

ODASIS

MAGAZINE

Office for Diversity and Academic Success in the Sciences



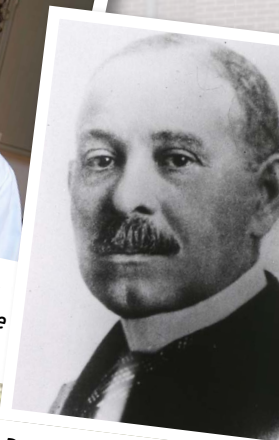
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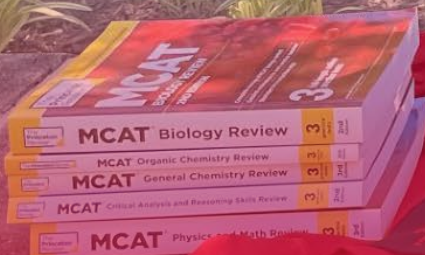
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Eat your books!

RUTGERS

School of Arts and Sciences

Coming Home—The ODASIS Alumni Reception

By: Abigail Alvarez



The energy in the room was palpable: vibrant excitement tinged with a bit of wistful nostalgia. Pianist, Rhicki Santos, played a soft melody that danced in the atmosphere as alumni filled up Douglass Lounge. Laughter, smiles, and light conversation between seasoned and new physicians illuminated the room. Whether someone has been practicing for years or just graduated from medical school, a sense of unity, accomplishment, and eagerness brought everyone together. This was more than just an alumni reception; this was a homecoming.

On Friday, April 21, 2023, the Office of Diversity and Academic Success in the Sciences (ODASIS) hosted its annual Alumni Reception and ODASIS Graduation Ceremony at the Douglass Student Center in Douglass Lounge and Traves Hall. This event is committed to merging the past with the future, allowing current ODASIS students to connect with ODASIS alumni. Even years or decades later, ODASIS alumni return for this opportunity to reconnect and inspire the next generation of medical professionals to graduate from the ODASIS program.

ODASIS hosts its alumni reception to maintain alumni engagement with the program and see where their medical careers have taken them. The dedication of these alumni can be attributed to the relationships that Director, Dr. Kamal Khan, fosters with all of his students both young and old. The endearing stories and memories serve as a testament to his love for the ODASIS program and his students even years after

they graduate. Even at an institution as large as Rutgers, ODASIS represents the value of cultivating a community.

Alumni in attendance for the reception received red carnation boutonnieres and gift bags filled with Rutgers swag as a token of appreciation. Light refreshments were provided as well. Over 60 alumni came to the event, with some even joining online via Zoom or phone. Despite their busy schedules as medical professionals, each alum in the room took time out of their day to celebrate with fellow alumni and honor graduating students.

Pediatric dentist Pamela Ledig graduated from Rutgers in 2005 and now has her practice in Bloomfield, New Jersey called Itsy Bitsy Dental. She reflects on the motivation that the ODASIS program brought her throughout her journey toward becoming a dentist. “The program energizes you to keep going. There’s so much work and so many things to be doing,” says Ledig.

Reminiscing about her in the ODASIS program allows her to appreciate how far she has come since then. For Ledig, attending the alumni reception and graduation ceremony means that she can inspire future physicians, assuring them that they have a bright future ahead: “I get to come back and say that your work will pay off in the end.”

Her fellow ODASIS classmate Dr. Michael Ruzek shares the same sentiment. Dr. Ruzek graduated from Rutgers in 2005 and is a physician who specializes in osteopathic medicine and emergency medicine at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Barnabas Health.

He attended the ODASIS alumni reception because of his love for the community: “The alumni and individuals in this room are like a second family to many of us.” The family emerges as a common theme, connecting all the alumni to the ODASIS program regardless of how far they go in their careers.

Dr. Ruzek emphasizes the value of the dedicated support system that ODASIS offers to all of its current students and alumni. He attributes this level of engagement and unity to his success. The benefits, life lessons, and connections of ODASIS are life-changing and long-lasting. His advice to ODASIS graduates emphasizes that. “Nurture these contacts. Nurture these friendships. These are contacts and friendships that you will have forever,” he says.

Regardless of whether someone graduated last semester or last decade, ODASIS alumni cherish the valuable connections from the program. Featured speaker and Douglass Residential College Alum Dr. Ginia Pierre graduated in 1987, yet she continues to show her love and support for ODASIS. Dr. Pierre’s extensive experience as a family doctor traveling all over the United States and even to Ghana reflects her accomplishments. However, no matter how far Dr. Pierre goes, she always returns home.

“I have nothing but fond memories. I actually credit the program for my success

today,” she says. Since graduating, Dr. Pierre has attended multiple ODASIS Alumni Receptions throughout the years. Her dedication to the program represents the transformative experience that ODASIS provides its students. “I still remember being a student wondering about my future. Today, they can see that their future does occur. Their future can be thriving and happy. They can enjoy the path that they set decades ago.”

The benefits of ODASIS span across generations. Two 2023 graduating seniors Jada Mitchell and Genesis Isuiza were recognized, receiving the Essien Award and the Dennis Award to propel their future careers in medicine. In a room full of distinguished alumni, these two graduating seniors were able to see the incredible future ahead of them. Each figure represented a different story, a different career, and a different path—all leading back to the ODASIS program.

The ODASIS alumni reception is more than a reception, but is an opportunity to showcase the diverse and inspiring journeys through medicine. Hosting this annual reception illustrates the exceptional and irreplaceable memories that come with being a part of this encouraging community. No matter how many years pass or how far you travel, ODASIS will always be home.



Daniel Hale Williams, Breaker of Barriers

By: Dr. Francine Conway, Chancellor of Rutgers University–New Brunswick



Why invest in ODASIS, the Scarlet Guarantee, and Rutgers–New Brunswick’s many other initiatives that make higher education more accessible to students of color and other underrepresented groups?

Because, despite the great strides our society has made, subtle and systemic barriers persist. And they cannot always be overcome by an individual’s brilliance, hard work, or supportive “village” of family, teachers, and mentors.

These barriers may take the form of a K-12 system unprepared to see the potential in some students. Or in so-called “gateway” courses—prerequisites that, nationally, have had higher failure rates for students of certain backgrounds. Or in academic, advising, and support systems that are not designed to support the diverse needs of all students. Or as obstacles within the professions and industries of the post-academic world.

Those of us who come from disadvantaged backgrounds or were the first in our families to attend college understand this reality. And when we overcome the odds and find success, we turn to groups like ODASIS who will help us dismantle those barriers for the next generation.

This work of holding the door open for those who come next is exemplified in the life of someone I described when I spoke at the ODASIS Alumni Reception and Graduation Ceremony this past April.

Daniel Hale Williams was an African American physician, pioneer of open-heart surgery, founder of the first American hospital with a nursing and intern program with a multiracial staff, and co-founder of the National Medical Association—impressive feats for a Black man born in 1856 in Pennsylvania. The following details are courtesy of Kentake Page, Biography.com, and Forbes.

Williams graduated from Chicago Medical College in 1883 and built a reputation as an exceptional surgeon—but remained aware of

the widespread discrimination against those who looked like him.

Few medical establishments were willing to serve Chicago’s Black residents or hire Black doctors. So Williams worked to create Provident Hospital and Training School for Nurses in 1891, the first such facility to hire a racially integrated staff.

One night in 1893, a young man was rushed to Provident after having been stabbed in the chest. Without modern amenities such as antibiotics, blood transfusions, or effective anesthesia, Williams performed one of the world’s first successful open-heart surgeries. The patient reportedly lived 20 more years.



Williams worked with the Equal Rights League and donated to Meharry Medical College, the NAACP, Howard University, and other organizations that helped make medical education accessible to Black students. He died in 1931. He once

told an audience, “Do not be deterred by the thought you may encounter antagonism. Few enterprises, even those for the betterment of mankind, have smooth sailing.”

Rutgers–New Brunswick, a proudly diverse and world-class institution, is similarly committed to helping our qualified and dedicated students achieve their goals.

Through our implementation of the Academic Master Plan, we are launching new initiatives such as Discovery Advantage, a reimagining of the student experience from enrollment to retention and ultimately graduation; ScarletWell, a public health and prevention-focused approach to mental health and wellness; 15+ to Finish, which connects students with the resources they need to graduate on time and minimize debt by completing at least 15 credits per semester; and more.

We will share updates on these initiatives, and invite ongoing community input, during the coming months. And we are proud to echo the work of Daniel Hale Williams who achieved great things not just for himself, but for those who would follow.

Infectious and Illuminating Wisdom



Dr. Denise Rodgers, Vice Chancellor of Interprofessional Programs at Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences, was invited by Dr. Khan to the Alumni Reception and Graduating Ceremony as another key speaker. Referencing many quotes of the famed author and poet Maya

Angelou, Dr. Rodgers moved the audience in a thought-provoking speech.

Dr. Rodgers commended the students and alumni, hoping that they feel accomplished for their hard work, joyous for the end of their college years, nostalgic for the friends and memories they made, and optimistic for their futures. “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel,” she quotes.

To Be in ODASIS and Medicine



Dr. Elorm Avakame, a man of many academic and professional achievements, was one of the Alumni Reception’s key speakers who left an impression on the audience with his riveting words and humble attitude.

While starting off with erupting laughs from those present, such as thanking Dr. Khan for posting his baby picture and remarking on his lack of facial hair in the years past, Dr. Avakame continued onto a speech that moved the room to applause.

Dr. Avakame commented that the rigor of ODASIS’ sessions and classes are the essence of what it means to be in ODASIS. “There are a lot of universities in this country,” Dr. Avakame said. “But there are very few of them that send so many underrepresented students into medicine, dentistry, physical therapy, pharmacy, and all other health professions, so many that they can fill up a room as large as this room. We do that here, and we do it

In her speech, Dr. Rodgers comments on the severe backlash that the Black Lives Matter movement faced and how the systematic racism that has run rampant over the course of America’s history have led to racial inequality in physical health, mental health, and health care. She calls to the students and alumni to act. “It is imperative that you become committed to doing your part to eliminate health and healthcare disparities,” Dr. Rodgers said. “Going back to Maya Angelou, ‘Do the best you can until you know better. And when you know better, do better.’”

As closing remarks, Dr. Rodgers not only reminds the audience to take care of their own health, like getting enough sleep and eating healthily, but also to never let go of their dreams in tough times. “Don’t let anyone take away your dreams,” she said. “Have the courage to dream, have the courage to hold onto that dream even in the face of adversity, and have the courage to achieve that dream.”

every year. And we do it because of ODASIS.” With these words, Dr. Avakame believes in ODASIS’s impact, and how the program means so much for the underrepresented students, who wouldn’t have had the same opportunity in other universities.

What added to the touching atmosphere of Dr. Avakame’s anecdote was how he saved an infant’s life. Faced with what could have been the inescapable fate of fatality, that being an eight-month-old who had open-heart surgery, Dr. Avakame did not give up. A ray of hope, he reassured the infant’s mother that her child would be in the best of care and that there was still a reasonable chance of survival – such words were not said in vain as after days of fighting, the infant’s health improved miraculously.

Dr. Avakame’s speech demonstrated his persistence in unison with his genuine, compassionate nature, characteristics of what make medicine and patient care what it is today. Whether he is in a classroom or a hospital room, Dr. Avakame continues to inspire the people around him, providing invaluable insight on the path to medicine and the fulfillment that comes from caring for people in need.

Thanks to our program donors!

ODASIS would like to thank all alumni for their generosity and contributions and would like to highlight those that donated during 2022-2023:

- Dr. Shirley Angel
- Dr. Alain Bauza
- Dr. Margarita Borghini
- Dr. John Castillo
- Dr. Christopher Chisolm
- Ms. Taruna Chugeria
- Dr. Shereen Dahab
- Mr. & Mrs. Emmet Dennis Jr.
- Dr. Kenechi Ebede
- Dr. Norman Einstein
- Dr. Evelyn Escobar
- Dr. Roland Theodore Hamilton
- Dr. Olamide Ifaturoti
- Dr. Paul Johnson
- Dr. Cindy Johnston
- Dr. Nancy “Muffin” Lord
- Ms. Gabriela Magdaleno
- Dr. Tiffany Martinez
- Mrs. Chrystal McArthur
- Dr. Thobekile Ndlovu
- Dr. Ijeoma Njoku
- Mr. Glenn Noland
- Dr. Amaka Omoniyi
- Dr. Herbert Pardes
- Dr. Karla Perez-Goldberg
- Dr. Schubert Perotte
- Dr. Elsa Pichardo
- Dr. Susan Rasul
- Dr. Laury Rosefort
- Dr. Michael Ruzek
- Dr. Owolabi Shonuga
- Dr. Corey and Mrs. Allison Smith
- Dr. Danitza Velazquez
- Dr. Whitney Smith
- Dr. Jose Otero
- Ms. Renee Reed
- Dr. Chioma Nwosu
- Dr. Garfield Miller

Make a donation to ODASIS



go.rutgers.edu/ODASIS-donate

Sources for the life of Daniel Hale Williams:

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Family Trauma Inspires Rutgers Senior to Pursue Medical Career

Daniel Ortega wanted to become a physician since middle school when his brother ended up in the emergency department, but he kept his dream a secret for years because it seemed out of reach.

Witnessing a transformative moment in his life inspired him to join the small number of Hispanic men entering medicine. After his family received a call in the middle of the night, Daniel remembers the power that a doctor can have in healing his patient.

“My mom picked up the phone. She did not speak any English. She panicked and thought my brother had died,” Ortega said.

He remembers rushing to the emergency department, feeling scared and thinking about the arguments he had with his brother over unimportant and trivial matters.

“We got there and although he looked horrible because of a physical altercation, my brother was sitting there talking to the doctors who were making him feel

better physically and mentally,” Ortega said. “Seeing how a physician helped to create an environment where my relationship with him went from a type of sibling rivalry to what we have today inspired me to go into medicine.”

Ortega will graduate in May with a degree in biological sciences, a 4.0 cumulative grade point average and will fulfill the middle school promise to himself when he starts medical school at Columbia University in August.

“There were times that I didn’t think it would happen because I knew how hard it was,” said Ortega, a senior in the School of Arts and Sciences at Rutgers-New Brunswick. “I looked at the average number of Hispanics in medicine and the underrepresented minorities and worried that it might not happen, so I did not want to make any announcement.”

Ortega is among a new group of minority men deciding to become doctors. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), first year medical school enrollment experienced significant gains among

historically marginalized racial and ethnic groups. While enrollment increased more than 20 percent among Black and 7 percent among Hispanic, Latino or Spanish medical school students, the majority are women.

The 22-year-old North Brunswick resident, who has been on the Dean’s List since he got to Rutgers, remembers when he was a young boy and school wasn’t as important. “After learning more about the night my brother was admitted to the emergency department and how big of a supportive role the doctor had on him, I became focused on my studies in high school and beyond so that I could have a chance of getting into medical school.”

His plan, however, came to a halt and could have gone off-track entirely. In the fall semester of sophomore year, Ortega had to have surgery to remove a benign tumor in his jaw. The golf-ball size tumor, and the cyst growing on top of it, left him in pain, unable to eat and in the hospital for a week.

“They had to remove a big portion of my jaw; it was not an easy time,” Ortega said. “I remember waking up from surgery and finding it pretty hard to even breathe.”

Still, he took it day by day. Ortega learned to appreciate the small things, like being able to drink a glass of apple juice. Once out of the hospital and recovering at home, Ortega would wake up early, go through old class materials and lectures, reach out to his professors and do all he could to catch up.

“Despite the setbacks, Daniel completed the semester with all A’s and was able to flourish,” said Kamal Khan, director of the Office for Diversity and Academic Success in the Sciences (ODASIS) at Rutgers, which works to increase the recruitment and

academic success of underrepresented and disadvantaged students interested in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math). “His tenacity and adaptability are remarkable and will serve him well as a future physician.”

Ortega believes in giving back to the community. For three years he served, first as a third responder providing support to EMTs and then as an EMT and Crew Chief for North Brunswick First Aid and Rescue. He received the squad’s Excellence in Patient Care Award and the Two Years of Volunteer Service Award.

“I really felt good about being able to be there even when I wasn’t delivering direct emergency care,” said Ortega. “There were times when someone couldn’t speak English and I talked to them in Spanish, and they appeared to become more comfortable and understood we were there to help them.”

Khan said Ortega’s “calm and trustworthy” demeanor has enabled him to develop a good rapport with everyone he works with. He is also tutoring students planning to take the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). It’s the first time Ortega has been an instructor, in charge of teaching those like him who want to become physicians. He wants to offer them the same help that others have given him over the years.

“It’s been a learning experience,” said Ortega. “I know I’ve been hard on them, like I’ve always been on myself. I truly believe each of them has developed skills and habits that will serve them in their future as physicians.”

Welcome new SAS Executive Dean Juli Wade



Juli is a Distinguished Professor in the Department of Psychology. An academic leader and scholar, she has a clear understanding of the important role that public, land-grant, research-intensive institutions serve for their home communities, states, and the nation. Juli’s research, funded by the National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation, focused on understanding the hormonal and genetic factors that regulate brain structure and behavior.

Juli has served as Dean for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Connecticut, and previously worked at Michigan State University for nearly 25 years serving in many roles including Associate Provost for Faculty and Academic Staff Development and as Chair of the Department of Psychology.

“I am eager to connect with you and continue to share the great work going on at SAS, and our plans for the future as we work toward a new, unified vision for SAS.”



EOF on the Move

Working in Meow-dicine



We are proud of our new veterinarian. University and ODASIS graduate Dayana Perez (EOF) recently graduated from the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. Having completed her education at Rutgers in 2016 with a major in animal science and public health and a minor in biology, the Ecuadorian-born alum is now a practicing veterinarian in a primary and urgent care in Hoboken, New Jersey.

Coming to the United States, Dayana observed in lower income and minority areas that families and animals experienced a lack of care and resources to take care of themselves, the people around them, and their pets. Such issues were all too familiar to Dayana's early childhood in Ecuador, thus pushing her desire to work in the field of medicine to take care of animals. "You have to realize that there are a lot of other things that families are struggling with, usually with their own health, their kids, and their family members at home," Dayana said. "It's hard to put all of that aside to take care of their pet. It's rough when dealing with that. They want to do more for their pets, but they don't have the financial ability to do so."

Dayana's favorite aspect about working with animals is educating owners. "It's like having your human doctor," Dayana said. "Sometimes you tell them how you feel and what you have. They'll send you some medication or send you to another location, but often they don't take the time to explain things. It's important, especially for better medicine. Pets can't tell their owner their needs, so it is important for the owners to understand what we are doing, why we are doing it, and what to look out for." Stressing the significance of a veterinarian's role in medicine, Dayana informs her clients of what they should do to take care of their pets before the direction of their health takes a turn for the worse.

An ODASIS alum, Dayana is grateful for their support on her journey to become a vet who strives to make a difference. It is with ODASIS, their guidance, and their resources, that Dayana believes in their importance to her and many other students who were not so fortunate to get academic help in the past. As there are many students coming from a minority background that had neither resource nor guidance to succeed, ODASIS was there to change their lives for the better. "ODASIS are our cheerleaders to keep us going," Dayana said.

Where there's a wall, they can be broken. Dayana hopes that ODASIS students will follow her advice to keep their goals high, push through their hardships, and be welcome of the detours that take place in their journey. We wish Dayana the best of luck on her animal adventures!

An EOF Student's Journey



Recent Education Opportunity Fund (EOF) student and Rutgers- ODASIS alumna Maame-Afua Ansah is a first-year medical student at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. She has always been fascinated with science and how the body functions. Her vision of patient care was solidified by the care and subsequent death of her grandfather.

What also made her pursue medicine was the lack of black women doctors in the field, a field where it's important to understand where people are coming from. "Being able to treat people with who they are in mind and with their culture and identity at the forefront is important because it plays a role," Maame said. "People's backgrounds, people's language, their culture: it affects their decisions, it affects the way they think, and it matters. It was something I felt was important to me, and I wanted to impact other people's lives in that way."

Studying Biology as an undergraduate, Maame stepped into the ODASIS office, where their resources and the love from Dr. Khan, their advisors, and tutors came to her aid. While acknowledging how much of a family

ODASIS has become to her, she also values their importance in helping her improve as a student. "At the beginning, I was struggling with my study methods and how to be a good student, but ODASIS showed me how," Maame said. "That support went beyond academics: it was teaching me how to be a disciplined individual or be someone who gets up in the mornings."

ODASIS was not her only support system. Maame was also a participant in the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF), another pillar that lifted her to be the best she could be. Through the program's opportunities, Maame was exposed to the Summer Undergraduate Medical Experience (SUMEx), where she developed the skills and experiences necessary to be a suitable applicant for medical school. She thanks the friends she made, the tutors, and the advisors who were there for her when she needed it the most. "There's a whole list of counselors that EOF has," Maame said. "They're always handing out many great opportunities, always checking up on us, and sometimes it's easy to withdraw and find yourself in a corner, but EOF counselors will come to find you wherever you are,"

To get to your goals, it cannot be done alone. For Maame, it was ODASIS and EOF that acted as her village. She hopes that such programs continue to exist so they will help other students who need them just as much as they helped her. "I can guarantee that without ODASIS, I wouldn't have made it this far," Maame said. "I'm sure that there are many people who share the same sentiment."

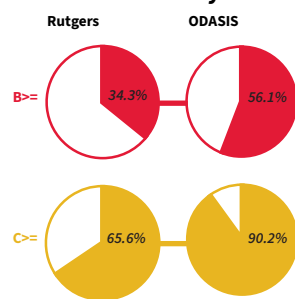
AAMC under represented statistics for 2022-2023

In 2022-2023, the AAMC ranked Rutgers:

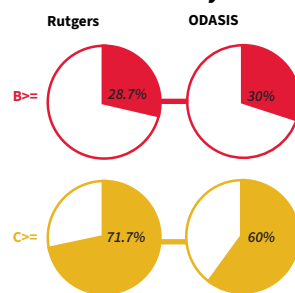
- **16th out of 116** schools in number of African American applicants to medical school
- **30th out of 138** schools in number of Hispanic/Latino/Spanish applicants to medical school

**Grade Comparisons
Fall 2022**

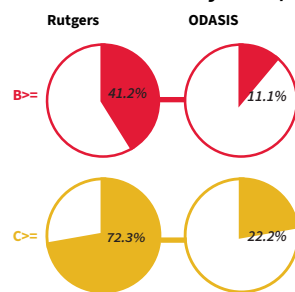
General Chemistry - 161



General Chemistry - 162



General Chemistry - 165/166



Our Doctors, Their Stories

The Testament of Determination and Commitment



Rutgers and ODASIS alumni Dr. Elsa Marisol Pichardo has been in practice as a surgeon at Princeton Medical Center in Princeton, New Jersey for over five years. During her time there, she has performed many surgical procedures and other tasks, from taking out gall bladders and hernia repair, to teaching surgical residents and students, which she credits ODASIS for. “I just love the learning aspect of things, being able to ask questions freely,” Dr. Pichardo said. “I think ODASIS really helps you with that. They really do promote asking questions. They give you as much knowledge as you can take. I love that environment. Because it was so motivating with me in undergrad, every step I’ve gone through and every location I’ve been to, I’ve always tried to just keep on with the teaching.”

Dr. Pichardo started out as an undergraduate at Rutgers, double majoring in Psychology and Biology on top of being in the Honors Program. At ODASIS, she could tutor and be advised by the program. She learned about giving back to her community as well as discipline, qualities crucial in ODASIS and medicine. “Dr. Khan has been such an outspoken individual in that if you put in the work, you can make it happen,” Dr. Pichardo said. “Having that belief system in ODASIS, people believe. Yes, you will get into medical school. Yes, you will become a doctor. You just have to put in the work, but it will happen. Because there are opportunities out there, you just have to be disciplined enough to put in the work.”

As a Latina surgeon, the following surgeon can be made. It does not matter who is in the scrubs: the stereotypes of a surgeon to be a man continue to prevail. However, the support from her community, as well as the support of female surgeons, women and Spanish-speaking patients outshines the struggles of being a woman of color in surgery. “I love being supported as a minority doctor,” Dr. Pichardo said. “I have Spanish-speaking patients that I take care of. Their faces light up when I start talking to them in Spanish. I love being able to bond with my patients that way and I think that’s great, too, that you have the ability to provide a real service to people.”

To find success in both the ODASIS program, it takes commitment to make the most of what the program has to offer, and not to take it for granted. Thanks to these experiences and skills, Dr. Pichardo’s story is a testament of dedication, perseverance, and hard work in the medical field.

Instrumental Materials to Success



Getting to such a prominent level of achievements was no walk in the park for Dr. Lasanta Horana, who has been dedicated to his education and career in emergency medicine for over 25 years. Graduating from Rutgers for a double major in Biology and African Studies in 1997, Dr. Horana pursued a master’s at Rutgers in Molecular Genetics and Microbiology, then getting into Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in 2000. After graduating in 2004, he went to Johns Hopkins for emergency medicine residency for three years, doing one year of fellowship in ER administration. Since his return to RWJ in 2008, Dr. Horana currently finds himself at RWJ Hamilton as both Assistant Medical Director to the Emergency Department for 15 years and the Chair of Emergency Medicine for five years.

Dr. Horana credits ODASIS and Dr. Khan for their contributions to not only his career path, but also to many other students. “Pre-med curriculum can be very tough; it can be very competitive,” Dr. Horana said. “We got a

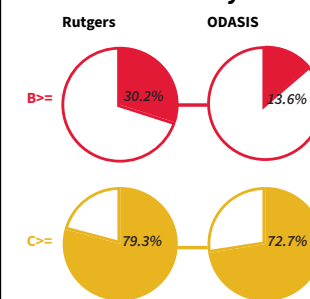
lot of people, and you need every advantage and every help that you can get. ODASIS was a huge part of that, providing extra tutoring and Dr. Khan would call me weekly to make sure that we were all studying, that we would get prepared for exams, that we were going to show up to tutoring, and the progress. That really helped to get a well-rounded application for medical school.”

Many students of various backgrounds come to ODASIS, where they have access to countless opportunities and resources, features they did not have prior to getting accepted to Rutgers. Dr. Horana was no exception to this, being from a high school that had extremely limited honors and AP classes and resources. Coming to Rutgers, he noticed during lectures that he was further behind the other students; it was difficult to keep up. Thankfully, Dr. Horana came to ODASIS, where they not only provided him these resources: they taught him key strategies – how to study, how to approach a class, how to be an effective test taker, how to organize material – Dr. Horana believes these approaches are what close the gap between the students privileged to have these resources and the students that were not.

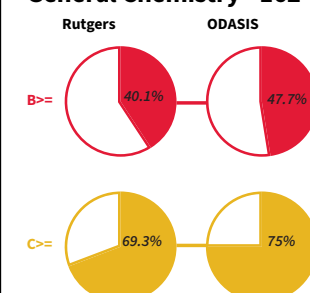
“If ODASIS was to go away, the students would suffer greatly,” Dr. Horana said. “I think that Dr. Khan has dedicated his life to providing this resource by looking at the numerous graduates that come back and speak on his behalf and speak on behalf of the program. The support that they lend is a testament to how important and vital this program is, to not just Rutgers University, but just to allied health professional fields in New Jersey.”

**Grade Comparisons
Spring 2023**

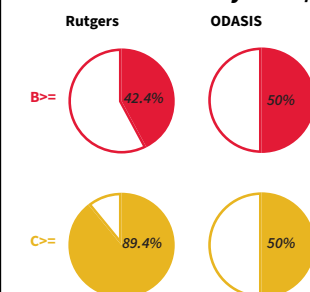
General Chemistry - 161



General Chemistry - 162



General Chemistry - 165/166



A Second Chance to Thrive



Dr. Jason Smith majored in biology, studying at Morehouse College before transferring and coming to Rutgers University as a postgraduate student. With Dr. Khan taking him under his wing as a student of ODASIS, Dr. Smith's life changed for the better. "Dr. Khan was kind of like that father figure that made sure I did what I was supposed to do," Dr. Smith said. "He held me to a standard that few others at that time in my life really held me to. It instilled in me this work ethic that's continued through medical school. Dr. Khan is somebody who I'm very grateful to."

Following his graduation with an undergraduate degree, Dr. Smith was not able to make it into medical school and graduate school. Despite feeling like he had failed, Dr. Khan did not give up on Dr. Smith, providing an opportunity that he could not ignore. "Dr. Khan really reached back for somebody who other people gave up on," Dr. Smith said. "At that point, I was actually on my way to just saying, 'Okay, you know what? I've got my degree, but I'm not in med school. I don't know what I'm doing with it. I'm just going to be a teacher.' There's nothing wrong with being a teacher. I think that's a very commendable job. My father was a teacher. But no, I was gonna be a teacher just because I didn't know what to do with my life at that point in time. I never made a plan for my life outside of being in medicine. And Dr. Khan gave me that chance."

Dr. Smith flourished with this opportunity at ODASIS. Currently, Dr. Smith works in the Atlantic Healthcare System, specifically Morristown Larson Medical Center. Not only does he serve as the Chair of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and is a clinical physician for pain, but he is also the Associate Director of Rehab, a system-wide role that applies to not only Morristown but also Overlook Medical Center. With such success in his career, Dr. Smith's story is only proof that everyone deserves a second chance to turn their lives around.

The Magnitudes of Mentorship

Rutgers University and ODASIS alum Dr. Ranjith Ramsamy (EOF) is currently an associate professor and director of reproductive neurology at the University of Miami. Not only did he benefit from participating in ODASIS, but he was also an instructor for the program, helping students climb the ladder to accomplishment in their studies. Recently, he received the Gold Cystoscope Award from the American Urology Association: the highest award in neurology.

As Dr. Ramsamy also taught the MCAT courses, he highly recommends students on the track of taking the MCAT to take more practice exams to better their chances of flourishing when the time comes to take the official exam. "As much as people wait to use the practice test till the end to see how they're doing, I think it's also important to use it as a study guide," Dr. Ramsamy said. "Keep taking



more and more practice tests, learn from them, and study the questions from them because at some point, all these questions will

become routine and standard. You will know how to answer these questions."

Dr. Ramsamy knew how much he loved mentoring and teaching, further solidified by his experience with ODASIS. Now in the workforce as a urologist, he spends much of his crucial time mentoring and teaching daily. Regarding his students who want to go on the path he does, he believes that what they should do is not to follow him but to carve their own paths and seek mentorship. "Even though you become a mentor, you still require mentors," he said. "You can relate with people who can help you along, both with successes and failures. People who can show you what is right and what is wrong."

It is important to follow a mentor's advice. Additionally, it is important to build strong

connections and communication with them. Dr. Ramsamy understands this fact well, advising students to do the same. "You will need mentors in your life, both in your career and outside of your career, and follow their advice and be a good mentee," Dr. Ramsamy said. "Make sure you follow their advice. If you're not going to follow that advice, tell them why you are not following it and make sure you have a good reason. That relationship can be very fruitful for both you as well as hopefully the mentor that's helping you."

ODASIS prepared Dr. Ramsamy's future in both teaching and urology. His words of wisdom and flourishing career will inspire future ODASIS students and graduates as they create their own story while they also find mentors to guide them on the journey beyond.

Remembering Your Roots

Interview with Dr. Wylie Lopez

By: Abigail Alvarez



and elevate his understanding. Because of the academic tools that ODASIS provided, he transformed from a B and C student in his first year of college, to a straight-A student for the rest of his undergraduate career.

Despite academically excelling and receiving a full scholarship to Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Dr. Lopez is proud of his humble beginnings. "I think the most important thing is not forgetting your roots. Being around a lot of people that were like me always reminds me where I come from and why it's so important to use my Spanish when I'm taking care of patients to be able to connect with people." As a first-generation Hispanic student, Dr. Lopez understands the impact of representation, support, and connection within the medical community, especially among the patients he serves.

Even though his path was not easy, Dr. Lopez made sure to take advantage of ODASIS resources, challenging himself to be the best version of himself as he prepared for his future medical career. He is exceptionally grateful for having access to such opportunities as an undergraduate student. Dr. Lopez encourages current ODASIS students to do the same, advising them to be an advocate, take initiative, and work hard as they embark on their own medical journeys: "I invite the people who are in the unique position and lucky enough to have [the ODASIS program] in front of them to go all out. If you don't go all out, who else is there to blame?"

Dr. Wylie Lopez was the first one in his family to go to college. With little guidance or direction, he joined ODASIS to gain a better sense of how to navigate being a pre-med student at Rutgers University. "If it wasn't for ODASIS, I wouldn't have gotten into medical school. There's no doubt about that," Dr. Lopez says. Today, he is a spine surgeon practicing at Jersey Shore Medical Center, JFK Medical Center, and Ocean Medical Center.

Through the ODASIS program, Dr. Lopez learned the importance of structure. He took advantage of the variety of tutoring and class opportunities, working to improve his studying habits. Rather than just memorizing the material, Dr. Lopez gained valuable insight into how to enrich his medical knowledge

Bottom: Gold Cystoscope Award winner Dr. Ramsamy and Dr. Kamal Khan.

How to Make a Dream Come True



Left, top: Dr. Gonzales (center) standing alongside his family.

Rutgers and ODASIS alum Dr. Manuel Gonzales was only 15 when he was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma. After going through a year of chemotherapy treatment, he realized he wanted to go into medicine. Working for his dream to become a reality, Dr. Gonzales graduated from Rutgers in 2016 with a major in biological sciences and a minor in psychology before taking the next step of his medical journey in Philadelphia with Jefferson Medical School, where he attended from 2016 to 2020. Dr. Gonzales is currently working as a fellow in pediatrics at Nemours Children’s Hospital following his residency training there.

Throughout the course of his medical career, Dr. Gonzales found the most enjoyment in giving back by educating others. At ODASIS, he was not just a student, but in the second half of his time there, he was also a science instructor and the MCAT instructor in medical school. Dr. Gonzales gives his gratitude to Dr. Khan and all who

have supported him at ODASIS, where he acknowledged how much he loved to teach and help others learn. “[ODASIS] were really the first ones to allow me to realize that it’s one thing to have success as you go through ODASIS, but it’s another thing to be able to give back and be an educator,” Dr. Gonzales said. “That does not end with ODASIS. That is something that continues as you go through medical training. You must educate your peers, or trainees, or medical students, or anything like that as you advance through your training.”

For Dr. Gonzales to get to the level of success that he has, he had to find a compromise. In exchange for weekends, winter, and spring breaks, he attended ODASIS’s supplemental sessions and MCAT classes. Despite the sacrifice, Dr. Gonzales believed it to be a necessity. He recommends students attending ODASIS to learn how to commit to these programs to accomplish their goals, even when it can get difficult. “It’s all done with the recognition that ODASIS is focusing on making sure that we have more providers in the long run in the medical field that are more representative of the patient population that we treat,” Dr. Gonzales said. “It is a huge advantage to be part of ODASIS.”

Dr. Gonzales was able to pave the path to success with his diligence and ambitious attitude. With the love and support of ODASIS, as well as the support of his family, he continues walking down this road with his head held high.



Above: An inside look of Dr. Gonzales’ work.



Maybe Laughter Isn’t the Best Medicine—It’s Love!

Interview with Juan Romero and Melissa Romero

By: Abigail Alvarez



The ODASIS program doesn’t just help students find the ideal medical school; it also helps them find their true love. High school sweethearts Juan Romero and Melissa Romero met in their junior year in the ODASIS Saturday Scholars Program at New Brunswick Health Science Technology High School. They came to Rutgers University on a pre-med track and continued with the ODASIS program as undergraduates.

Today, they are now happily married and living in Texas. Mr. Romero is an MD Ph.D. student at Baylor College of Medicine researching how stress influences body weight and body composition at the level of the brain. After working as a nursing assistant for Texas Medical Center, Mrs. Romero decided to pivot her path and is currently at Texas Woman’s University pursuing a career in nursing.

The pre-med track is difficult in itself, yet balancing a relationship at the same time serves as an additional challenge. In between rigorous coursework, shadowing experiences, and MCAT studying, Mr. and Mrs.

Romero made it a mission to maintain their relationship despite their stressful schedules. “I think being in ODASIS, and being in that environment, where we’re all on the same path or on the same mission of trying to be in healthcare, in a lot of ways framed our relationship and expectations and resilience,” says Mr. Romero.

Being goal driven, respectful, and communicative are the main pillars that Mr. and Mrs. Romero have upheld throughout their relationship to maintain a healthy dynamic. “You’re going to be sent to clinical. You’re going to be having long hours of studying. I think that the most important thing is to find someone who understands that of you,” says Mrs. Romero. While Mr. and Mrs. Romero acknowledges the demands of being two pre-med students navigating a college relationship, they have found ways of prospering in both their personal and professional lives.

Whether they arranged study dates or scheduled the same pre-med classes together, they always devoted time to not only grow in their academic pursuits but also in their romantic relationship. Yet, it isn’t always this easy says Mr. Romero: “Maintaining a strong relationship does take work, and it’s very meaningful to have. But, it’s not something that just happens. Like Melissa was saying, we did a lot of things to make sure that we spent the time together and communicated about the things that we needed.”

The same level of work that Mr. and Mrs. Romero put into their relationship they put into their education as students in the ODASIS program. Being an ODASIS instructor helped Mr. Romero discover his love for teaching, inspiring him to be a TA and tutor for several Human Physiology courses in the graduate school at Baylor. Even though Mrs. Romero shifted her career from pre-med to nursing, she still says that she benefited from ODASIS, especially now that she’s back in nursing school: “ODASIS gave me a really extremely strong foundation and my basic sciences that continue to help me to this day.”

ODASIS Around the World



ODASIS Beyond and Forward

As Dr. Elorm Avakame said in his speech at the 2023 ODASIS Graduation Ceremony and Alumni Reception, “People from institutions all over the country training in all kinds of specialties all had one thing in common: We’ve all been in this room.” ODASIS alumni can be found anywhere across the United States and even outside of its borders, each making an impact on the lives of others. Here are a few of these alumni living in other parts of the country and the world.

Dr. Michael Hayoun – Tennessee

Dr. Michael Hayoun is a dual-board certified emergency physician and medical toxicologist working in community medicine. Prior to his professional endeavors, Dr. Hayoun completed his undergraduate degree at Rutgers University with a Bachelor’s in Cell Biology and Neuroscience in 2008. He went to the University of Cambridge and completed the Masters in Bioscience Enterprise Programme; he then got his Master’s Doctorate in Medicine in 2014 at New Jersey Medical School. In 2020, Dr. Hayoun became the founder and president of Cerberin PLLc, where physicians dedicate their efforts to medicolegal consultations in medical toxicology and emergency medicine.

Dr. Michel-Ann Dias – California

Dr. Michel-Ann Dias was in the Class of 2005 when she graduated from Robert Wood Johnson Medical School with a Master’s Doctorate, specializing in Surgery. Currently, she is affiliated with many hospitals across California, and some of her offices are at Fairchild Medical Center, Healthy Bone and Joint Medical Center, and Cedars Sinai Medical Center, where she completed her residency. With an astonishing 18 years of experience in the field, she is board-certified and continues to specialize in General Surgery.

Dr. Andrea Gardner Carey – Jamaica

For almost 12 years, Dr. Andrea Gardner Carey has been a Consultant Obstetrician and Gynecologist at Winchester Women’s Health in Kingston, Jamaica. After graduating from Rutgers University with a Bachelor’s in Biology in 1996, she later moved abroad to study at the University of the West Indies in Mona, Jamaica. She studied for another five years and graduated with a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery before going into the university’s residency program in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Currently, she has a Doctorate of Medicine.



Above: The nine recipients of the Einstein Scholarship with Dr. Kamal Khan.

STP Program Is Another Smashing Success

While summer is a time for graduating high school students to relax and have fun from the stress-induced school life, it’s also a time to continue learning and charting the path to success. This year, the Strategic Plan Program (STP) welcomed 45 incoming freshmen, where they were introduced to the basic foundations and rigorous materials necessary to prepare for the fall semester.

The program ran from July 9 to August 11. Students spent these five weeks engrossed in the essentials of their courses, including English, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Chemistry, and Biology. Biology was a recent, much-needed course that was possible thanks to the combined efforts of the Foundation of Health Advancement and ODASIS alums. In addition to the courses, students also participated in workshops that provided them significant insights on many subjects of college life and beyond, such as how to navigate the academic systems of the university, consider majors, plan their schedules, how to get involved in research, and mental health.

Many students saw STP as necessary and beneficial to the start of their college

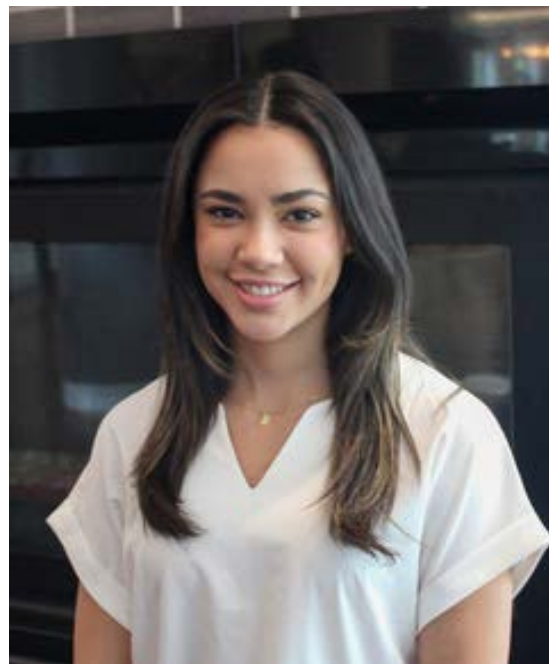
experiences. Solomon Williams, a former STP participant and current third-year student said, “The STP Program guided me in terms of how to stay on track with the rapid pace of college courses, as well as how to efficiently study for its competitive exam. It is for these reasons that I attribute my academic success during freshman year towards the STP, as I would go on to be recognized as the #1 student in General Chemistry at Rutgers University.”

The program concluded with a graduation ceremony attended by students, parents, and the faculty who worked in the program, from instructors to ODASIS staff. The next generation of scientists and medical professionals are in good hands because of STP. Thank you to all the instructors, facilitators, ODASIS and non-ODASIS staff, and other hardworking individuals who helped the upcoming freshmen students understand the concepts of what it means to work in science.

Summer Research

The Impact of Research

By: *Sophia Abreu*



My name is Sophia Abreu, and I am a third-year student studying to become a Physician's Assistant. Starting in the winter and concluding in the summer, I worked with an excellent team of pediatricians, linguists, cognitive psychologists, and other research assistants. I give a big thanks to my mentor, Dr. Manual Jimenez, who is a pediatrician specializing in Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics at RWJMS.

I researched parent-child attendance and teacher fidelity during a cross-sector education-healthcare online Family Wellness Program for Latino dual language learners and their families. The academic achievement gap among young students coming from high-income compared to low-income backgrounds grew close to 40% in 20 years, with Hispanics experiencing some of the most pronounced disparities (Reardon & Portilla, 2016). To address this issue, the study implements a bilingual Family Wellness Program (FWP) to promote school readiness among Latino Dual language learners (DLL) entering Kindergarten. The primary research question focuses on exploring the feasibility and fidelity of implementing the FWP, which employs health-related topics to introduce foundational language and literacy skills, with the aim of reducing literacy achievement gaps. Through a mixed-methods approach, we collected qualitative and quantitative data including parent-child attendance, participation, and teacher fidelity to the intervention manual, in order to assess the program's effectiveness. Preliminary findings suggest (1) the FWP is feasible, (2) high engagement levels among parents and children, and (3) high fidelity implementation. Ongoing work will examine the FWP's effects on vocabulary, biliteracy, and healthy lifestyle choices.

Climbing the Ladder

By: *Solomon Williams*



My name is Solomon Williams, and I am a third-year student studying Biology. This summer, I participated in the Bridging the Gaps Summer Research Program at the Keck School of Medicine of University of Southern California. Under the guidance of Dr. Shana Adise, I conducted research on disparities in obesity prevalence between Non-Latino and Latino youth at the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles. The project began with a literature investigation, where I learned that youth with a low socioeconomic status (SES) have higher rates of obesity, and that Latino youth disproportionately have a low SES. This evidence implied a link between SES and the ethnic disparity in obesity; however, further research indicated that SES possesses various components insofar as it

can be contextualized by within-family as well as overall neighborhood-level factors. As I reviewed the literature, I simultaneously learned how to use python to generate numerous statistical tests and analytical graphs. With these newly developed skills, I then ran linear mixed effect models to test for 3-way interactions of neighborhood and within-family SES factors on ethnicity and BMI over time. The results demonstrated that neighborhood social/economic resources and neighborhood educational resources each significantly lowers the BMI growth rates in Non-Latinos, but not in Latinos, thus sustaining the ethnic disparity in obesity.

On Monday mornings, us students would attend lectures in Biostatistics and Physiology, and later participate in interactive workshops hosted by faculty members of the school of medicine. These included mock patient interviews, learning how to use medical equipment, discussion panels with medical/graduate students, etc. During the rest of the weekdays, we either worked in our respective laboratories or shadowed physicians affiliated with the medical school. Outside of the lab and workshops, us students spent our time exploring Los Angeles, visiting the beaches, and even attending an LA Dodgers game. The Bridging the Gaps Program was overall a highly engaging, enriching experience, enabling us to delve deeper into the medical field as we gained a greater exposure and understanding of what it means to be a medical professional.

Easing the Pain

Pain finds all of us at one time or another. While acute pain from an injury usually is short-lived, some 50 million Americans suffer from chronic pain that never goes away. Whatever the cause, pain erodes a person's quality of life. After trying everything, usually these sufferers finally give up and "just learn to live with it." But there is good news: innovative technology and treatment options can help control chronic pain and improve quality of life.

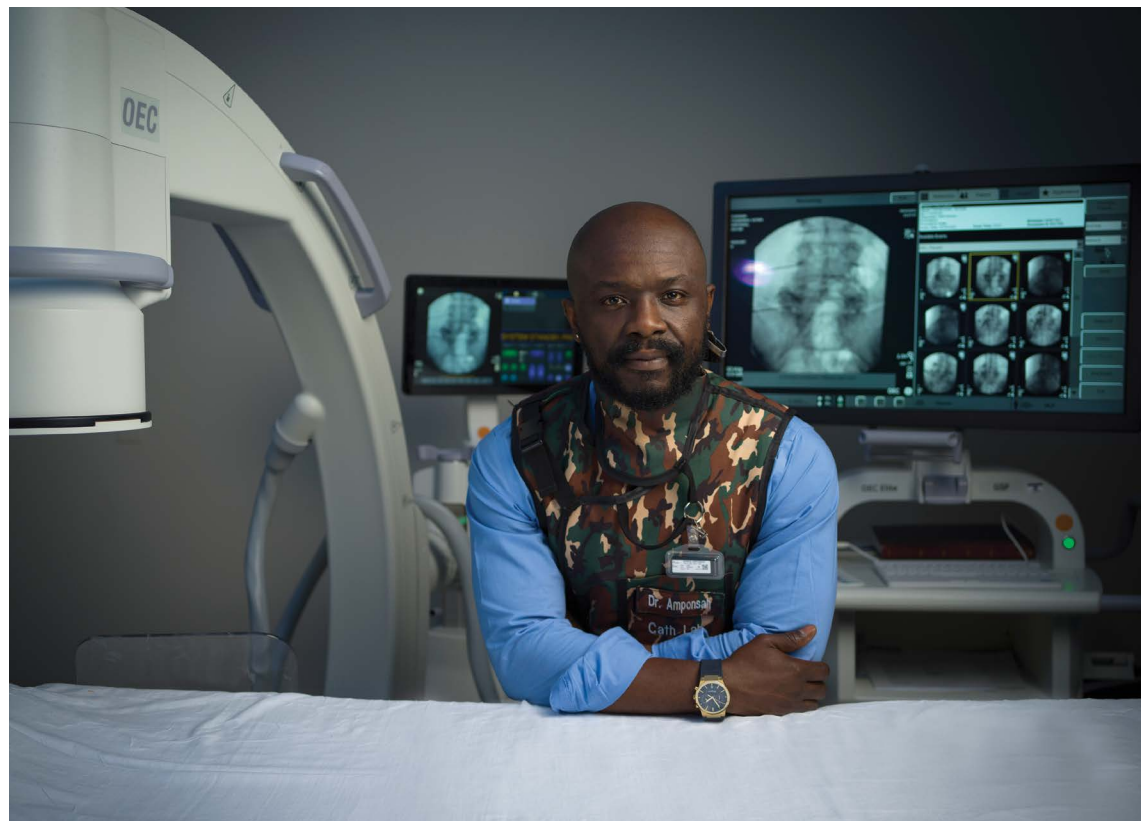
Akwasi Amponsah, MD'08, NJMS assistant professor of anesthesiology, is using a technology known as neuromodulation for patients coping with chronic pain. To make this technology more widely accessible for those who need it, he is working on establishing a neurostimulation center at NJMS. It would be the first such facility in a northern New Jersey academic center. "We want to become a beacon of relief in the pain management field," says the physician.

What is neuromodulation? It is technology that acts directly upon the nerves. It alters painful nerve activity by delivering electrical impulses to a targeted area. Similar to the way a cardiac pacemaker corrects abnormal heartbeats, neuromodulation therapies help to modify pain transmission in the body.

The pain specialist says neuromodulation is used most frequently in people with what's known as failed back surgery syndrome. It is not uncommon to see patients who have had spinal surgery on their necks and mid- and lower-back areas still experiencing pain. However, neuromodulation can be used on almost any type of pain, including severe chest pain, leg pain, pain after amputation, and arthritis, to name only a few.

Patients who are interested in trying the therapy must complete three steps. First, they need medical clearance from their primary care physicians to have surgery. Next, a psychiatrist will work with the patient to ensure they understand all that is involved with neuromodulation. The last step is completing a five-to-seven-day trial. "We put similar electrodes on the spine with a trial battery," Amponsah explained. "If the patient feels at least 50 percent less pain after a week, we will do the permanent implantation." It is a same-day surgery done in the operating room, and the recovery time is usually about a week.

Amponsah is excited about opening a neuromodulation center at NJMS. "Helping people with pain who have finally found relief is so rewarding," he says.

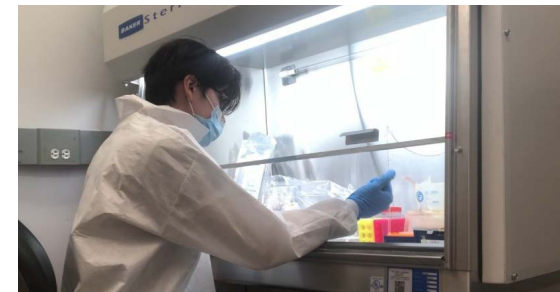


Words from the Dennis Scholarship Recipients

Dr. Emmet Dennis, professor of the Cell Biology and Neuroscience Department at Rutgers University and one of the major pillars that molded ODASIS into what it is today, recently passed away on March 6, 2022. A distinguished scientist and scholar in the sciences, Dr. Dennis made a difference for the better, and his generous services are known both nationally and internationally. Touching the lives of those around him, his warm and friendly presence will not be forgotten.

Dr. Dennis passed the torch to his son, Emmet Dennis Jr., who continued to support students after his father's passing. This year, he gifted the Dennis Scholarship to two recipients, who received \$2000 that would go towards their research. Below are the two recipients and what they are researching.

Alex Velasco



Alex Velasco is a second-year student with a major in Biochemistry and a minor in Nutrition. His journey on becoming a doctor stemmed from his academic prowess in the sciences, while his focus in oncology originated from mom's cancer diagnosis in his last year of high school. Currently, he is participating in the Rutgers Youth Enjoy Science Program funded by the National Cancer Institute (1R2CA247785) and doing research in the Zheng Laboratory at the Cancer Institute of New Jersey.

Alex's research centers on liver cancer; specifically, how certain cellular mechanisms increase sensitivity to cancer cells as well as certain components in which the cell regulates itself. One of these components is mTOR, and by examining its roles and interactions, he looks to understand how it factors to the increasing sensitivity of certain cancer treatments. This research is personal for Alex, and he is grateful for the Dennis family's support. "Every step of the way is to make me a better doctor and person, to make me take better care of my patients that is more advanced and sincere," Alex said.

Deborah Oladeji



Deborah Oladeji is a second-year Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) student with a major in Public Health and a minor in Biology. Having witnessed firsthand the tendency of healthcare systems to ignore the voices of minority communities in her neighborhood, Deborah became determined to be that voice. On the track of being a leader and pursuing medicine, she aims to amplify this voice tenfold. Now, she is researching with Dr. Kelvin Kwan from the Cell Biology and Neuroscience Department and the Keck Center for Collaborative Neuroscience.

Deborah is researching ways to treat hearing loss, a healthcare concern that is often neglected. By analyzing analytical data obtained from inner ear stem cell cultures and RNA sequencing from these cells, she aims to understand how specific genes contribute to neuronal regeneration. Deborah seeks out discoveries and methods that would reduce the effects of neuron loss during trauma, neurogenesis, and other impactful areas of inner ear research. Cherishing the award of the Dennis Scholarship, Deborah acknowledges the importance of the opportunity to do research and its impact on her medical journey. "Having those foundations, knowing that you're confident in your academic work, and knowing that you're involved is important," Deborah said. "Being a self-advocate is really important in terms of the kind of opportunities you want."

Congratulations to the Undergraduates Taking the Next Step in 2023!



Rutgers New Jersey Medical School

Maame-Afua Ansah (EOF)
Oluwaeseun Akande
Oticia Brisport (ED)
Gabriela Carrillo (ED)
Alexis Oyediran (ED)

Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Cyanna Padmore
Genesis Isuiza (EA)

Rutgers University School of Public Health – Urban Public Health

Jeneatha Marshall

Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University

Ikechukwu Anyanaso
Julia Durugo
Samuel Elesinmogun
Gabriela Mulkay
Mojisola-Gabrielle Obayanju
Gaetan Paul
Alyssa Pina
Jasmine Vazquez

Rowan School of Osteopathic Medicine

Tainiz Polanco

Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia University

Daniel Ortega

Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University

Joshua Russell
Rhicki Santos

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

Inaya Thompson (EOF)

Western University of Health Sciences

Alexis Llaneras

Drexel University College of Nursing and Health Professions

Jada Mitchell

Rowan University Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

Josh Harmon

Medical College of Wisconsin

Jaden Vnencak

University of Medicine and Health Sciences at Saint Kitts, Caribbean

Ajibola Oyeniran

Northwestern University

Olisemeka Oputa

Louisiana State University

Karl Waldron

Congratulations to the Alumni Graduating from Graduate, Doctoral, or Professional Programs in 2023!



Rutgers New Jersey Medical School

Antonio Alvarez
Cesar Clarke (EOF)
Ovie Enaohwo
Daniel Marte (M.D.)
Irene Martinez
Michelle Martins

Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Ngozi Anaemejeh
Yadybel Ayala
Immanuella Boah (EOF)
Alexis Etheridge

Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University School

Jessica Amoako
Sopuru Ezeonwu

Brianna Mendiola (M.D.)
Kevin Nolasco (EOF)
Emefa Ocansey
Roger Robles
Mahir Sufian

Oluwadamilola Ilesanmi
Hesbon Isaboke (EOF)
Karan Kalahasti

Peace Nosa-Omorogiuwa
Jideofor Okafor

Rutgers School of Dental Medicine

David Casal
Jaya Gamble
Nelson de Lima
Beshoy Malk (EOF)

Temple University Kornberg School of Dentistry

Joshua Kim

New York University College of Dentistry

Ummia Zaman (EOF)

University of Maryland School of Dentistry

Garrett Tom

University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine

Elad Saeed

Rowan University College of Osteopathic Medicine

Michael Anyanwu
Jenna Lee (EOF)
Ola Ogunnowo (2022)
Justin Wong

Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine

Elisa Marte (EOF)

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

Dianne Mancheno
Claudine Nwadiozor
Ashley Otto
Joseph Romero

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine–South Georgia

Chizoba Akunwanwa
Chika Okafor

New York Osteopathic Medicine

Devika R. Soin

Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University

Frank Cedeno
Paul Gallina (2022)
Bryce Hill (EOF)
Chase Jennings
Andrew Marciano
Abim Okulaja (2022)

Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania

Adora Moneme
Anchi Numfor (2022)
Chielozor Okafor

University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine

Dayana Perez (EOF)

University of Illinois Medical Science Training Program

Kyle Kremiller

Saint George's University School of Medicine

Zekeria G. Sawaged
David Ulloa (2022)

New York Medical College

Kedar Trivedi

Wright State University Boonshoft School of Medicine

Musunga Mulenga

Jacobs School of Medicine and Biological Sciences

Matt Akbar

Saint Peter's University College of Arts and Sciences

Stephanie Bennett

Seton Hall Meridian School of Medicine

Nicholas Balbi

Congratulations to all the graduating EOF Students!

Undergraduates

- Maame-Afua Ansah
- Inaya Thompson

Alumni

- Immanuella Boah

- Cesar Clarke, M.D.
- Bryce Hill, M.D.
- Hesbon Isaboke, M.D.
- Jenna Lee, D.O.
- Beshoy Malk, D.D.S.
- Elisa Marte, D.O.
- Kevin Nolasco, M.D.
- Ola Ogunnowo, D.O.
- Dayana Perez, D.V.M.
- Ummia Zaman, D.D.S.



From left to right: The following students are graduates of their respective programs. Bryce Hill: Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University, Chielozor Okafor: Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, Peace Nosa-Omorogiuwa: Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University, Jessica Amoako: Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University, Dianne Mancheno: Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, Antonio Alvarez: Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, Kevin Nolasco: Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, Claudine Nwadiozor: Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, Orticia Bishop (ED): Accepted into Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, Hesbon Isaboke: Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School