



RUTGERS-NEW BRUNSWICK
School of Arts and Sciences

OFFICE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS IN THE SCIENCES

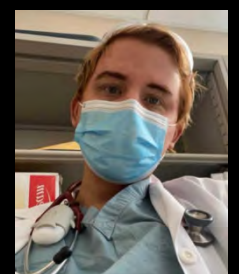
ODASIS

MAGAZINE | 2025

Celebrating

40

Years!



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**Educating Today.
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Educating Today, Transforming Tomorrow

40 Years of Academic Success



From humble beginnings in the basement of Beck Hall, in the past 40 years, ODASIS has grown into a large and transformative program. With over 1700 alumni, ODASIS has made a significant impact on the medical field. Students from various backgrounds leave our halls with the skills, strategies, resources, and motivation to excel in their chosen specialties. “When I look at our students and alumni, I go ‘Wow, wow, wow!’” ODASIS Director, Dr. Kamal Khan, said, “I get goosebumps.”

Dr. Khan has nurtured ODASIS since its inception back in 1986. “I’ve spent half my life with ODASIS,” he said. It began as an unofficial program to support underrepresented premedical students, founded by Dr. Francine Essien. Later, Dr. Khan and Dr. Emmet Dennis joined forces, and all three tirelessly mentored students in their small office in the basement of Beck Hall. It was not until 1990 that ODASIS received its current home, Nelson Biological Laboratories. “A couple of students went to Rutgers President Richard McCormick to advocate for our program,” Dr. Khan recalled. “That was how ODASIS started.”

Over the years, ODASIS continued to evolve. Initially, the program was called the Office of Minorities Underrepresented in Science Program (OMUSP). Over the 1990s, numerous now-foundational ODASIS initiatives were launched, such as the MCAT Preparatory Course, Access Med, Academic Research for Careers in Healthcare (ARCH), and the Bio Career Program. OMUSP also made connections with both New Jersey Medical School and Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. “Now, medical schools call us,” Dr. Khan beamed. “They know our students are well-prepared.”

OMUSP was renamed to the Office for Diversity and Academic Success in the Sciences (ODASIS) in 2004. Then, in 2010, ODASIS rapidly grew when Dr. Kenneth Breslauer, a dean at the Division of Life Sciences, joined the team. “He came to one of our graduation ceremonies,” Dr. Khan remembered. “He was blown away by the success of our alumni.” Through connections with the Rutgers science departments, he expanded ODASIS’s staff and funding. Most recently, in 2025, ODASIS was renamed once again to the Office of Development and Academic Success in the Sciences.

Over the years, ODASIS has weathered challenges and continues to grow, providing the same genuine support and warm community that it has since its birth. Like many academic institutions, it has faced occasional funding challenges, but the generous and consistent support of ODASIS’s alumni, friends, and community partners has allowed the program to continue thriving. “We can only run this program through our supporters,” Dr. Khan said.

Reflecting on his long tenure with ODASIS, Dr. Khan is in awe of the excellence displayed by both ODASIS alumni and current students. He often encounters ODASIS alumni when he goes to medical professionals in his personal life, and he is impressed by the high MCAT scores and academic honors earned by ODASIS students. “We have created a doctor pipeline with no leaks,” Dr. Khan exclaimed proudly.

ODASIS looks forward to its next 40 years of educating, uplifting, and transforming. We celebrate this anniversary together with you, our supporters, because your generosity has made ODASIS possible.

Dr. Khan would also like to thank everyone who helped create this magazine, especially Crystal Soliman, Mason Springer-Lipton, Kareem Mumford, and Ian DeFalco. He additionally thanks Dean Lori Covey and Dr. Martha Haviland for their continued support of ODASIS.



ODASIS Through the Years

1986:

An unofficial program of supplemental instruction for underrepresented and struggling students is started by Dr. Francine Essien, who joined with Dr. Kamal Khan and Dr. Emmet Dennis to expand the reach.



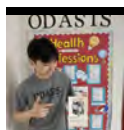
1993:

The MCAT Preparatory Course is created.



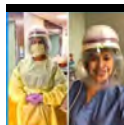
2004:

The name is changed to the Office for Diversity and Academic Success in the Sciences (ODASIS).



2020:

The COVID-19 Pandemic begins, which forces Rutgers and ODASIS into remote learning. Meanwhile, ODASIS alumni save lives on the front lines of the pandemic.



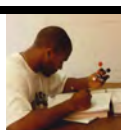
2024:

The ODASIS Alumni Network is formed to connect alumni who live around the country and the world.



1990:

The OMUSP, Office of Minorities Underrepresented in Science Program founded in by Dr. Essien, Dr. Khan, and Dr. Dennis. OMUSP office is relocated from Beck Hall to Nelson Biological Laboratories.



Mid-1990s:

The OMUSP gains credibility as over 500 alumni and students achieve success. Meanwhile, connections are made with New Jersey Medical School, especially through Dr. Heinrich and Dr. Soto, and Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. As a result, the Access Med, Bio Career Program (BCP), and Academic Research for Careers in Healthcare (ARCH) programs are created.



2010:

ODASIS becomes part of the School of Arts and Sciences (before it was part of the Chancellor's Office). Additionally, Dr. Kenneth Breslauer joins ODASIS and helped it grow substantially.



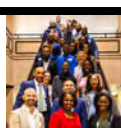
2023:

Rutgers President Jonathan Holloway is the keynote speaker for the ODASIS Graduation Ceremony.



2025:

The newly named Office for Development and Academic Success in the Sciences (ODASIS) now has over 1700 alumni.



Like Father, Like Son

WRITTEN BY MASON SPRINGER-LIPTON



Dr. Guy A. Francis and his son Guy E. Francis

Dr. Guy A. Francis and his son Guy E. Francis demonstrate the multigenerational success fostered by ODASIS. While Dr. Guy Francis currently owns and operates a private practice, his son has thrived as an undergraduate and is now heading to Rutgers New Jersey Medical School.

Dr. Francis began his Rutgers journey in 1988, where he discovered ODASIS and quickly became a dedicated member. “ODASIS gave us a place to do well academically and thrive socially,” he remembers. Dr. Francis took advantage of our mentorship services and research opportunities, and he especially appreciated the MCAT preparation. “It still felt like a family back then,” Dr. Francis added. He spoke with his peers about his issues and struggles, and the close-knit community supported one another collectively. Afterwards, just like his son years later, he attended NJMS for his MD.

Today, Dr. Francis operates a clinic, providing comprehensive care to individuals and families. Dr. Francis ensures that his patients receive his dedication and time for each of their visits—he builds rapport, deeply understands their circumstances, and develops holistic care strategies. Additionally, even before his son joined ODASIS, Dr. Francis was continually involved with our program. Over the years, he had taken countless undergraduates into his practice to shadow, where they all find his methods inspiring and powerful. Dr. Francis, in turn, loves to bring new, eager minds into his workspace.

“It’s almost like it’s my continuing medical education,” he said. “I learn about new things through them.”

Dr. Francis’ son, Guy, has developed his own passion for medicine. While he always looked up to his father, the COVID-19 Pandemic and the passing of several family members also charged Guy with a deep desire to help others. At his father’s urging, Guy joined ODASIS and attended our STP program, which prepares incoming freshman over the summer for the rigors of the pre-medical curriculum. “ODASIS opens many opportunities for its members,” Guy said. As a senior, Guy is now tutoring students through ODASIS supplemental instruction sessions and is working daily as a home health aide for one of his professors.

Over the years, Dr. Francis and his son have been especially connected through sports. They play golf together, and when Guy was younger, Dr. Francis coached his baseball and football teams. “Coaching is about teaching, instructing, and mentoring,” Dr. Francis said. Guy remembers his father taking his role as a coach seriously, even getting stern with his kids when they weren’t playing up to par. “I expected more from my kids,” Dr. Francis explained. “I know what they can do.”

This ethos matches well with that of ODASIS, a program which has greatly influenced both these medical minds. Indeed, throughout the generations, ODASIS has supported students’ success, realizing their potential.

Generational Success

WRITTEN BY MASON SPRINGER-LIPTON



Dr. Margarita Borghini and Francesca Borghini

Mother and daughter Dr. Margarita Borghini and Francesca Borghini have both found a family at ODASIS. As our program approaches its 40th anniversary, the way that Dr. Borghini—one of ODASIS’ first members—found the program just as supportive and transformative as her daughter, a current ODASIS member, demonstrates how it has continued to greatly impact the medical profession throughout the decades.

Dr. Borghini immigrated to the United States from the Dominican Republic when she was 13 years old, and at just 16 she had graduated high school and began her college career. Upon transferring to Rutgers, she joined ODASIS after being referred to it by a friend. Here she met Dr. Khan and one of ODASIS’ founders, Dr. Essien. “It wasn’t as structured as it is now,” Dr. Borghini recalls. “But they still offered tutoring and summer programs.” The community was smaller but no less close-knit—she remembers spending every night at libraries with her ODASIS friends, studying and supporting one another.

Her daughter, Francesca Borghini applied to many universities, but thanks to her mother, she decided to attend Rutgers largely because of the opportunities provided by ODASIS. “It was kind of non-negotiable,” Francesca explained. She took our STP program before her freshman year, through which she met many friends and prepared herself for the rigors of college classes. Since then, Francesca has taken advantage of ODASIS’ many programs and opportunities, such as Supplemental Instructional classes and our MCAT preparatory course. The ODASIS community has been especially

impactful for her, however. “In ODASIS, everyone is helping you,” she said. “They’re explaining problems, studying with you, and going through the same struggles.” Just as her mother surrounded herself with “study buddies,” so does her daughter.

Today, Dr. Borghini works as an internist at a busy clinic in Jersey City. Her schedule reflects her high-volume fast-paced practice: she works between 8am and 6pm and treats patients with numerous pathologies. Yet, Dr. Borghini never sacrifices the quality of her care, and her favorite part of her work is listening to and comforting patients. “You should only go into medicine if you have a passion for people,” she explained. Despite her packed schedule, Dr. Borghini finds time to allow ODASIS students to shadow her at her work. She said, “I want to give back to students, especially to those who don’t have family connections to medicine.”

At the end of the day, however, Dr. Borghini is a mother, and seeing her daughter go through the same halls of Nelson Biological Laboratories is both strange and amazing. To Francesca, following her mother through ODASIS is comforting, as it makes the whole program feel more familiar. “At ODASIS, I’m never really lonely. There is always someone there I know and who cares about me.”

Despite the decades between Dr. Margarita Borghini’s membership at ODASIS and that of her daughter’s, their experiences were not very different. They both found support, community, and purpose, which has helped propel them into personal and professional success.

Twin Doctors

WRITTEN BY MASON SPRINGER-LIPTON



David Casal

Many people consider ODASIS family—but for twin doctors, Daniel and David Casal, it literally was.

Daniel and David moved to the United States from Peru at the age of only six months. With the unending support of their parents, they both decided to pursue careers in medicine. “By aiming to become doctors, we were shooting for a highest degree we could,” David said.

At Rutgers, both Daniel and David joined ODASIS. The support they received from our program was invaluable, providing them with tutoring sessions, study resources, and a dedicated community of aspirational peers. However, their paths soon began to diverge. It was during a class taught by Dr. Khan that the brothers discovered their unique medical interests. On one hand, Daniel had the opportunity to shadow a psychiatrist, which inspired him to pursue a career in that field. Daniel particularly felt inspired to dispel the stigma around mental health within the Hispanic community. David, on the other hand, shadowed a dentist, and found the hands-on nature of that field immensely appealing. However, even though



Daniel Casal

the brothers’ career paths forked, they united in the ODASIS offices, assisting each other with exams alongside their fellow ODASIS students.

Today, Dr. Daniel Casal works as a Psychiatry Resident at Ocean University Medical Center. Interviewing and advising around six patients per day, he works alongside an interdisciplinary team of other professionals that address different aspects of wellbeing. He also stays on call for emergency psychiatric situations. “When we see a patient, it’s often when they’re at their lowest point,” Daniel said. “So, when we follow-up and see how they improve, it’s very nice.” Just as he dreamed, he works in a community with a large Hispanic population and participates in community events at schools and town halls to educate about mental health.

Dr. David Casal practices as a Pediatric Dental Resident at the Rutgers School of Dental Medicine in Newark, New Jersey. His clinic also sees around six pediatric patients per day, and conducts procedures like cleanings, fillings, and extractions. “Kids are always fearful of the dentist,” Dr. David

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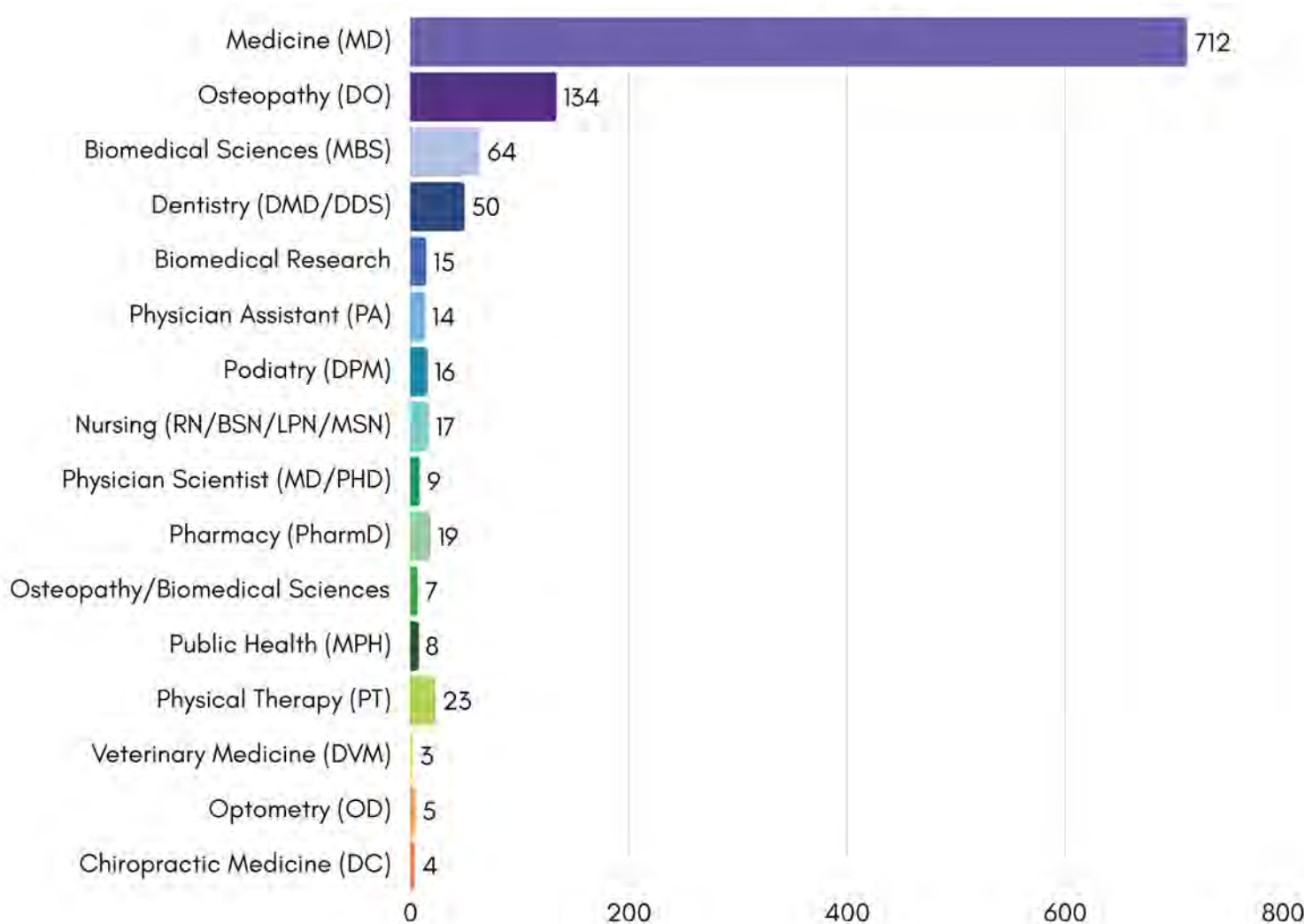
Casal admitted. “But we implement different strategies for every child to manage their behavior in order to create a patient-doctor bond.” With quick hands and a friendly smile, he can provide these children with an easy experience—sometimes, patients will even hug him and thank him after a procedure.

Daniel and David Casal both live together at home with their parents. Just as they did in their youth, and at ODASIS, they support each other

throughout the highs and lows of their medical careers. “I see living at home as an advantage because of the support,” Dr. David Casal explained.

As immigrants, doctors Daniel and David Casal blazed their own trails into the medical world. They found support in each other and in ODASIS, and through perseverance, are making meaningful differences in their own fields and communities.

Professions of ODASIS Graduates 1990 - 2025



An Unpredictable Journey

WRITTEN BY MASON SPRINGER-LIPTON



Fechi Nwodili

ODASIS alum Fechi Nwodili never expected she would go to medical school on an island. Yet, the journey to medical school is hardly ever predictable, and the real strength of a medical professional lays in adaptability. Today she is a second-year medical student at St. George's University in Grenada.

At Rutgers, ODASIS assisted her in many ways, supporting her academics through tutoring, supplemental instruction, and even providing shadowing experiences. However, when Fechi's

MCAT score turned out not to be competitive enough for most medical schools, ODASIS advisors told her about St. George's University. "I never knew about Caribbean schools," Fechi remembered. She discussed her situation with SGU alums, and was pleasantly surprised. One alum said, "If you go there and work hard, it makes you a strong applicant. You're unique, you were on an island." So, she applied, got in, and took a flight to beautiful Grenada.

Fechi says that the adjustment to island life was relatively easy. She enjoys having the beach so close, and the vibrant carnival celebration brings weeks of excitement every year. She never feels alone: "Everyone here is just nicer," Fechi smiled. Although the rigor of medical school education can sometimes feel like "drinking water from a fire hydrant," Fechi has found that her time at SGU has allowed her to harness her strengths and follow effective study strategies. Fechi has also been connected with ODASIS during her time at SGU, and has helped some students commit to SGU.

Fechi Nwodili's journey shows how the path to becoming a doctor can be worldwide in scope, and that perseverance is the backbone of success.



Perseverance on the Island

WRITTEN BY MASON SPRINGER-LIPTON



Juliana Lozano (EOF)

Juliana Lozano is a first-generation medical student—her dream is to make an impact on Spanish-speaking communities as a physician, and she has the perseverance to make it happen.

When Juliana came to Rutgers, she joined the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) and ODASIS.

ODASIS assisted her throughout her undergraduate career. We gave her a roadmap for her future, opportunities to excel in difficult classes, work-study and shadowing experiences, and a community of like-minded peers. “It was always students teaching each other, helping each other out,” Juliana said.

Applying to medical schools provided a challenge, however. “You’re doing six essays per school, and not hearing back from them is kind of heartbreaking,” Juliana recalled. Saint George’s University was not her first choice, largely due to the stigma surrounding Caribbean schools. However, during an advising meeting, something Dr. Khan said stuck with Juliana, “You think all those doctors out there got only straight As?” So, despite the hurdles, she embarked on the next part of her journey at SGU.

Juliana is now in her first year at SGU, and has found it very enjoyable. Her current roommate is a fellow ODASIS alum, and the nearby beach is a great temporary escape. “I’m really happy with my decision,” Juliana smiled. Medical school is fast-paced and intense, but she takes it one day at a time and feels prepared by her education at Rutgers and ODASIS. “It’s an adjustment being on the island, but it’s not impossible,” she said. No matter the challenges or the location, Juliana Lozano is motivated to become the doctor of her dreams.



A Wider Perspective

WRITTEN BY MASON SPRINGER-LIPTON



Luis Sanchez-Gonzalez

Luis Sanchez-Gonzalez, an undergraduate member of ODASIS, is conducting pathbreaking research through one of our affiliated summer programs.

Luis has always had immense passion for medicine and helping others, especially by using

his Spanish-language skills. When Luis' brother was diagnosed with cancer while he was in high school, Luis became interested in treating cancer specifically. Later, Luis' brother went through ODASIS and into a medical career—similarly, Luis attended ODASIS. Since then, Luis has become integral to our program, teaching student instructional sessions and even facilitating our rigorous MCAT preparatory course.

"I attended the Rutgers Youth Enjoy Science (RUYES) program at the Rutgers Cancer Institute

over two years ago," Luis said. This program allowed him to pursue novel cancer research, building on his interests in cancer and medicine in a new, exciting way. "I never understood that medicine and research could be compatible like that," Luis remembered. "And then I started talking to physician-scientists on the MD-PhD track." After this program, Luis decided that he was going to get an MD-PhD. "It's all that I apply to now," he said.

Since then, Luis has been working on a new research project: his honors thesis in Cell Biology and Neuroscience. This thesis focuses on Ewing Sarcoma, a rare type of pediatric bone cancer characterized by its extremely poor outcome. "We are experimenting with treating it using epigenome altering agents," Luis explained proudly. "In theory, we could selectively kill cancerous cells."

Thanks to ODASIS's summer programs, Luis found a way to combine his love for medicine and research in an incredibly impactful way.

Hands-On Opportunities

WRITTEN BY MASON SPRINGER-LIPTON



Eboseremen "Reme" Odion

For Eboseremen "Reme" Odion, the summer programs associated with ODASIS have been transformative. Reme was the first person in her family to pursue medicine, and ODASIS provided her with a community of like-minded students.

"ODASIS has helped me tremendously," she said. "Both in my academic journey and personal growth."

Reme learned about ODASIS's many summer programs through our advisors and joined the "College Pipeline Program with Zucker School of Medicine." In this program, she spent the summer living in New York City, taking science courses in small, focused classes. "Rutgers lecture halls are really big, but there I could ask

questions and get to know people," she said. Reme was also able to make connections with other students from various schools. "There was a togetherness in the program," Reme remembered. "Just like ODASIS."

During her sophomore year, Reme participated in an online summer program focused on MCAT preparation. Next summer, she will be returning to New York City to research at the Feinstein Research Lab. Indeed, these summer programs have allowed Reme to expand her horizons in medicine and academics, opening her mind to new possibilities. For instance, she now wishes to go to a small medical school like the Zucker School of Medicine thanks to her rewarding experience there.

Reme has taken full advantage of ODASIS's summer programs, and is now on track to become a more well-rounded student and uniquely qualified doctor.

Summer Research



NERA I

Oyinkansolam Babalola
Daniel Henry
Medjina Sillion

NERA II

Krishna Shah (EOF)

SUMEX I

Rubi Bautista (EOF)
Serena Ilenis (EOF)
Jennah Morales (EOF)
Elvia Sarmiento-Garcia (EOF)

ARCH II

Orlando Angulo
Francesca Borghini
Nabil Boto
Derrick Chin (EOF)
Nicole Collinson
Cassidy Cudjoe
Sebastian Diaz
Joshua Iheanacho
Huda Memon
Anita Ojibe
Geovanny Reyes (EOF)
Alejandro Vera
Tyreese Yearwood

ARCH III

Carlos Alfonso
Ericka Bautista Lopez
Clayton Bryan
Lilia Carnes
Kalem Dawson (EOF)
Chinenye Ekemezie
Guy Francis
Marco Gordils
Delande Joseph
Jadaiah Lokko
Deborah Oladeji (EOF)
Matthew Rodriguez
Kiarra Rosa
Jason Villalobos
Paige Young



STEP-UP Medicine Program

Gina Hayford
Andres Mena
Dana Oliva (EOF)
Alexander Velasco



Rutgers Youth Enjoy Science (RUYES)

Tifeoluwani Fadugba
Jonathan Julian
Aaron Olmo
Maya Saez
Luis Sanchez-Gonzalez



Rutgers Early Assurance Program (REAP)

Kaya Canikligil (EOF)
Nimrat Kaur (EOF)

Keck School of Medicine of USC

Bridging the Gaps Program

Amarachi Nwokonko



DONALD AND BARBARA
ZUCKER SCHOOL of MEDICINE
AT HOFSTRA/NORTHWELL

College Pipeline Program

Eboseremen Odion
Hannah Oliva
Aliyah Traore



A Tribute to Dr. Heinrich



"Dr. Heinrich was an incredible educator, mentor and overall presence. His impact on the extended NJMS community is indelible. I am forever thankful for the confidence he had in me and the significant role he has played in my path to becoming a physician."

—Dr. Erika Concepcion

"As a devoted internist and longtime Dean of Admissions at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey Medical School, Dr. Heinrich touched lives far beyond the exam room. Yet his most significant impact extended beyond clinical practice. As Dean of Admissions, he became the first voice of welcome for every student he accepted—not through a form letter or an email, but through a personal phone call."

—Dr. Owano Pennycooke

"The last time I saw Dr. Heinrich was at an ODASIS event. In the comfort and privacy of my ODASIS family, I finally got a chance to share how meaningful his presence had been in my early career."

—Dr. Ricardo Verdiner

"Dr. Heinrich's famous New Jersey Medical School acceptance phone calls changed many people's lives forever, especially mine. He called me a few days before Christmas in the year 2000. I could not stop crying when he called me. His voice of encouragement, advice, and positivity over the years prior to getting his acceptance call lit a fuse in me that still lives to this day."

—Dr. Ronniel Mercado



Healing Around the World

WRITTEN BY MASON SPRINGER-LIPTON



Dr. Gabriel Szmigiel

Dr. Gabriel Szmigiel has always welcomed challenges and new experiences. Indeed, his fascinating career has seen him practice around the world in underserved areas, facing unique obstacles and meeting different people. Today, he works as a family medicine physician at VIPcare, a primary care clinic in Riverview, Florida.

Dr. Szmigiel was born in Poland and immigrated to the United States at 13 years old. In the US, he took care of his aunt who had Type 2 diabetes, which germinated in him a curiosity about medicine. However, since Dr. Szmigiel was living in relative poverty, he needed assistance to achieve success—he received that assistance through the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) and through ODASIS. “Without those programs, it would have been impossible for me to get where I am,” Dr. Szmigiel said. ODASIS specifically offered him the resources, structure, and opportunities that made a medical career possible.

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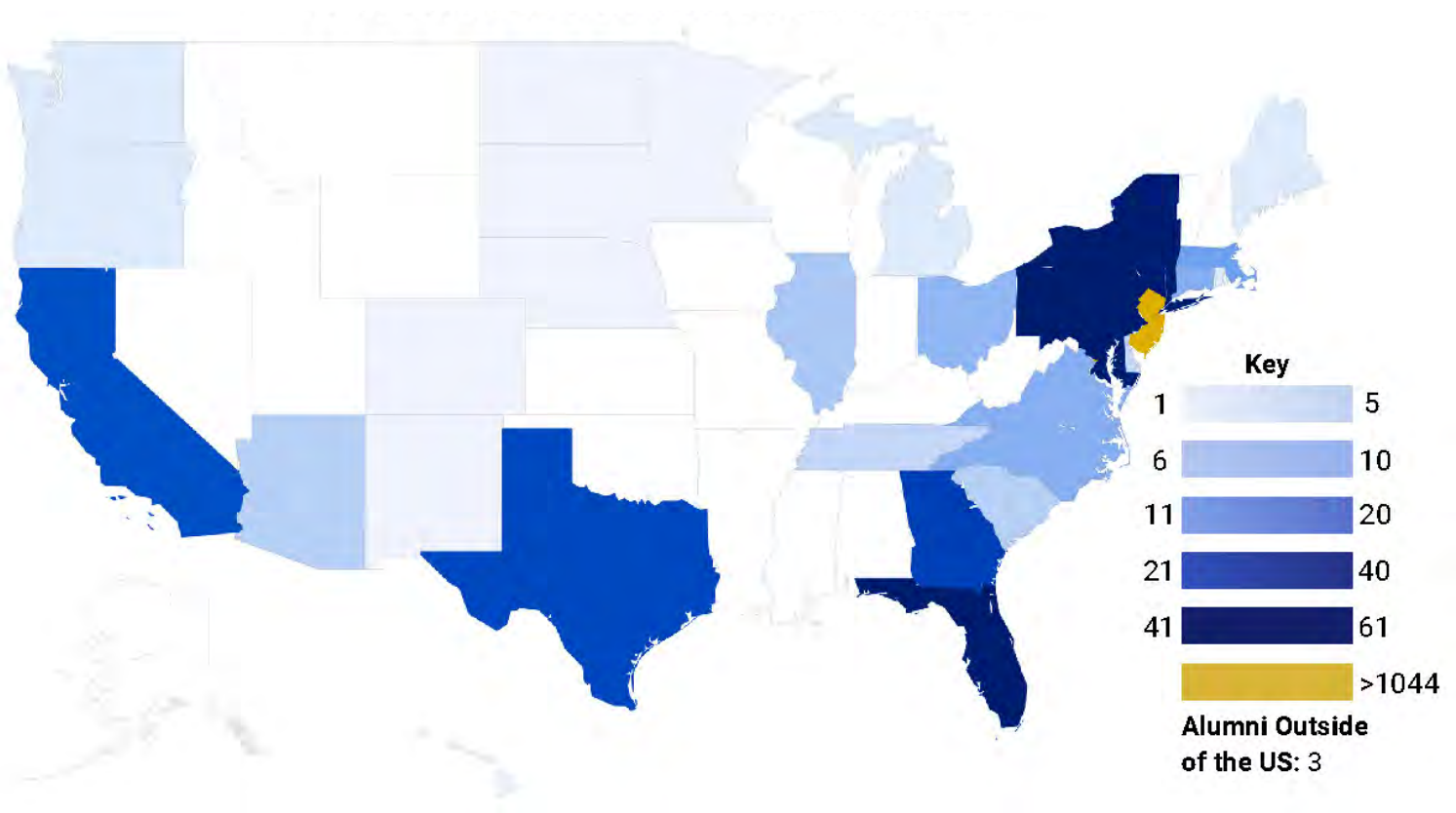
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After working for a few years in rural Virginia, he moved with his wife to Chile after she was deployed there by the US Army. During this time, Dr. Szmigiel took four-to-six-week contracts to practice both locally and in the United States. He worked everywhere from underserved communities on the outskirts of Santiago to the Navajo Reservation in the southwest United States. “You have to change your strategy and mentality,” Dr. Szmigiel said, reflecting on his many workplaces. “People have many different backgrounds, cultures, and beliefs.” For instance, when working on the Navajo Reservation, he often prescribed patients to visit with a local spiritual healer to complement his medicine.

After living in Chile, Dr. Szmigiel and his wife moved to Florida, where he now practices. “There’s a large geriatric patient population here with complex comorbidities. Often, they are restricted by socioeconomic situations, like homelessness,” he explained. The clinic also operates under a novel model in which the practitioners focus on the quality of care and positive outcomes through a more attentive style of practice.

Dr. Gabiel Szmigiel is unafraid to try new things and practice in poorer areas. It was only with the assistance of EOF and ODASIS that he could change lives around the globe. Regardless of where he is, he is saving lives one patient at a time.

ODASIS Alumni Across the United States



Embodying ODASIS at New Jersey Medical School

WRITTEN BY MASON SPRINGER-LIPTON



Henry Souto

Henry Souto, a first-year student at New Jersey Medical School, deeply appreciates the transformative power of ODASIS. “If you embody the lessons, you’re going to succeed,” Henry said confidently. “I wouldn’t be here without everything ODASIS taught me.”

It was not until his sophomore year at Rutgers that Henry joined ODASIS. During the Fall of that year, he struggled with difficult classes and exams, leading him to seek out assistance at our program. Immediately, he understood how helpful ODASIS could be and took full advantage of it. “I annoyed Dr. Khan when I first met him,” Henry laughed. “I was talking his ear off, asking every question.” By

embracing our supplemental instruction services, resources, and programs, Henry not only got back on track but excelled. “It was a complete 180,” he said. “I was now proactive and had a goal to work towards.”

Henry says his most impactful experience with ODASIS was the MCAT Preparatory Course, a rigorous program where students meet for long hours every week to tackle the notoriously challenging exam. “You’re giving up weekends, locking away your phone, studying with the same group,” he remembered. After graduating, Henry worked with ODASIS for a year as a clerical assistant, advising students and contacting alumni. “It was a great way to give back to ODASIS,” he explained. “Plus, it didn’t really feel like a job. I was hanging out with my community.”

After applying early-decision to NJMS, Henry received a call from the school’s dean, the late Dr. George Heinrich. It was a powerful moment, one made bittersweet by Dr. Heinrich’s recent passing. “You can feel the hole he left here,” Henry said about Dr. Heinrich. “But his legacy lives on through this amazing school and the doctors he helped create.”

The skills Henry developed at ODASIS have proved invaluable at NJMS. Although he is intaking heaps of information and is on campus every day from 8am to 11pm, he stays focused and on-top of his work. “I always work in groups thanks to ODASIS,” he said. “And because of the MCAT class I can effectively study for anything.” Importantly, he can disconnect from distractions like his phone and effectively strive towards his goal of becoming a physician.

Henry advises students during the application process to not narrow their choices and remain open to opportunities. “There is a misconception that you have to be perfect,” Henry explained. “But the real reason I’ve seen most people not become doctors is that they gave up.”

Through ODASIS, Henry and countless other students have become disciplined, dedicated students with the perseverance to succeed.

The Power of Education

The Saturday Scholars Academy

WRITTEN BY MASON SPRINGER-LIPTON



George Schroepfer

George Schroepfer believes in the world-changing potential of education. “What we as educators should do is motivate these students,” he explained. “With education, they can challenge those in power.”

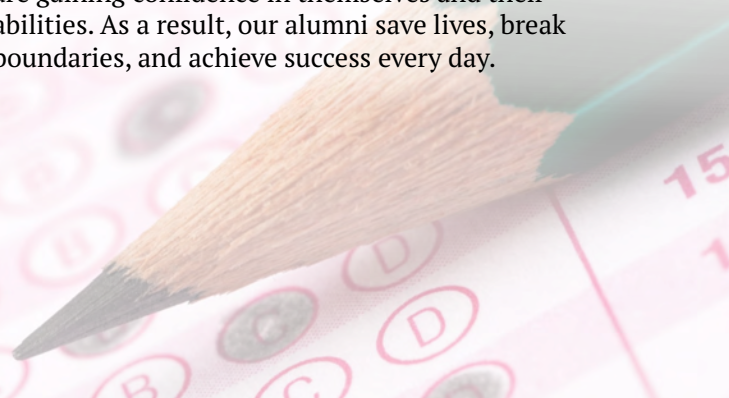
For many years, Mr. Schroepfer taught writing at the Saturday Scholars Academy, an ODASIS program that provides comprehensive supplemental instruction to New Brunswick High School students. In this program, students who often struggled academically due to lack of resources or attention gained skills in sciences, math, writing, and SAT preparation. “I taught them the same way I would teach any of my college students,” Mr. Schroepfer said.

Originally, Mr. Schroepfer only worked in the Rutgers Writing Program but later sought to assist ODASIS and its mission of student academic development. “I loved teaching the students,” he remembered. “The best parts were helping them be the best writers they could be. They were proud and I was proud of them.”

Today, Mr. Schroepfer is enjoying his well-earned retirement. However, he continues to sing praises for ODASIS and the Saturday Scholars Academy and even endeavors to return to teaching classes soon. When asked about why programs like ODASIS are important, he said, “Look at what you’re doing: you’re taking working class students, and you’re giving them an education and opportunity. Isn’t that what the American dream is all about?”

Indeed, the work of the Saturday Scholars Academy and George Schroepfer shows how ODASIS develops its students into holistic learners and professionals. Our services help students analyze, research, and write—all skills useful in countless careers.

Just as importantly, by becoming educated, they are gaining confidence in themselves and their abilities. As a result, our alumni save lives, break boundaries, and achieve success every day.



Re-investing Success

WRITTEN BY MASON SPRINGER-LIPTON



Dr. Chukwudi Okafor

“I want to give back to the people who allowed me to grow and achieve,” explained Dr. Chukwudi Okafor. Despite his own professional career, Dr. Okafor has never forgotten the support ODASIS gave him as an undergraduate, and he has generously continued to contribute to our program. Today, he works as a radiologist with Penn State Community Medical Group, a private practice associated with Pennsylvania State University.

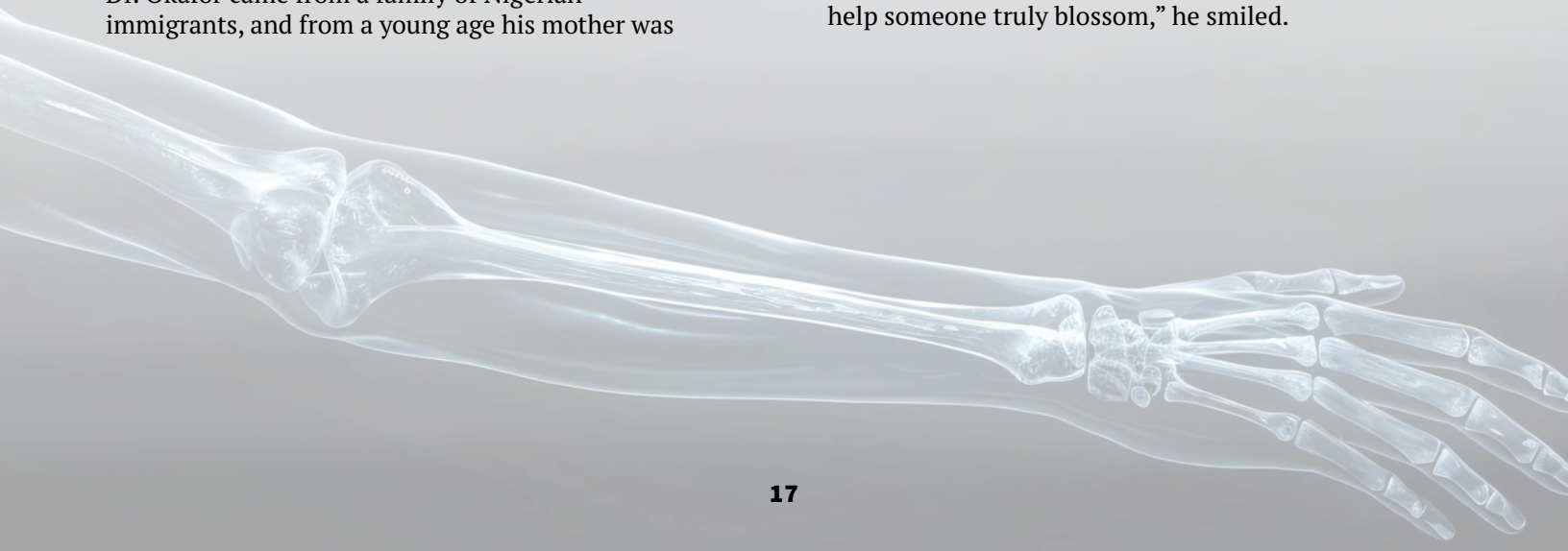
Dr. Okafor came from a family of Nigerian immigrants, and from a young age his mother was

pushing him to achieve success, especially in medicine. During his first year at Rutgers, he encountered ODASIS, which provided him with an invaluable foundation for his academics. “ODASIS’s structure grounded me and gave me a template to move forward,” he said. Over the years, he even began teaching our student instructional sessions and instructing the ODASIS MCAT Preparatory Course. Thinking back on his time as an MCAT instructor, Dr. Okafor said, “I surprised myself with what I was able to get people to understand. It was a great feeling.”

Empowered by ODASIS, Dr. Okafor went through medical school, joined along the way by friends he made in our program. While he was initially on track to become an anesthesiologist, during his third year of residency, Dr. Okafor realized it was not what he wanted to do. As a result, he made the difficult decision to suddenly switch to radiology. “You should do the things you want to do,” he explained. “By choosing radiology, I chose for myself.”

Dr. Okafor is very happy with his current position. He spends most of his day interpreting diagnostic images like x-rays while also consulting for studies with clinical providers. On some days, he conducts procedures like arthrograms. “Each study I report on is a different patient,” Dr. Okafor said. “And I do 60 to 70 cases per day.” Yet, the job is quite flexible and exciting for him, affording him time to participate in enriching activities like working out and salsa dancing.

Admirably, Dr. Okafor never forgets to re-invest his success back into ODASIS. “It feels like how it felt when I saw my MCAT students do well on their exams,” he said about donating. He also has shared advice with ODASIS undergraduates and hopes to mentor others very soon. “It’s a powerful way you can help someone truly blossom,” he smiled.



Congratulations to the Undergraduates Taking the Next Step in 2025!



Allopathic Schools

Rutgers New Jersey Medical School

Youstina Ragheb
Henry Souto (ED)
Beryl Zonese (ED)

Harvard Medical School

Solomon Williams

Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University

Angelina Albanese
Nia Melvin
Agustin Velasco

St. George's School of Medicine

Victoria Beaumont
Stephanie Bennett
Juliana Lozano (EOF)

Chicago Medical School at

Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science

Fernando Duran (Pre-Matriculation
Program)
Eziyeamaka Nwosu
Kelvin Omari-Kwarteng

Osteopathic Schools

DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine at Lincoln Memorial University

Chibuike Ozuoh

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

Diana Hadad

Dental

Touro College of Dental Medicine

Oluwumi Akinmade

University at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine

Emmanuel Azuonwu

Rutgers School of Dental Medicine

Hawa Diallo
Kameron Saul

Other Health Programs

New Jersey City University – ABSN

Andrea Carrillo

Rutgers School of Health Professions

Rehan Lone (DPT)

New England College of Optometry

Reghan Funderburk

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



Allopathic Schools

Rutgers New Jersey Medical School

Sebastian Acevedo
Valeria Alvarado
Michelle De Freitas
Rosamaria Dias
Steve El Eshaky
Naana Kena
Aushenay McNeill
Carlos Pareja
Fabian Victoria
Jack Wright

Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Adedayo Adepoju
Andres Alba
Jennifer Delgado

Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania

Ikenna Anusionwu

Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine

Devin Barsallo

Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University

Lindsay Benitez
Christopher Garrick
Siani Harding
Obehioye Isesele
Tomisola Onafowokan
Michael Sangobiya

Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University

Gabriel Colley
Johvany Plaisime

Cooper Medical School of Rowan University

Lindsey Dejean

Escuela Latinoamericana de Medicina

Agyeiwa Weathers

Miller School of Medicine at University of Miami

Joseph Yunga Tigre

Osteopathic Schools

A.T. Still School of Osteopathic Medicine

Quincy Akaba

Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine at Middletown

Paola Arteaga

Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine

T'Sian Caesar
Daniel Casal
Ozekia Cole
Rahyan Mahmud

Noorda College of Osteopathic Medicine

Emely Fernandez

Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine

Kevin Ndukwe

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

Percy Takyi

Dental Schools

Columbia University College of Dental Medicine

Jayanne Pierre

Nova Southeastern University College of Dental Medicine

Brittany Urena

Other Health Programs

Nova Southeastern University

Kristy Boocz

University of Charleston School of Pharmacy

Israa Shehata

Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health

Bridgette Wamakima, MD,MBA

Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science College of Nursing

Rubin Cruz

William Patterson School of Nursing

Stephany Caicedo

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Tomorrow. Donate to ODASIS.**

