

Fun Facts/Interests/Hobbies: Anything active like biking, hiking, tennis. Trying new foods. Dogs!! I would love to chat!



Alexandria Plant

Class year: MS 4

Hometown: Swoyersville, Pennsylvania

Email: plant@uchc.edu

Fun Facts/Interests/Hobbies: I am a current fourth year medical student who studied Biology at Boston College, and I am currently leaning towards internal medicine at this time. I enjoy running and traveling, and I am passionate about mental health.



Jacqueline Steele

Class year: MS 3

Hometown: Greenwich, CT

Email: jsteele@uchc.edu

Fun Facts/Interests/Hobbies:

- I went to college at Emory University in Atlanta, GA.
- I love to ski!
- I got scuba certified in the Long Island Sound.



Danielle Kriscenski

Class Year: MS3

Hometown: Bristol, CT

Email: kriscenski@uchc.edu

Fun Facts/Interests/Hobbies: I graduated from UMass Amherst in 2016 where I majored in Kinesiology and played for the Division I Women's Soccer team. Between college and medical school, I worked in the St. Francis Emergency Department as an ED Tech. I currently volunteer as an assistant soccer coach at my high school alma mater, Bristol Eastern. In my free time, I like to make DIY crafts (my latest creation is a coffee table for my house), travel, eat Chipotle, take naps, and bring my three-year-old puppy, Maya, on walks! (Will show puppy pictures upon request) Please feel free to reach out if you need anything or would just like to chat!



Kelly O'Sullivan

(They, them)

Class year: MS2

Email: kosullivan@uchc.edu

Hometown: Newtown, CT

Fun Facts: I am dog parent to my two French bulldogs (Edgar and Maya) in addition to MANY house plants. I love watching movies and being outside. When I'm not busy at school I read as much as possible to self-educate, particularly on the different realms of social justice. (Queer literature comprises half of my library.) Before Miss Corona I liked to travel (picture above is on my birthday a few years ago in Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam) and my goal is to get to Antarctica within the next 10 years. If I didn't choose medicine, I'd like to think I'd be working in the field for national geographic (somewhere cold with lots of bears, my favorite animal) doing whatever. Favorite food is anything Vietnamese and favorite local brewery is New England Brewing Company down in Woodbridge. Always down for a beer and a chat!



Spencer Coleman

Year: MS2

Email: spcoleman@uchc.edu

Hometown: Alpharetta, GA

Misc: I enjoy photography, the beach, and biking.



Joy Gullo

Year: MS2

Email: jgullo@uchc.edu

Hometown: Huntsville, AL

Fun facts: I love going to concerts, Facetiming friends, and taking BuzzFeed quizzes



Rhea Sindvani

Year: MS3

Email: rsindvani@uchc.edu

Hometown: Farmington, CT (woo, been with UConn Health my whole life!)

Fun facts: I'm from Farmington and have a long history with UConn Health. My non-medical interests include watching TV and collecting chic and cheap pieces for my wardrobe as a fashion enthusiast.



Kyle Grabowski

Year: D2

Email: kgrabowski@uchc.edu

Hometown: Monroe, CT

Fun facts:

-I am a middle child

-I used to compete in freestyle skiing in middle school and high school

-Jack and I made a turducken this past

Thanksgiving (and hopefully next as well!)

-I enjoy spending time outdoors skiing, hiking, and running



Audrey Defusco

Class year: MS3

Email: defusco@uchc.edu

Where I am from: Cheshire, CT

Fun facts/interests/hobbies: Since going to college in Maine, I have enjoyed hiking, gardening, and being in nature when I can; I am interested in surgery (not sure which field); I like using fitness as a break from school work; I can wiggle my ears.

Josh Goodman

Year: D4

Email: jgoodman@uchc.edu

Hometown: Bedford, MA

Fun facts: I went to College of Charleston for undergrad and I love biking, skiing, cooking, and playing racquet sports.





Kavita Sinha

Year: MS3

Email: ksinha@uchc.edu

Hometown: Woodbridge, CT

Fun facts: I did Taekwondo for ten years and have three black belts. I love cooking and working out.



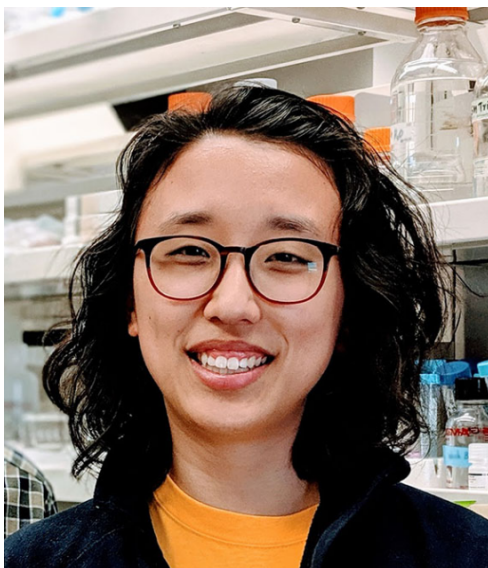
Olivia Campbell

Year: MS3

Email: ocampbell@uchc.edu

Hometown: Easton, PA

Interests/hobbies: Trivia, Korean dramas, knitting, making Bible verse songs for kids



Grace Kwon

Year: MS3

Email: grkwon@uchc.edu

Hometown: Beaverton, OR

Fun facts: I'm a first-generation college student and am an MD/PhD student (matriculated 2014) if you have concerns or stress about being either. I like David Attenborough-narrated documentaries, reading nonfiction, running, and my guilty pleasure is watching The Bachelor. I have 2 friendly cats named after Batman characters. Before I started medical school I spent 3 weeks in Portugal; last winter I spent a week in London and went to the Harry Potter studio in Watford and also went to a Tottenham Hotspur game.



Arijit Chakraborty

Year: MS2

Email: archakraborty@uchc.edu

Hometown: Farmington born and raised

Fun facts: My hobbies include piano, chess, and discovering new things.



Nathan Rumpf

Year: MS2

Email: rumpf@uchc.edu

Hometown: I'm originally from the Boston area but have lived in CT for the last several years.

Fun facts: Before medical school I worked as an electrical engineer, so I'm familiar with the challenges & adjustments of non-traditional paths. I've been married to my wife Lucy for 3 years. I love Jesus, animals, and all things outdoors!



Evan Jansen

Year: D2

Email: jansen@uchc.edu

Hometown: Pembroke, MA

Fun facts:

- I love playing soccer, flag football, golf, and skiing
- Spending time at the beach is my favorite summer activity
- I enjoy learning how to cook new recipes
- Can find me at most Doggo Fridays in the library
- Star Wars, Lord of the Rings, and Avatar are my favorite movies/movie series





Samantha Hill

Year: MS4

Email: samhill@uchc.edu

Hometown: Greenwich, CT

Fun facts: I enjoy hiking, swimming, and other outdoor activities. In my spare time, I swim competitively and am part of the Connecticut Master's Swim Team. Other than swimming, I enjoy watching TV and movies with my favorite genre being horror, and my favorite TV show is American Horror Story. I am pursuing a career in Ob/Gyn.



Erin Hannon

Year: MS4

Email: ehannon@uchc.edu

Hometown: Darien, CT

Fun facts: I went to Villanova Undergrad and got a master's at Georgetown. I'm excited to be applying to pediatric residency programs and have enjoyed being involved with HHE, South Park Inn, CCMC Heme/Onc Crafts, Pediatric Scholars and the Pediatric Education and Service (PEdS) Group at UConn SOM. Outside of medical school I coach a Special Olympics Unified basketball team and love exploring the local ice cream scene, watching college basketball, going to the beach and spending time with family and friends.



David Guirguis

Year: MS4

Email: guirguis@uchc.edu

Hometown: Born in Egypt, raised in New York

Interests/hobbies: Sports, music, cooking, hiking, photography



Sorna Sarker

Year: D3

Email: sarker@uchc.edu

Hometown: Norwich, CT

Fun facts: My second major in undergrad was philosophy so I enjoy long discussions about things that are interesting but do not actually matter. I have lived in CT almost my whole life, and I did undergrad at UConn Storrs. I worked in an AmeriCorps program before coming to dental school. My main ways to relax during school are yoga and walks in the park with friends.



Talia Staiger

Year: D2

Email: staiger@uchc.edu

Hometown: Cromwell, CT

Fun facts: This is a picture of me enjoying some pie, which is one of my favorite foods. I went to UConn for college and I live at home with my parents, two cats, and snake. (big CT person) I love being outside, exercising, eating, and predicting which Briggs Meyer personality type my friends are.



Savannah Alvarado

Year: MS4

Email: salvarado@uchc.edu

Hometown: Burlington, CT

Fun facts: I love running, cooking, and meeting up with friends at one of the amazing local breweries. My family lives in Rhode Island and I can't resist a frequent weekend beach getaway to their house. I have a cat (Remmy) and it was quite challenging for me to find a photo of myself that didn't have him in it.



Walter Jongbloed

Year: MS4

Email: jongbloed@uchc.edu

Hometown: Madison, CT

Fun facts: I'm hoping to go into ENT, and I play tennis.



Kathryn Forth

Year: D3

Email: forth@uchc.edu

Hometown: Lakeville, MA

Fun facts: I love to bake and cook, I am always looking for new recipes to try. I am a huge Grey's Anatomy, Cats Of Instagram, and Harry Potter fan. In my free time I love to hike, and recently completed a trip to Denali National Park in Alaska!



Rebecca Joseph

Year: MS4

Email: rejoseph@uchc.edu

Hometown: Bethel, CT

Fun facts/interests: Hello! I am a fourth year medical student interested in radiology. I am passionate about medical student wellness and would love to share my experiences overcoming anxiety in medical school with you. I love all things food, so my favorite things to do are cook and try different restaurants! I also love to travel and spinning is my favorite form of exercise.



Alexandra (Allie) Goetjen

Year: MD/PhD Year 8

Email: agoetjen@uchc.edu

Hometown: New Milford, CT

Fun facts: My PhD project is on identifying and functionally characterizing genetic variants that may predispose individuals to developing alcohol use disorder (AUD). We use induced pluripotent stem cell-derived neural cultures as our model system, and it never ceases to amaze me how beautiful the intricacies of developmental biology are. I volunteer as a Crisis Counselor for Crisis Text Line and have counseled over 1000 individuals in helping them move to a state of cool calm. I aim to become an addiction psychiatrist once I complete my schooling.



Connor Milone

Year: MS3

Email: milone@uchc.edu

Hometown: Portland, CT -> Old Saybrook, CT

Fun facts: I love basketball, skiing, and ocean swimming. I touched Taylor Swift when I was 11 and haven't washed my hand since.



Jessa Sahl

Year: MS3

Email: jsahl@uchc.edu

Hometown: Avon, CT

Fun facts: I enjoy trail running, climbing, and am a classically trained singer. I went to South America between 1st and 2nd year of medical school to learn Spanish and travel.



Samantha Goldberg

Year: MS4

Email: goldburg@uchc.edu

Hometown: New York City

Fun facts: I love running around the reservoir and playing squash, especially with my mom.



Garrett Fontaine

Year: MS4

Email: gfontaine@uchc.edu

Hometown: Lebanon, NH

Fun facts:

- Enjoy staying active by hiking, running, and playing hockey.
- Hobbies: Wood working and fishing.
- Favorite self-care activities: spending time with my wife, mindfulness meditation, talking to my parents on the phone, and cooking!
- Fun fact: I am Reiki certified and my wife is a certified yoga instructor.
- Where next? Family Medicine in a northern New England.



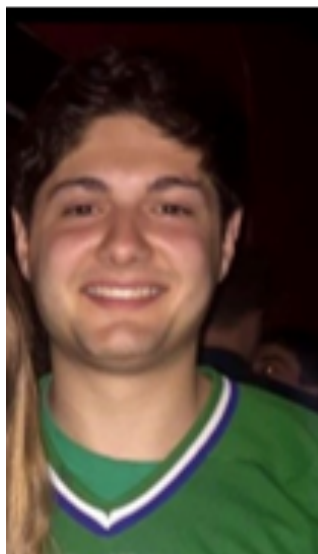
Roshni Patel

Year: D4

Email: roshpatel@uchc.edu

Hometown: Southington, CT

Fun facts: I enjoy trying to go through social media like instagram and pinterest to figure out new recipes to try at home! I probably make more mess than I can cook, but it's been really fun and great at releasing stress when school gets really hectic and I need to take my mind off!



Nick Maniatis

Year: D4

Email: maniatis@uchc.edu

Hometown: Shrewsbury, MA

Fun facts: Hi everyone! Before I got to Uconn Dental, I studied Chemistry at Holy Cross, and then took a year off to work at a pharmaceutical company. In my spare time I enjoy going to the movies, watching hockey and football, as well as taking the occasional weekend trip to Boston to visit friends. I've also found some great local places to unwind throughout my 2+ years living in the area; There are great concert venues, hiking spots, coffee shops, craft breweries, art museums, and pizza places (especially in New Haven). Feel free to reach out!



Ryan Carrera

Year: D2

Email: rcarrera@uchc.edu

Hometown: Silver Spring, Maryland

Fun facts: This is me midway through a 53 mile walk/run last year that I completed in 24 hours with no training. I'm interested in chemistry and finance, and planning to go into pediatric dentistry.



Elyse Estra

Year: D2

Email: estra@uchc.edu

Hometown: Woodbridge, CT

Fun facts: Hi everyone! I am quite introverted, but my voice is always heard when it comes to food and exercise. Some of my favorite foods include pizza and roasted paneer, and some of my favorite workouts include cycling and hiking. Fun fact, I trained in classical ballet until I was 18 years old. Nowadays, I am more likely to be exercising with friends or in a group fitness class (of course when it's safe again!). Dental and medical school can be quite stressful, and I am so grateful for my classmates who always offer their listening ears when I am in need. I hope to offer a friendly, safe face for anyone looking for the same.



Anya Brych

Year: M2

Email: brych@uchc.edu

Hometown: Middlebury, CT (originally born in Ukraine)

Fun facts:

- My party trick is wiggling my nose like Samantha in Bewitched
- I was born the day before Halloween and Fall is my favorite time of year
- My partner and I watch an unnecessary amount of true crime documentaries and conspiracy theory shows
- I ALWAYS have my headphones on with a podcast playing
- Some favs: The Daily, Hidden Brain, This American Life, Sinisterhood, and MFM
- I'm a cat mama to a 3 year old named Bellatrix



Dimitri Adamidis

Year: D3

Email: adamidis@uchc.edu

Hometown: Rocky Hill, CT

Fun facts: I majored from Trinity College Hartford in Classical Studies with a minor in Biology, and love learning about classical art and literature. I enjoy doing anything that involves the outdoors such as playing tennis, swimming, and spending time in nature. In my free time I enjoy playing the violin and working on cars. I have a passion for health and wellness and enjoy going to the gym and going for runs at the West Hartford Reservoir. I plan on becoming a General Dentist and hope to be the owner of my own practice one day.



Megan Civitello

Year: M2

Email: civitello@uchc.edu

Hometown: Middlebury, CT

Fun facts: I was a competitive dancer for 20 years, I love to travel and I am currently trying to learn to play the ukulele!



Mikayla Moynahan

Year: D3

Email: moynahan@uchc.edu

Hometown: Marlborough, MA

Fun facts: Hi! I am dental student and would love to talk with you! In my free time, I love to de-stress by spending time outdoors, hiking, and yoga. I also love painting and embroidery. Outside of school, my interests include collecting houseplants and spending time with family.



Kathryn Stevens

Year: M2

Email: stevens@uchc.edu

Hometown: Colchester, CT

Fun facts: Hello! My name is Katie and I graduated from UConn in 2018. I did an Americorps program in Denver before starting school last Fall. I enjoy hiking, skiing, and have just started getting into rock climbing! I love mysterious Netflix documentaries and my favorite podcast is The Moth.



Keara Bohannon

Year: M2

Email: bohannon@uchc.edu

Hometown: Bridgeport, CT

Fun facts: Hi, everyone! I'm originally from Black Rock in Bridgeport, CT and I'm now living in the Forest apartments across the street from the health center. I love traveling (COVID pls stop disrupting all my fun plans!!), going out dancing, having game nights with my friends and listening to true crime podcasts. My most recent quarantine obsession has been binging Avatar The Last Airbender and The Legend of Korra.



Keaven Caro

Year: MD/PhD, M2

Email: caro@uchc.edu

Hometown: New York

Fun facts: I was homeschooled up until college and the first time I was in a classroom was when I was taking the SAT. I grew up going to dance every day since I was 8 years old doing mostly ballet, modern and jazz. I started college as a dance major but fell in love with neuroscience my 2nd semester freshman year and eventually decided to commit my life to science. I like most nerdy things, e.g. video games, comics, anime, etc. I love Jesus and try to be the best person I can possibly be even though it is difficult sometimes! I am often very shy but try my best to reach out and talk to people anyway!



Purven Parikh

Year: M4

Email: pparikh@uchc.edu

Hometown: Wethersfield, CT

Fun facts: In my free time, I enjoy hiking, playing tennis, drawing, and finding new coffee shops where I can spend time reading.



Carli Wallace

Year: M4

Email: carwallace@uchc.edu

Hometown: Durham, CT

Fun facts: I love reading, knitting, baking bread, and being an overbearing parent to my plants. When I'm looking to be more active you'll find me on local hikes and intramural volleyball leagues.



Victor Munoz

Year: D3

Email: vmunoz@uchc.edu

Hometown: Newington, CT

Fun facts: I was born in Peru and lived there until I was 10

Hobbies: Playing/watching soccer, big Manchester United fan.

Interests: Fishing, outdoors activities, video games, dentistry



Natalia Kosyakova

Year: M2

Email: kosyakova@uchc.edu

Hometown: Newington, CT

Fun facts: I was born in Russia and came to CT when I was 9. I studied classical piano for most of my life and have been trying to get back into playing the piano. I love being outside exploring new places and have a bit of an obsession with bees (they are fascinating).



Michelle Rousseau

Year: D3

Email: mirousseau@uchc.edu

Hometown: Easthampton, MA

Fun facts: Hi my name is Michelle and I am a third year dental student here at UConn! Before dental school I was a manufacturing engineer for several years before deciding to change career paths. Although it has been the best decision I have made thus far, it has not come without a fair share of challenges. It was so important for me to have a good support system to help me through this transition which is why I joined Peer Support. I hope that I can be a part of your support system on your journey through medical or dental school. Some things I enjoy doing in my free time are rollerblading, exercising, skiing, cooking, crocheting, and watching hours on end of Youtube and 90 Day Fiance!



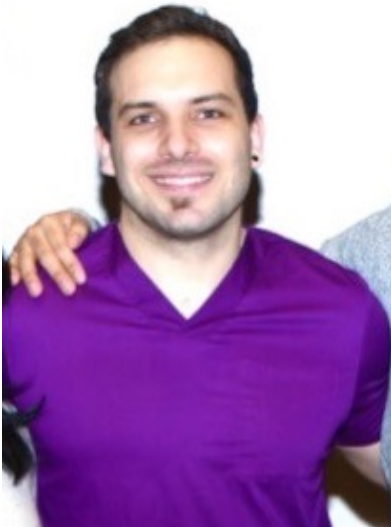
Farah Themistocle

Year: D3

Email: themistocle@uchc.edu

Hometown: Stratford, CT

Fun facts: Welcome to UConn! We're glad to have you here! I'm originally from Haiti but I call Stratford my home now. I really like working with my hands, going to museums, drawing, and a good laugh. When I'm not studying, you can catch me either reading or watching a good Korean drama. Recently, I've been really into watching some documentaries—so if you know any interesting ones, let me know!



Joshua Kwolek

Year: D3

Email: themistocle@uchc.edu

Hometown: Boston area (but also TN/KY for long stretches)

Fun facts: I'm an older married non-trad student. I worked in concert production in Nashville before deciding to further my education. I have too many other interests to mention, but I enjoy discussing pretty much anything from tissue engineering to pizza toppings.



Ryan Ciarlo

Year: M4

Email: ciarlo@uchc.edu

Hometown: Durham, CT

Fun facts: I spend all my free time outside, no matter the season. I'm halfway through hiking and camping in all the American National Parks. I follow New England sports and play basketball whenever I can. I listen to and play all different kinds of music. My obsession lately has been geology, and I could talk your ear off about the water topography of the American Southwest.



Anita Luxkaranayagam

Year: M2

Email: luxkaranayagam@uchc.edu

Hometown: Newtown, CT

Fun facts: My favorite quote is "What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" which alludes to how I try to make the most of life. I love listening to various genres of music, but you'll probably catch me listening to Kendrick Lamar most of the time. In my free time, I also enjoy traveling, visiting museums, and hanging out with friends. One thing on my bucket list is to make a movie or write a book.



Kathleen Morrisroe

Year: M2

Email: morrisroe@uchc.edu

Hometown: Glastonbury, CT

Fun facts: I went to UNC, I have a husky named Luna and I love to go to the gym in my free time!



Joseph Mandil

Year: D3

Email: mandil@uchc.edu

Hometown: Brooklyn, NY

Fun facts: I speak 5 languages and I love soccer!



Vipra Patel

Year: D4

Email: vippatel@uchc.edu

Hometown: Shelton, CT

Fun facts: I've moved around a lot! I was born in New Jersey, moved to California right after till I was five, Michigan for a decade, and then to Connecticut right before my senior year of High School. I have always enjoyed drawing and painting. So, during this quarantine I started learning how to use water colors. I enjoy exploring new places, travelling, and hiking. One of my favorite TV shows is Friends (basic I know). I also love cheese!!! Some other facts about me are that I am left-handed and I have never eaten meat.



Nicole Colon Cruz

Year: D2

Email: coloncruz@uchc.edu

Hometown: Puerto Rico

Fun facts: I love spending time with friends, trying out new food, and going to the beach. I am very passionate about wellness so I love taking care of myself, meditating and staying active.



Saparja Nag

Year: M2

Email: nag@uchc.edu

Hometown: Cheshire, CT

Fun facts: In my spare time, I enjoy running in new places, cooking new recipes, and feeding old and new friends (all from a distance these days!)



Ruby Feng

Year: M2

Email: rfeng@uchc.edu

Hometown: Old Lyme, CT

Fun facts: I was a graduate of Wellesley College where I was a Media Arts and Science Major. When I'm not studying, I enjoy playing tennis and squash, drawing, cooking, and find new restaurants to try out.



Carlos Cardenas-Peralta

Year: D2

Email: cardenasperalta@uchc.edu

Hometown: I am from Ecuador. Moved to Danbury, CT at the age of 12. I've been in CT since then.

Fun facts: Love to read books about different cultures within my country of origin. I like to cook and currently trying to start baking Ecuadorian biscuits and sweets. I love to travel. I enjoy playing soccer and tennis. Biking is something I definitely see myself doing more often. I love to know more about health and technology.