



## A Word from the Dean



Dear students,

I'm pleased to tell you about an exciting new initiative afoot at the Medical School. As you all know, human genome sequencing has given rise to

entire new fields of study, such as computational molecular biology, where high-throughput computing analyzes and decodes patterns in the genome. It has also made possible the idea of "personalized medicine" – the use of new methods of molecular analysis to better manage a patient's disease or predisposition for a disease. Personalized medicine aims to achieve optimal medical outcomes by helping physicians and patients choose therapeutic approaches that are likely to work best in the context of a patient's genetic and environmental profile.

The knowledge derived from new technologies in genotyping and genomic sequencing, expression array analysis and proteomics, genetic epidemiology, data management, bioinformatics, and statistical analysis will revolutionize primary care. Patients can be counseled to change their behaviors and the earliest signs of disease can be treated swiftly, heading off complications. The result will be better outcomes for patients and lower health care costs.

Building on existing strengths in its research enterprise and the clinical specialties, Brown has recently made significant investments in genomics, proteomics, computational molecular biology, biostatistics, and epidemiology. This

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## Medical Student Affairs

Philip Gruppuso

*Associate Dean for Medical Education*

As the pre-clinical curriculum redesign has moved along, I've given some thoughts to the gaps that exist in the typical core medical curriculum. "Core" is still largely defined by the requirements of our accrediting body, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education. The LCME's requirements are largely in the traditional medical sciences and clinical disciplines (medicine, surgery, psychiatry, etc.). There are additional content requirements for a number of other areas, including cultural competency and medical ethics. The inclusion of Doctoring in our redesigned curriculum addresses many of these less traditional requirements, but that does not mean that we should not explore additional "non-core" content areas.

In its June 2007 report, "Initiative to Transform Medical Education," the AMA addressed curriculum content. The report details the need to focus on non-traditional areas that include quality and safety, payer systems and humanism, among many others. Earlier this semester, we took a small step forward in addressing some of these areas.

A series of lunchtime seminars for second-year students took place during October and November. My intention was to pilot a series of non-required presentations and discussions with the hope that these sessions could be incorporated into the 08-09 second-year curriculum. Denise Panichas, Executive Director of Samaritans, presented on

the subject of Suicide Prevention and the Art of Befriending. Carol Poore, a Professor of German Studies at Brown provided a talk on Disability Studies for Doctors. James Burrill, a faculty member in Medicine and the Medical Director of Blue Cross in RI, provided an introduction to the medical insurance industry. Joan Flynn, the Director of Risk Management for Lifespan, spoke on physician liability.

There are many other subject areas that deserve similar attention. Finding space in the curriculum is always challenging, but the combination of engaging subject matter and engaging speakers can make the time commitment worthwhile. As for planning next year's speaker series, I would welcome any interested students to become involved by suggesting subject areas, suggesting speakers or planning the details for such things as panel discussions or case-based discussions. My hope is that this approach can make our pre-clinical curriculum more complete and more effective.

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## Student Affairs

Alexandra Morang

Director

This is the time of year when study space is in demand. The MDL folks have agreed to open Room 202 with 24 hour access on the weekends during the final exam period. We have also arranged to have Room 202 open during the evening and overnight hours Monday through Friday. In addition, you will have access to the seminar and conference spaces in the building. These rooms will also be made available to you when you return in early January while the University is on winter break hours of operation.

If you would like to create a study group of three to four people, you can reserve a study room in advance through Carrie Furtado at 863-2482. In addition, there are several study rooms in the Sciences Library that can be reserved by individuals and small groups. To reserve a room, just call Ginine Hefner at 863-2405. These rooms hold 6-10 students comfortably, have two walls of blackboards, and can be reserved for 4 hour time blocks. The 11th floor is scheduled to be wireless by the end of January.

## Admissions and Financial Aid

Kathy Baer

Director

With roughly one month to go before the application deadline, we have received over 2,200 applications for admission to the Fall 2008 entering class. We plan to interview approximately 200 candidates for 25-30 places. Many of you have contacted our office to endorse the candidacy of one or more applicants. We thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts, particularly as they relate to a candidate's potential contributions to his or her class. Your insights often help us to make better decisions among so many well-qualified, compelling candidates.

Nearly fifty students from the linkage programs at Bryn Mawr College,

## save the date

Please save the date for these important events;

February 6, 2008:	Simon Lecture
March 20, 2008:	Match Day for MD '08
April 15, 2008:	Sheridan Lecture
May 25, 2008:	Commencement

Columbia University, and Goucher College attended our annual Postbaccalaureate Visiting Day on October 5. The afternoon program consisted of presentations on the pre-clinical and clinical curriculum, including the popular Doctoring course and the Scholarly Concentrations Program, as well as information regarding the admissions process and financial aid options, a campus tour, and a reception with current students and members of the Admissions Committee. We especially appreciate the perspectives that Deans Gruppuso and Monroe and Emily Rickards Green provided on teaching and learning at Brown. We also wish to thank Jeremy Boyd, Tina Cinelli, Gita Suneja, and Jim Wilkerson for adding their perspectives on clinical training, as well as Bridget Malit, Luke Godwin, Jen O'Brien, Sarah Housman, and Sienna Vorono for leading a tour of the facilities in the BioMed Center.

Residency Interviewing and Relocation Expenses: As you start your residency interviews, we remind you to save receipts for residency interviewing expenses, as these costs may be tax deductible if you itemize your deductions on your tax return. Please also remember to keep track of any moving expenses in the spring as they, too, may be deductible. If you are not familiar with this tax terminology, don't worry! We will provide additional guidance in early February at our tax workshop and at our annual financial planning workshops (see below).

Are you concerned about how to pay for residency interviews and relocation expenses? Although federal regulations

do not allow our office to offer you traditional student loans (Stafford, Graduate PLUS, institutional loans) to help you cover these costs, several lenders offer loans to fourth-year medical students specifically for this purpose. Unlike most student loans, your eligibility is based upon creditworthiness as well as your current level of educational and consumer debt. You decide the amount that you will need based upon the limits within the program. These loans generally are less expensive options than credit cards; however, we urge you to borrow conservatively, as interest begins to accrue immediately and the interest rates are adjusted quarterly for the life of the loan.

The following is a list of lenders that offer residency and relocation loan programs:

CitiAssist: [www.studentloan.com](http://www.studentloan.com)  
(800-745-5473)

Med Achiever: [www.key.com/grad](http://www.key.com/grad)  
(800-539-5363)

MEDLOANS: [www.aamc.org/medloans](http://www.aamc.org/medloans)  
(800-858-5050)

Medical Access Loan: [www.accessgroup.org](http://www.accessgroup.org)  
(800-282-1550)

Chase Medical Education Program Private Loan: [www.chasestudentloans.com](http://www.chasestudentloans.com)  
(877-744-2633)

All of these lenders are reputable companies that have been engaged in educational financing for many years. They process applications quickly, deliver funds promptly, offer well-designed websites, and employ knowledgeable customer service representatives to help you manage these loans after disbursement. Similar interest rates,

deferment terms, and a choice of repayment plans are applicable in all of these loan programs. Please contact the Office of Financial Aid (863-1142 or md\_finaid@brown.edu) if you have questions or need help in deciphering the details.

Annual Personal Financial Planning Workshops (FPW): If you are graduating in 2008, please look for an email to your class listserv requesting recommendations for the content of this year's FPW. This popular program introduces fundamental financial planning principles, including: budgeting, investments, tax considerations, various types of insurance, and credit issues. Case studies and electronic tools are provided for most of these topics. We will expand this year's program from two to three evenings to allow more time for in-depth attention to these and other issues by experienced financial professionals. We also will offer it earlier in the year (late February or early March rather than in April) so that this information reaches you in a more timely way. The primary goal of this program is for you to graduate from medical school with confidence in your ability to make informed decisions regarding your personal finances.

## Office of Women in Medicine

Debra Abeshaus

Director

The Brown University/Women & Infants The Association of Women Psychiatrists (AWP) has announced the 2008 Leah J. Dickstein, M.D. Award. This unique award recognizes a female medical student who best exemplifies the spirit of creativity, energy and leadership that Dr. Dickstein epitomizes and seeks to foster in others. The award is open to women medical students who have demonstrated superior academic achievement, creativity and leadership. If you would like to be considered as a nominee from Brown, please visit the Association of Women Psychiatrists' website at: <http://www.womenpsych.org> for an application. Please submit

your completed application and references, at least one from a faculty member, by January 31, 2008 to: The Office of Women in Medicine, The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, Box G-A132, Providence, RI 02912. Two nominees will be selected from Brown.

Please let us know if you have questions by calling 401-863-2450/7960 or by e-mail to: [debra\\_abeshaus@brown.edu](mailto:debra_abeshaus@brown.edu).

## PLME Senate

Geolani Dy

Co-President

PLME Senate has been busy in the past month, bringing out everything from pie-making socials to formal lecture panels for the entire Brown community.

In October, PLME Senate joined teams with the Medical School in sponsoring a Bone Marrow Drive for the Brown community. We would like to thank all the PLME students who volunteered at the Drive, as well as those who joined the Donor Registry.

The Community Service co-chairs are working on a holiday season community service opportunity to end the semester. Ideas for future volunteer or other community service opportunities are very welcome; please contact [Mansi\\_Shah@brown.edu](mailto:Mansi_Shah@brown.edu) or [Arune\\_Gulati@brown.edu](mailto:Arune_Gulati@brown.edu) and let them know where you have been devoting your hours of outreach!

Freshman PLME students had the pleasure of attending two Whole Patient dinners over the past couple of months. The event on Oct. 3 featured Dr. Paul Morrissey, kidney transplant specialist, and his patient who has received multiple transplants in her attempt to combat kidney failure. On Oct. 31, students had the opportunity to hear local Internist Dr. Paul Dionosopolous and his patient Christina Battista speak about her very active lifestyle despite arthrogyposis multiplex congenita.

### December 7

BioMed Musicale

BioMed students faculty and staff will perform solo and ensemble performances including pop, jazz, classical, blues and folk. In Alumnae Hall at 7pm, doors open at 6:30

### December 10

Physicians for Human Rights speaker Series: Addiction. 12 noon

### December 10

Surgery CIM program for MD '11. To be held in BMC room 202 at 5:30pm

### December 11

Health and Human Rights investigations: Lessons from the Field. Farnoosh Hashemian, from the national PHR chapter will talk about her work in human rights in regions of conflict. 12 noon.

In the spring, the freshmen can look forward to hearing Pediatric Oncologist Dr. Foreman and one of his patients present on the relationship they have formed. We hope that freshmen will give their input on what fields and programs they are most interested in, so please contact [Jack\\_Cossmann@Brown.edu](mailto:Jack_Cossmann@Brown.edu) and [Lisa\\_Ratanassaporn@Brown.edu](mailto:Lisa_Ratanassaporn@Brown.edu) with suggestions or questions.

Whole Physician co-chairs gave last month an Alternative Medicine theme: on Nov. 1, the panel of practitioners—including a shiatsu masseuse and hypnotherapist—shared their specialties with a room fully-packed with curious Brown students. On Nov. 15 the PLME Senate, Brown Taiwan Society and AMSA brought Dr. Li to campus to speak about his years of experience with Traditional Chinese Medicine, comparing it to his training in Western medicine and molecular biology.

Students should keep their ears open for the next PLME-Med student Coffee Break, a chance to meet other PLMEs

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# opportunities

The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation announces the availability of 2008-2009 Doris Duke Clinical Research Fellowships (CRF), which are designed to encourage medical students to pursue a career in clinical research by giving exceptional students the opportunity to experience clinical research first hand. Students spend a year out from medical school on a mentored clinical research project. A minimum of 60 fellowships will be awarded across the 12 participating CRF schools for the 2008-2009 fellowship year, which begins on July 1, 2008.

**2008-2009 International Opportunities:** An additional 12 fellowships are available to medical students interested in conducting clinical research in developing countries the 2008-2009 fellowship year.

**Fellow Stipends & Benefits:** \$27,000 stipend; health insurance; financial support to attend year-end CRF meeting; supplementary research and training funds.

**Eligibility:** Students matriculated at any U.S. medical school who are in good academic standing and have completed two or more years of medical school prior to the start of the fellowship are eligible to apply to any of the participating schools. Please see our website at [www.ddcf.org/mrp-crf](http://www.ddcf.org/mrp-crf) to apply. Application Deadline: January 16, 2008

The American Medical Student Association (AMSA) in partnership with the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), proudly present the: Paul Ambrose Political Leadership Institute March 1-3, 2008 in Washington, D.C. This institute will address the following issues; the role that medical students have played in shaping health policy, the changes that are coming to our healthcare system, the skills to participate in & shape the healthcare workforce of tomorrow, how to lobby, how to frame issues and communicate strategically with legislators, patients and the media, how to plan and execute a strategic state level political campaign, how to build relationships with some of today's leaders in health policy and an understanding of what it will take to defend the interests of medical students. Application Deadline is January 5, 2008. Submit all applications by email to [lad@amsa.org](mailto:lad@amsa.org).

The Foundation for Anesthesia Education and Research is pleased to announce that the FAER Medical Student An-

esthesia Research Fellowship Program will again be held in 2008. Application materials for host institutions are now available and can be obtained by visiting the FAER website at <http://www.f aer.org/programs/students/host.html>. FAER will begin recruiting medical students in January. Interested students may download the short student application from the website beginning January 3, 2008. We welcome your questions and look forward to hearing from you. Questions may be directed to FAER in care of Mary Schrandt by e-mail, [schrandt.mary@mayo.edu](mailto:schrandt.mary@mayo.edu), or by phone at 507-538-7883.

The Summer Training on Aging Research Topics - Mental Health (START-MH) Program, funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and administered by the University of California San Diego, is a unique national program that offers competitive scholarships to pre-doctoral and medical students who may be interested in aging and mental health research. Students receive a \$6,250 stipend for the 10-week training program. The program gives selected students an opportunity to gain research experience and work closely with established mentors/investigators in the field of aging and mental health research. During the summer experience, students will work on specific projects developed by, or in conjunction with a mentor. The training is designed for students at all research levels. Training may occur in a variety of institutions all across the country. Applications are due January 18, 2008. Please visit our website at: <http://startmh.ucsd.edu> for program details and application forms.

The Pisacano Leadership Foundation is pleased to announce that the application for the 2008 Pisacano Scholars Leadership program is now available online at [www.fpleaders.org](http://www.fpleaders.org), and may be submitted as the original application. The Pisacano Leadership Foundation (PLF) seeks to advance family medicine by providing well-educated, community-minded leaders in primary care. By aiding students who demonstrate the highest levels of commitment to family medicine, scholarship, leadership, character, interpersonal skills, and community service, the PLF will promote the development of the future leaders in the specialty.

The Pisacano Scholars Leadership program is designed to provide educational programs, leadership training, and funding to reimburse a portion of medical-school-

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## PLME

Hilary Sweigart

PLME Manager

Hope you enjoyed a restful and happy Thanksgiving with family or friends. Here are some opportunities to keep in mind during December. Good luck with exams, and enjoy a safe and peaceful holiday break!

ALL PLMEs, EIPs, are invited to the **\*\*PLME Holiday Party\*\*** on Friday, December 7, 12:00-1:30 p.m. in Chancellor's dining room. Take a study break and enjoy hot chocolate and lunch with fellow students.

**NOT-TO-BE-MISSED EVENT**—Open to all students—International Health Opportunities Student Panel, **\*\*December 12, 12:00-11:15 pm in BMC 202\*\***. Not just junior year abroad, you'll also hear about summer mini-courses in Germany, premed courses in Denmark and the UK, medical student exchange programs in China and Israel, med school Scholarly Concentration research in China, sustainable community development in the Dominican Republic, and more. Invited audience members include: Kendall Brostuen, Director of Office of Int'l Programs; Stephen T. McGarvey, PhD, MPH, Director of Int'l Health Institute and Director of Global Health Scholarly Concentration; Emily Green, Manager of Scholarly Concentration Program; Mark Fagan, MD, Dominican Republic; Tim Empkie, MD, Germany, Greece & Dominican Republic; Julianne Ip, MD, Israel & China; and Thomas Bledsoe, MD, Germany.

Reserve your spot and order a lunch by emailing Hilary\_Sweigart@Brown.edu by 12/5/07 (indicate vege focaccia or pesto chicken). **DON'T MISS THIS!**

Have you checked out 2008 summer research opportunities? Students are urged to identify the faculty sponsor/mentor early in the academic year (i.e., in Semester I before Winter Break) to allow time to thoughtfully plan out a research

proposal.

SRA-Biomedical Sciences—[http://med.brown.edu/plme/SRA\\_PLME.html](http://med.brown.edu/plme/SRA_PLME.html)  
SRA-Emergency Med—[http://med.brown.edu/plme/SRA\\_EM.htm](http://med.brown.edu/plme/SRA_EM.htm)  
UTRA—[http://www.brown.edu/Administration/Dean\\_of\\_the\\_College/utra/](http://www.brown.edu/Administration/Dean_of_the_College/utra/)

Announcing two summer mini-courses in Germany (taught in English) and open to PLME seniors and juniors, and medical students:

I. Growing Old—The medical perspective of aging at Rostock University, June 9–20, 2008.

II. Comparative Medical Ethics at Tuebingen University, June 23–July 4, 2008.

Students pay transportation to and within Germany, some food, and incidentals. Accommodation is provided, and tuition waived. Application is available at [http://med.brown.edu/plme/Summer\\_Germany.html](http://med.brown.edu/plme/Summer_Germany.html). Deadline is March 31, 2008.

Have you signed up to shadow a Brown alumni in your home state during Winter Break? [http://med.brown.edu/plme/MIAP\\_plme.html](http://med.brown.edu/plme/MIAP_plme.html)

We wish you Peaceful Holiday Season:  
Juli, Anne, Tim,

## PLME Senate

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and those who have gone on to Alpert Med School. Those who attended our last Coffee Break in November had the chance to connect with med students, who discussed their workloads and the value of taking a year off or going straight through to AMS, among other aspects of the PLME continuum and the reality of medical school. As a social event to end the year, we are planning a screening of Michael Moore's Sicko, which will be open to all Brown students. The time and place will be posted closer to the date! Let

us know how you would like to spend your study breaks with other PLMEs by e-mailing Whitney\_Eng@brown.edu or Kenneth\_Morales@brown.edu.

Our Freshman Class Representatives have been putting on Chem33 Study Sessions and Study Breaks throughout the semester; please contact Kevin\_Huang@brown.edu, Douglas\_Jacobs@brown.edu or Helen\_Johnson@brown.edu for information on these. If you are interested in attending a session for Neuro1 or Genetics (Bio47), please contact Jinyu\_Zhang@brown.edu or Rachel\_Kahn@brown.edu, our Sophomore Reps. And for those in search of off-campus housing, or those who have housing to offer, please contact our Senior Class Rep at Ana\_Gustafson@brown.edu. Ana sends out a regular Housing Newsletter to all PLME students by e-mail; it could spare you much frustration in your apartment search!

Lastly, PLME Apparel orders have finally arrived. If you have not picked yours up yet, please head to the PLME Office in the Biomedical Center where your apparel will be waiting. If you are looking for a present to bring home over winter break, consider a classy PLME t-shirt featuring the caduceus logo (\$12) in black! These are also available in the PLME Office.

Our PLME Senate meetings are held on Sundays at 5 p.m. in Faunce 201. Everybody is welcome to share ideas and hear about recent PLME Senate and Med School developments. We are also looking for feedback or questions you might have, in or out of meetings: please feel free to contact Jenna Kahn or Geolani Dy by e-mail. Every Senate member's contact information is available at <http://bms.brown.edu/plme/senate/about.html>, the NEW PLME Senate website designed by Webmaster Rahul Banerjee. Happy holidays!

## Opportunities

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related debt. Scholarships will be awarded to outstanding medical students for a four-year period. Students who have made a commitment to the field of family medicine and who will enter their fourth year in medical school in the fall of 2008 may apply. The PLF will award scholarships with a maximum value of \$28,000 each for the 2008-2009 academic year. Applications must be received by March 1, 2008 to be considered. Please contact Jane Ireland: [jireland@fpleaders.org](mailto:jireland@fpleaders.org) for additional information.

The William Osler Medal is awarded annually for the best unpublished essay on a medical historical topic written by a student enrolled in a school of medicine or osteopathy in the United States or Canada. The writer of the winning essay will be invited to attend the 2008 meeting of the American Association for the History of Medicine, 10-13 April, in Rochester, New York where the medal will be conferred. Reasonable travel expenses will be provided.

Essays may pertain to the historical development of a contemporary medical problem, or to a topic within the health

sciences related to a discrete period of the past. The essay (maximum 9,000 words, including endnotes) must be entirely the work of one contestant.

Complete contest information may be viewed on the AAHM website ([www.histmed.org/Awards](http://www.histmed.org/Awards)). Entries must be postmarked or submitted electronically no later than 15, January 2008.

Nexos Voluntarios (NeVo) is a non-profit organization, supported by the Inter-American Development Bank that aims to strengthen multilateral relations between Latin America and the Northern Hemisphere through the participation of university students and professionals, from USA, Canada and Europe, in development and research projects in Peru. We work with impact-driven and renowned NGOs that offer internships and volunteering opportunities for participating students. In return, we offer a meaningful learning experience abroad and a balance of cultural interaction, service work and strengthening of Spanish language and professional skills. For more information please visit the website at [www.nexosvoluntarios.org](http://www.nexosvoluntarios.org).

will enable us to leverage preeminent talent and begin to foster translational and transformational genomic studies. Alpert Medical School will soon be training a new generation of physicians in personalized genomic medicine. In addition, we are in the early planning stages of establishing the country's first population-based biobank, where tissue and DNA samples from a large number of individuals would be matched with their corresponding health records, enabling researchers to pinpoint the genetic and environmental factors that predispose or protect individuals from disease.

This initiative's implications for improving public health and accelerating progress in medicine are immeasurable. I will look forward to keeping you apprised of this initiative as it develops.

Meanwhile, I wish you all a restful and joyous holiday season.

Sincerely,

## the pulse

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