

A Word from the Dean



Dear students,

The weekend before last, the Corporation of Brown University met for its February meeting, a special focus of which was The Warren Alpert Medical School.

Indeed, an all-day retreat was held on Friday, February 23, to discuss the Medical School's strategic planning efforts.

I am pleased to inform you that the Corporation was supportive of our ambitious plans to make The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University one of the country's leading institutions for medical education. The Corporation also expressed its general support for the concept of constructing a new medical education building either on the grounds of the Rhode Island Hospital campus or in the Jewelry District. Also discussed were the desirability of further coordinating research activities among campus- and hospital-based faculty and the prospect of jointly identifying and underwriting, with the hospitals, areas of excellence in biomedical research. As you can imagine, I was gratified to see the Medical School's agenda being subjected to such rigorous and broad scrutiny.

Also of interest to you is the Corporation's approval of major renovation and reorganization of Faunce House as a new campus center that will be open to students 24/7. Plans for the renovation include enhancements to student and community life at Brown.

Although this news constitutes a wonderful way to begin the month of March, the Brown

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Medical Student Affairs

Philip Gruppuso

Associate Dean for Medical Education

Some Thoughts on Examinations and Assessing Student Knowledge

In the past several weeks, I have been involved in some discussions on how we should approach the issue of examinations in our pre-clinical courses. There are a number of important considerations, some of which seem mutually exclusive: multiple choice (board-type) versus essay, short versus long, timed versus untimed. This is reflected in the diversity of opinion that was expressed this past fall in a student-initiated discourse on the subject.

As part of the redesigned first-semester curriculum, we introduced a system of integrated (i.e., multi-subject) exams that took place on half days about every three weeks. The exams were mostly single-best-answer multiple choice and included many clinical vignettes. They were also fairly rigorous with regard to length (about 80 questions per 3-hour exam block). In short, they bore a resemblance to the USMLE Step 1 format. This was intended to make a contribution to students' preparation for Step 1.

At the end of last month, a meeting of first semester course directors was convened to discuss the experience of the first semester from a faculty standpoint. One of the subjects discussed was examinations. Some faculty members raised concerns about the serious limitations of the type of exam we used in assessing students' ability to integrate material,

their understanding of "systems" (a concept critical to human biology and pathophysiology) and their creativity in dealing with complex subjects.

I hope that faculty and students will become engaged in the next several months in discussing this broad area of assessment of pre-clerkship students. Clearly, one of the goals of the first semester (in fact, the first four semesters) is the acquisition of an extraordinary amount of new knowledge. We (like the USMLE) have probably placed disproportionate emphasis on this particular goal. As we move forward with the curriculum redesign process, I hope we can develop an approach to assessment of students that will itself be of some educational benefit and promote a better integration of the material. The one suggestion on the table is an open-book, integrated essay examination to take place at the end of the semester. As of next fall, the first semester (as approved by the Medical Curriculum Committee) will be pass-fail, which we hope will reinforce the educational value of this approach.

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summer study in germany

There is still time to apply to **study in Germany this summer:** Comparative Medical Ethics at Tuebingen University, June 18–29, 2007 and/or Management of Acute and Chronic Pain at Rostock University, June 30–July 12, 2007. First-year medical students and PLME students may apply for one or both opportunities. Classes are in English. Students pay transportation, food, and incidental expenses. For an application, contact Hilary_Sweigart@Brown.edu. **Deadline for receipt of application is March 31, 2007.**

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I will work towards convening a group to discuss this broad issue prior to the end of the semester.

Student Affairs

Alexandra Morang

Director

MD Class of 2007: Match Day is March 15th and the invitations are in the mail! A festive champagne reception in your honor will be held at Andrews Dining Hall on Pembroke Campus. You will receive your residency training appointments exactly at the strike of 12:00, immediately prior to the reception. Wishing you all the very, very best! **Reminder: If you have not filled out your electronic AAMC graduation questionnaire, please do so. The web address is www.aamc.org/gq.**

MD Class of 2008: The fourth-year lottery for sub internships and electives will take place this month using the OASIS scheduling program. Your preferred course list must be reviewed and approved by your career or academic advisor in order for you to participate in the lottery. Linda Bozzario will be sending you further details about the process and the dates.

MD Class of 2009: A series of meetings have been planned to help you with the transition to the clinical years. **On Thursday, March 8 at 12:00 p.m., there will be a general overview meeting in Room 291.** Lunch will be served. **On**

Wednesday, March 14 at 3:15 p.m. in Room 202, there will be a **Core Clerkship Information Meeting.** All of the clerkship coordinators will be on hand to discuss the third-year curriculum and clerkship assignments. **On Wednesday, March 21, from 4:00-6:00 p.m. in Room 202,** a panel of third- and fourth-year students will discuss planning your third year and share their clerkship experiences with you. A guide to the clinical years will be distributed and timelines will be discussed. **Further details on each program will be sent via the listserv.**

Office of Women in Medicine

Deb Abeshaus

Director

The Office of Women in Medicine cordially invites you to the following upcoming programs. For more information and to RSVP for these events, please email: officeofwomeninmedicine@brown.edu or call 863-7960/2450.

A discussion on *Excelling on the Wards* will be led by Dr. Renee Ward, Teaching Fellow in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. The program will take place on **Thursday, March 1, 2007, from 5:00–6:00 p.m.,** at Rhode Island Hospital in the Jane Brown Building, Division of General Internal Medicine Conference Room—Suite 0105.

On **Thursday, March 15, 2007,** from 5:30–7:00 p.m., a *special evening for Women in*

Medicine will be held at the Rhode Island School of Design Museum. This annual networking event in the Porcelain Gallery of the museum will take place on Gallery Night.

The Women in Residency Fair will be held on **April 12, 2007, 5:30–7:00 p.m. in the Brown Faculty Club.** This is a unique opportunity for women medical students to learn about the residency experience and medical specialties from the perspectives of women physicians. An announcement will follow.

PLME

Hilary Sweigart, *PLME Manager*

A **HUGE THANK YOU** to **ZACH GORDON, '07,** co-chair of the Whole Physician Program who, along with the College Lecture Board, organized the stellar presentation on autism by **Dr. Eric Fombonne** on February 26. Starr Auditorium was filled! Dr. Fombonne provided historical background to research done in the area of autism and current thinking.

PLME Freshmen: We are anticipating a terrific **Whole Patient Program** on **APRIL 18** with Emily Harrison, MD, MPH, a family practitioner with a strong interest in international health. Dr. Harrison is committed to the care of underserved women, and practices with Women's Care, Inc. She is a volunteer for *Shoulder to Shoulder, Inc.* which worked with local community leaders in Honduras to form *Hombro a Hombro*, a grassroots, community-based, non-profit NGO. Its mission is to develop educational and health programs to help poor, rural communities in Honduras achieve sustainable development and improve the overall health and well being of its residents. Every project involves the provision of health care at the level of the community, sometimes working in the most remote sites, often staying in communities without water or electricity, sleeping on school floors and walking home to home to see older and more sick individuals who cannot walk outside the confines of their own home.

PLME Sophomores: As you develop your **PLME Educational Plan**, you must meet with your advising dean to discuss it. Plans along with a copy of your approved concentration forms are due to Ms. Fullerton in the PLME Office by **April 16**.

PLME Senate

Jenna Kahn

Co-President

Beginning with the first month of school the PLME Senate has already planned and executed a large number of events! The PLME Senate has been working hard for you and is very excited to announce the programs that it has in store for the rest of the semester.

On February 11th the PLME Senate and other members of the PLME classes got together to make one of our Sunday meetings into a Pizza making get together. There was a great turnout and it was a fantastic bonding experience for the Senate members. The Social committee will be planning a continuation of the *House Marathon* with Shanghai Chinese food. Look out for more on this event!

As part of the Whole Physician program, on February 26th, Dr. Eric Fombonne spoke on the topic of "Autism: Progress and Controversy" in the Starr Auditorium. He is a professor of psychiatry and an epidemiologist and is the Director of Child Psychiatry at McGill University in Canada. Dr. Fombonne is a leading authority of autism. His research focuses on epidemiological investigations of childhood mental illness and related risk factors with a particular focus of the epidemiology of autism. This event was co-sponsored with the Brown Lecture Board. Many thanks to Dr. Fombonne for coming to speak to the Brown Community.

The PLME Senate co-hosted an event with the Brown Medical School on February 28th and held a lunch-time meeting in Smith Buonono 106. This was

an educational event to discuss lobbying and the Rite-Care issue. This event was well attended and was very informative.

Look out for March 6th, from 7:00-8:00 p.m. in BMC Eddy Auditorium. There will be an informal information session with Dean Gruppuso discussing the changes in the Medical School curriculum. Pizza will be served at this event and it is highly encouraged that all PLMEs attend.

Our community service chairs, Annie Wang and Angela Yang, are working

vigorously to provide you with opportunities at Hasbro Children's Hospital to visit and plan activities. Angela Yang will be organizing trips to Hasbro for 4-5 volunteers at a time to do arts and crafts with children in the waiting rooms. PLME Senate is also co-sponsoring Locks of Love, so if you are interested in participating or want to learn more about it, please contact us.

There is a Housing newsletter sent to all PLMEs by email. If you have any openings or need a sub-letter, please email

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March 8

Workshop targeting 1st and 2nd year med students—National Health Service Corps (NHSC) info session on scholarship program to serve underserved populations—4:00-5:00 p.m.

March 9

Med School Karaoke Night. Come out for pizza, beer, Barry Manilow, Celine, and Whitney. Like Queen says, "It's a kind of magic". At Pembroke Fieldhouse, 7:00-11:00 p.m.

March 13

Meeting—Substance Abuse and Women's Health, 12:00-1:00 p.m. (Contact Shankar_LeVine@brown.edu for more information.)

March 14

"Promoting the Health of the Public: Creating Political Will for Action" (Taubman Luncheon Series), with Deborah Klein-Walker, President, American Public Health Assoc., Vice-President, Abt-Associates, 12:00 noon (lunch provided), Seminar Rm., Taubman Center

March 14

2nd Year Meeting with 3rd/4th Year Clerkship Directors. In BMC, Rm. 202, 3:15-5:00 p.m.

March 14

MOMS meeting, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

March 15

Match Day for MD 2007 Andrews Dining Room, Pembroke Campus, 12:00-2:00 p.m.

March 15 and 16

MD 2009 Reading Days

March 19

MD07 Financial Aid Exit Interview required for all graduating medical students. Preregistration required. Contact Carol Chace at Carol_Chace@brown.edu to reserve a spot. 2:00-5:30 p.m.

March 21

MD 2007 Dinner with Dean Adashi Maddock Alumni Center, Brian & Lanpher Rooms, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

March 21

2nd Year Meeting: 3rd and 4th year student panel discussion of Clerkships/Rotations Location: BMC, Room 202., 5:00-6:00 p.m.

March 24 -April 1 SPRING BREAK

March 26

MD07 Financial Aid Exit Interview required for all graduating medical students. Preregistration required. Contact Carol Chace at Carol_Chace@brown.edu to reserve a spot. 2:00-5:30 p.m.

INTEGRATED EXAMS

March 9 and March 23

MD 2010—Brain Science (IMS Exams IV/V), 9:00-12:00 p.m., S-B, Rm. 106

March 19

MD 2009—9:00-12:00 p.m., Rm. 202

opportunities

The **Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)** is requesting nominations for medical students in their final year to a one-year term with the **Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME)** beginning July 1, 2007. Appointed student members participate in all of the LCME activities and enjoy full voting privileges. They also serve on one accreditation site visit during their term. AAMC nominees should meet the following criteria: (1) Evidence of involvement in efforts to improve medical education, such as curriculum committee membership; interest in medical education and the role of accreditation; strong academic achievements. (2) Ability to make a significant time commitment to the LCME. Duties include review of accreditation reports, attendance at four LCME meetings, and participation on an accreditation survey. The selected student will be expected to attend the June 5-7, 2007, LCME meeting in Washington, as an observer, followed by meetings in Chicago on October 2-4, 2007 and February 5-7, 2008 and in Canada (city to be determined) on June 3-5, 2008. The LCME will reimburse the student for travel and lodging expenses. (3) To minimize disruption of their academic programs, nominees should be in their final year of medical school while serving on the LCME. **The nomination deadline to the AAMC is March 16, 2007.** For nomination details, please contact Joanne_MacConnell@brown.edu.

The **New York Academy of Medicine** is requesting applications for **Ferdinand C. Valentine Student Research Grants in Urology**. Up to four \$3,500 grants will be awarded in 2007 to students pursuing mentored research projects in urology to MD candidates who are either enrolled in a New York-area medical school or plan to conduct research at a New York-area institution. The grants typically support 8-12 week urology research projects initiated during the summer between the first and second years of medical school, but medical school students in any year of their education may apply. Students are encouraged to pursue research projects that extend beyond this startup period. **Applications are due by March 16, 2007.** Visit http://www.nyam.org/grants/valentine_student.shtml for further information and application instructions.

The **American Medical Student Association/Foundation (AMSA)** has several summer 2007 programs available for medical students. (1) The **End-of-Life Care Fellowship Program** runs from June 18-July 27, 2007 and is offered in conjunction with Horizon Hospice in Chicago, IL and Vitas Innovative Healthcare Corporation in Fort Lauderdale, FL. **The application deadline is March 23, 2007.** Additional information on this program and applications are available at <http://www.amsa.org/eol/>. (2) The **2007 Primary Care Leadership Training Program (LTP)** is a weeklong program designed to enhance the leadership skills of outstanding students and educate them on the wide range of career opportunities available in primary care. **Primary Care Across the Lifespan: Meeting the Challenge of Health Disparities** will be held at the University of Califor-

nia, San Francisco from June 25 to June 29, 2007. **The application deadline is April 18, 2007.** For additional information and an application, visit <http://www.amsa.org/addm/#ltp>. (3) The **Paul Ambrose Scholars Program** is for first- through fourth-year medical students interested in public health. A three-day symposium and project will be held in Washington, DC from June 21-24, 2007. It features skills-based leadership education and training in prevention and public health content areas, such as community organizing; project planning; policy advocacy; health literacy; and health care finance and delivery. Travel expenses up to \$250 will be covered and a \$200 stipend will be available. **Applications and information are available at http://www.atpm.org/meetings/symposium/PA_Symposium.htm and are due by April 13, 2007.** (4) Medical students interested in a career in academic medicine, particularly teaching and curricular reform, should apply to **Training Tomorrow's Teachers Today, AMSA's 4th Annual Medical Education Leadership Institute**. This five-day program meets from June 24-29, 2007 at the University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor, MI. It was co-developed by the AMSA Medical Education Action Committee and the University of Michigan Medical School to provide AMSA members interested in academic medicine with practical teaching and leadership skills. The program fee for attending this institute is \$300 for AMSA members, with an additional \$65 for non-members. **All application materials must be received by April 16, 2007.** Application forms are available at <http://www.amsa.org/meded/T4.cfm>. You are also welcome to contact Flavio Casoy, the Chair of the Medical Education Action Committee, at flavio_casoy@brown.edu for more information.

The **Federal Employee Education & Assistance Fund (FEEA)** offers an annual merit-based competition to civilian federal and postal employees, their spouses, and dependent family members. Eligible students must be in a degree-granting program at an accredited college or university. All applicants must have a minimum 3.0 GPA on an unweighted 4.0 scale. Sponsors must have at least three years of service by August 31, 2007. For more information on the **FEEA 2007-08 Scholarship Program** and an application, please contact the Financial Aid Office at 863-2721. **All applications must be postmarked by Friday, March 30, 2007.**

The **American Medical Association (AMA) Foundation** and the **AMA Minority Affairs Consortium** are offering the **Minority Scholars Award**, which is presented annually to 10 medical students from minority groups historically underrepresented in the medical profession. The \$10,000 awards are offered with support from the Pfizer Medical Humanities Initiative. The Minority Scholars Award recognizes personal commitment to improving minority health status, scholastic achievement and financial need among minority students. Eligible nominees are medical students from one of the following underrepresented minority groups: African

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PLME Senate

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Eric_Mao@Brown.edu, or if you have anything to add to this newsletter. We will also be starting a Volunteer Newsletter. If you have any volunteer opportunities, if you would like to contribute, or if you know of any submissions, please email Ana_Gustafson@Brown.edu

Finally, we hope that you will check out our new and improved website: <http://bms.brown.edu/plme/senate>. We hope that our new site will permit

better communication between the Senate and all of the PLME classes—please contact us if you have questions, comments, and suggestions!

We are looking forward to another productive semester and to seeing each and every one of you at our events and Senate meetings!

Student Health Council

Ashlynn Harris

“Feeling Depressed, Stressed, Overwhelmed?”

By Rebecca Evans-Olders, a member of Medical Student Mental Health, at McGill University Faculty of Medicine. Edited by Ashlynn Harris.

- First, know that you're not alone. One study showed that the rate of depression was 18% for 1st year students, rising to 39% in year 2.
- As medical students, we have an enormous workload and high pressure to perform that can result in a non-supportive atmosphere. The key is to identify which stressors apply to you and work on those.
- Keep a diary of your mental health. Find patterns in your daily activities, and correlate them to the feelings, good or bad, that result.
- When you are feeling stressed, try one of the following:
 1. Talk to someone who makes you laugh. It can translate into a more relaxed and positive outlook.
 2. Do aerobic exercise for 30 minutes. This type of exercise causes the release of endorphins in the brain. They are our natural high.
 3. Take a shower. It will relax you enormously and make you better able to think rationally and calmly.

There is still time to apply for an **International Health Travel Scholarship (IHTS)**. The Medical School has funding available for approximately ten international travel grants of \$500 each to help support travel to international locations to pursue educational experiences, such as attending summer seminars, conferences, programs, or research, which will benefit students' professional development. For more information and an application, medical students and PLME students may contact Hilary_Sweigart@Brown.edu. **Deadline for receipt of completed application is March 31, 2007.**

opportunities

American/Black, American Indian, Native Hawaiian, Alaska Native and Hispanic/Latino. Nominees must be a permanent resident or citizen of the United States in their first or second year at an accredited U.S. medical school. Eligible candidates must be nominated by the medical school dean or dean's designate. **Nominations for up to two individuals per medical school may be submitted for this award by no later than April 16.** All AMA scholarship opportunities can be viewed at <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/14772.html>.

The **Helping Hands Grant Program** established by the **American Psychiatric Foundation** encourages medical students to participate in community mental health service activities, particularly those focused on underserved populations. Recipients of 2007 grants will be invited to create and present a poster about their project at the American Psychiatric Association's Institute on Psychiatric Services in October 2008 in Chicago, IL. A small travel stipend will be offered to each recipient program to offset the cost of travel for one representative. Grants of up to \$5,000 will be provided to medical schools for community mental health service projects that are initiated and managed by medical students. Community service programs supported by these grants will fund medical students in their second, third, or fourth year of medical school. **Applications**

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4. Watch a movie you find inspiring.
- At the same time, it is important to have a lifestyle that promotes good mental well-being. What are some things you can do?
 1. Remember that no one is perfect. You didn't get accepted to med school because you're perfect, but because you have unique qualities that will make you a good doctor.
 2. Do not sleep in. Research has shown that sun-rise time predicts depression prevalence. Do yourself a favor, and get up when the sun is up!
 3. Make use of the SHC and Psychological Services. They exist for you, so don't be shy to talk to someone about your problems.
 4. Cultivate your relationships with your family and friends. It is important to have a strong support system when the going gets tough. Balance is important: a satisfying life outside of school is necessary for a satisfying, and successful, academic life.

Opportunities

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for 2007 grants must be received by May 1, 2007. Further information and applications are provided at http://psychfoundation.org/helping_hands.cfm.

The Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic and The Department of Psychiatry of The University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine announce the **Fifth Dr. Thomas Detre Senior Medical Student Award** for advanced students planning a career within psychiatry. Awardees will have the opportunity to create a unique one-month clinical sub-internship with a faculty member at the University of Pittsburgh. This award includes a \$1,000 cash stipend to cover expenses. **The application deadline is May 4, 2007.** Requests for additional information and application forms can be obtained by contacting Jason Rosenstock, M.D., Director of Medical Student Education, at 412-246-5122 or rosenstockjb@upmc.edu.

Coler-Goldwater Specialty Hospital and Nursing Facility on Roosevelt Island, New York, NY, is offering an opportunity for 10 undergraduate medical students to attend a six-week summer multi-specialty/multidisciplinary externship at their facility. The goals of this program include acquiring an understanding of chronic illnesses and the interdisciplinary team approach required to care for people with chronic illnesses. Students are given the opportunity of one-to-one supervision with

full-time attending physicians. Free board and lodging are provided at the hospital. **The deadline to apply is May 9, 2007.** Please contact Harvey Jolt, Ph.D., at 212-318-4082 or by email at Harvey.Jolt@nychhc.org for further information.

The **Rhode Island Society of Anesthesiologists (RISA)** is offering the **RISA Medical Student Fellowship** to Rhode Island medical students interested in anesthesiology issues pertaining to anesthesia residency training, anesthesia research, and anesthesia practice management. By becoming members of RISA and the **American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA)**, fellowship recipients will be awarded an \$800 stipend to attend the ASA Legislative Conference and the ASA national meeting as members of the Rhode Island delegation. At the conclusion of the fellowship year, fellowship recipients will be invited to share their experiences with the RISA membership by making a brief oral presentation at the RISA annual meeting. To apply for RISA membership and the RISA Medical Student Fellowship, contact Trevor S. Sutton, MD, President of the Rhode Island Society of Anesthesiologists and Assistant Professor of Anesthesiology, Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University at 401-444-5142.

The **New England Eye Center, Tufts University School of Medicine**, in collaboration with the **Massachusetts Institute of Technology** has an exciting and unique research opportunity for a highly motivated medical student. The research involves the clinical applications of high-speed ultrahigh resolution optical

coherence tomography (OCT). The student will have the opportunity to design, initiate, and complete clinical studies on the utility of this device in retinal diseases and glaucoma. A background in engineering or computer science is preferred. **This is a one-year, full time commitment starting in July 2007.** A stipend of \$25,000 per year is available. Interested individuals should contact Jay S. Duker, M.D., Professor and Chair, New England Eye Center, 617-636-4677, judker@tufts-nemc.org.

A Word from the Dean

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community was of course saddened by the news of the passing of Mr. Warren Alpert, just one month after he made his historical gift to Brown and for which we renamed the Medical School in his honor. I am grateful that The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University will stand as the enduring manifestation of Mr. Alpert's commitment to supporting biomedical education and research. He has entrusted us with this legacy, and I know we will make him proud.

Sincerely,



the pulse

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Student Affairs Newsletter
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