



DUCK MED

The Official Stevens Pre-Health Professionals Newsletter

In This Issue

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

INNOVATIONS IN HEALTHCARE

MENTAL HEALTH: ONLINE COUNSELING

MESSAGE TO 2021 GRAD SCHOOL APPLICANTS

COVID UPDATES

AAMC UPDATES

Black Owned Businesses in Hudson County

By: Va'Shayna Williams

Tia Planta - Jersey City

Address: McGinley Square: 722 Montgomery Street, Jersey City, NJ

Hours: Thursday - Sunday 12:00 P.M. - 5 P.M.

Shayla Cabera, aka "Tia Planta", utilizes her services to fundraise plant giveaways that raise awareness of the health benefits that come with household plants and raise money for the Black Trans Travel Fund. The Black Trans Travel Fund is an organization that provides material and financial resources to Black trans women. She is aiming to make her services more mobile and is currently doing Zoom events for "Plant Rehab", or plant consulting. Check out Tia Planta to enhance your plant IQ and bring life into your living space!

As-U-Wish Salon and Spa - Hoboken

Address: 319 Willow Avenue, Hoboken, NJ

Hours: Tuesday & Wednesday 12 P.M. - 8 P.M., Thursday & Friday 9:30 A.M. - 8:00 P.M., Saturday 8:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

Skyy Hadley is the owner of the As-U-Wish Salon and Spa. She has overcome barriers by opening up a business in a neighborhood with less than 5% African Americans. She has been running her salon in the square mile for 17 years and has successfully kept the business afloat despite the pandemic. She strives to empower Black women through her entrepreneurship. Check out As-U-Wish Salon for a pick-me-up or a day to treat yourself!

Double Dough - Hoboken

Virtually on Instagram at @jordanandjoelle

Jordan and Joelle are business women, hobby bakers, and authors. On their Instagram, you can find a variety of sweets and treats, as well as ways on how they strive to empower young Black girls through their book, Twin Tales. Jordan and Joelle use their platform to raise awareness on the importance of topics such as Latina Equal Pay, volunteering in Hudson County, human rights, and Black Lives Matter. In addition, they have a radio show that is dedicated to providing motivational and educational speeches for college preparedness. Check out this sister duo and all that they do for Hudson County!



THE TUSKEGEE EXPERIMENT

By: Jeel Shah & Elizabeth Chu

In 1932, hundreds of African American men in Alabama unknowingly signed up for the Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis. Promoted as a “Free Blood Test; Free Treatment,” many poor men sought help to remove and treat the “bad blood,” omitting the term syphilis, that they thought was potentially inside of them. The clear manipulation was intently used to study the deadly disease in African Americans as if they were experimental guinea pigs. The lack of informed consent and disclosure of the patients’ wellbeing is only one of many reasons for why Black people today have mistrust in healthcare and their healthcare providers. Additionally, this study, originally supposed to last one year, lasted for 60 years. During that time, a cure for syphilis was found, but never offered to the men participating in the study. The harmful and clear neglect of Black people in this study, in addition to people’s wrongful belief that Black people are considered as the “other”, causes fear that being a test subject like in the Tuskegee Experiment will happen to Black people again.

The Tuskegee Experiment is one example of explicit bias and health disparity in medicine. However, implicit bias is more common and often overlooked. It is important to recognize and provide equitable treatment to patients regardless of their sex, race, ethnicity, cultural and moral beliefs, or other forms by which individuals identify, as highlighted in one of the four tenets of medicine— justice. Furthermore, some diseases and medical conditions are unique and more susceptible to certain races, sexes, and ethnicities. Therefore, it is important for current healthcare personnel to educate themselves and recognize a person’s identity and potential risks associated with it to better address their conditions. Another way is by increasing the involvement of the Black community in healthcare, by hiring more Black doctors, nurses, emergency medical personnel, etc. Last, but not the least, it is important for rising medical personnel to educate themselves about the Black community in medicine early in their career to avoid worsening the health disparity and provide equitable treatment with respect.

AMERICA'S FIRST BLACK DOCTORS

By: Faizah Chowdhury

African American doctors make up a crucial part of our country’s medical field, and their contribution to medicine is often underappreciated. One of the pioneers was Dr. James McCune Smith, MD, known as the first African American doctor in the United States to receive a medical degree, which he received in 1837. Due to racism present within American medical schools at the time, Dr. McCune Smith was admitted to the University of Glasgow Medical School in Scotland. He was also the first Black person to own and operate a pharmacy in the United States and the first Black physician to be published in U.S. medical journals. Dr. McCune Smith was an abolitionist and friend of Frederick Douglass, and contributed to Douglass’ newspaper, writing the introduction to his book, *My Bondage and My Freedom*. In 1864, Rebecca Lee Crumpler became the first Black woman in the United States to receive an MD degree. She graduated from New England Female Medical College in Boston, Massachusetts, where she was the only Black graduate. After the Civil War, Crumpler moved to Richmond, Virginia, where she worked with other Black doctors as a nurse. In 1883, Dr. Crumpler wrote *A Book of Medical Discourses: In Two Parts*, which addresses children’s and women’s health. Even before those who earned medical degrees from American institutions, African Americans have worked to shape medicine into what it is today. For example, Onesimus, who was an enslaved African, is credited with bringing the African method of inoculation against smallpox to the United States, which was later used to protect American Revolutionary War soldiers. Another great example is Dr. James Durham, who was born into slavery, bought his freedom, and began his own medical practice in New Orleans, becoming the first African American doctor in the United States, despite not having formal medical education. These individuals are among many African American medical professionals who have had a lasting impact in medicine, and we admire them deeply for their perseverance and dedication to the field. To learn more about Black medical pioneers, feel free to check out the Duke University medical library’s [website here](#) and the [AAMC’s website here](#):



Mental Health: Online Counseling Services for Stevens

By: Milena Sudarikov

Stevens has recently partnered up with an online counseling service, Uwill. This service provides confidential counseling and psychological service for students in and outside of New York and New Jersey. Contact <https://app.uwill.com>, call at 1-833-998-9455, or email support@uwill.com. The short-term therapy takes the form of 5 free sessions per academic year. Otherwise, students living in New York and New Jersey may make appointments to CAPS by calling 201-216-5177.

A recent two-phase study led by Sami Shaaban of NuRelm Inc., Ana Radovic, MD, MSc, of the University of Pittsburgh, and Afsanah Doryab, PhD, of the University of Virginia is researching the use of mobile technology for the purpose of improving depression in teenagers. Up to 20% of teens struggle with depression and with the inescapable nature of technology, researchers find it imperative to create a digital passive monitoring system. An app called MoodRing Enhanced Care collects data on teens' communication patterns and social media use as well as their Fitbit data. This app's data is then available to themselves, parents, and healthcare professionals.

The first phase of the study will increase the accuracy of the MoodRing app to predict self-reported depressive symptoms with at least 85% accuracy. In the second phase, the predictions made by the app will be taken to a follow-up appointment with a health care provider. Symptom-monitoring for depression using an app is interesting, in that technology will be used for good. It is known that technology is constantly tracking our movements and rather than living in paranoia, wellness monitoring like MoodRing will allow teenagers to live in pronopia.

MICHELLE GNIDASH

Major: Biology
Minor: Medical Humanities
Graduating Year: 2021

Medicine was always a dream of mine growing up; however, it was only after starting at Stevens that I realized it was a passion I could pursue. Through community service, extracurriculars, and research, I grew as both a student and a person. During my freshman year, I joined the Hoboken Volunteer Ambulance Corps (HVAC) and soon after became an EMT. I have been fortunate to have enriching opportunities beyond HVAC, such as working numerous athletic events like the New York City Marathon. In addition to giving me a taste of what it is like to be a patient care provider, these experiences exposed me to a wide variety of medical professions. Transcending my work as an EMT, I have shadowed various physicians in both hospitals and offices over the past couple years. I joined a breast cancer research lab my junior year, amplifying my love for science overall. Being interested in various aspects of science and medicine, I decided to join AED. Not only have I been able to connect with numerous individuals across Stevens' pre-health community, but I have been part of the E-Board as the Scalpel and President! Last summer, when my internship was canceled due to COVID-19, I worked with The Stevens Healthcare Education Partnership to develop a Russian language translation program for patients in hospitals and became a staff member at The Hoboken Shelter. I am continuing my work at the Shelter and cooking up to 100 meals a day and supervising volunteers. Reflecting on my experiences, I can not believe graduation is right around the corner. I could not be more grateful for all of these experiences which have motivated me to continue pursuing medicine.

STUDENT HIGHLIGHT



Message for : Spring 2021 Applicants

SPRING 2021 APPLICANTS TO MEDICAL, DENTAL, AND OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

By: Dr. Nuran Kumbaraci & Dr. Patricia Muisener

I hope everyone is ready for a long semester break now that the finals are over, and we are leaving unforgettable 2020 behind!

Students who are planning to apply to medical and dental or other schools in the health professions for **admission in FALL 2022**, please contact Jona Drishti, jdrishti@stevens.edu.

Please note a few things:

1. **MCAT / DAT:** We recommend that the standardized tests MCAT/DAT is taken as early as possible so that, if necessary, students can retake them before online applications open June 1, 2021.
2. **Individual HPAC Interviews** will be schedules in the end of Feb/March/April 2021. Student must upload their CV/resume, personal statement, and other pertinent information onto Canvas at least a week before the schedules interview.
3. **Letters of Reference:** Letters from two science/engineering and one humanities/business professors must be submitted by April 1st, 2021 or before the interview with HPAC.
4. **Process to submit Letters of References:** The letter writer would send the letter to stevenshpac@stevens.edu and address the letter to either the Health Professions Advisory Committee, Dr. Kumbaraci or Dr. Muisener. Students can also choose to have letters written by others who can recommend the student (doctors, boss, volunteer supervisor, etc.). These "extra" letters can be submitted by their letter writer to the HPAC committee for submission along with the committee letter or the student can have the letter writer upload the recommendation letter to the application system when the student applied June 1st.

Please also see the HPAC Process Guide.

<https://sit.instructure.com/courses/26031/files/7427649/download?wrap=1>

If you have any questions, please email Dr. Kumbaraci (nkumba@stevens.edu) or Dr. Muisener (pmuisene@stevens.edu).

Wish everyone Happy Holidays and Healthy Days in 2021!



Innovations in Healthcare: Compassionomics

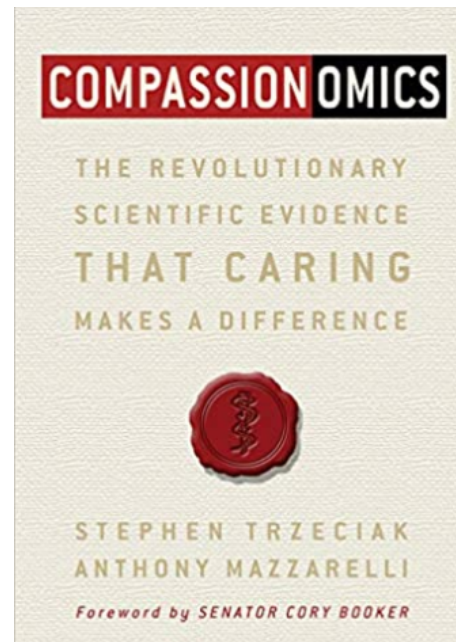
By: Michelle Gnidash

Innovations in healthcare expand beyond new pharmaceuticals, medical devices, or groundbreaking surgical techniques. Sometimes, there is a very simple solution that can drastically improve patient outcomes: compassion.

The field of Compassionomics is an innovative branch of scientific knowledge that studies the science of compassion proposed by Dr. Stephen Trzeciak, MD, MPH and Dr. Anthony Mazzairelli MD, JD, MBE. Together, they wrote the book *Compassionomics* and have given inspirational talks on the subject. Dr. Trzeciak opened his Ted Talk, “How 40 Seconds of Compassion Could Save a Life,” by discussing a tragic bus accident in Sweden that killed 6 people and left 56 survivors. Years later, when the survivors were asked what they remembered, there were two common themes: physical pain and a lack of compassion from the medical workers. Amongst the chaos of the situation, compassion in medicine was still held in high regard for these individuals. This idea transcends beyond healthcare to other fields. For example, there are times where one remembers the kindness of a waiter more than the actual food served.

Compassion is an emotional response to pain or suffering with a desire to help. *Compassionomics* stresses that action is needed in order to make an impact, and when a physician administers compassionate care, both the patient and health care provider can benefit. Dr. Trzeciak stressed that these benefits surpass a higher quality of care from the doctor and show physiological improvements in patients. Individuals who receive compassionate care have a decrease in stress-mediated diseases and pain, better blood sugar control, and better immune responses. An interesting point that Dr. Trzeciak conveyed is for better patient self-care. When patients feel that their doctor cares, they are more likely to adhere to treatment plans. Physicians who administer compassionate care also benefit themselves by having decreased stress and negative emotions. In an age when many of us are burned out, one solution is to simply show compassion for others. Dr. Trzeciak emphasizes that this is applicable to all, not just healthcare workers. We hear that the solution to burnout is to “get away” or take a vacation; however, this is countered by Dr. Trzeciak. He suggests that the solution is at the root of the issue, which in a doctor’s case is the point of care. When interactions between the patient and doctor have a better human connection, doctors are less likely to burn out and patient outcomes are improved.

Dr. Trzeciak and Dr. Mazzairelli’s book, *Compassionomics*, is filled with research studies, statistics, and real-world examples that prove the power of compassion. The best part is that it can be learned and only takes 40 seconds to implement. For anyone interested in the healthcare field or in innovative ways to make a difference, take a look at their research, book, or try implementing compassion in your everyday life.



Tips for Health Professional School Applications

By: Dr. Kenny Wong



1 Be Prepared

Have a detailed plan with a timeline. A successful professional in any field will have a plan A, B and C. Failure is certain in the real world. How you prepare for failure is a characteristic of a successful person.

2 Be Informed

Keep up with the science and talk to your professors, especially the HPAC members. Stevens pre-health students are fortunate that they have access to professors that are at the cutting-edge of biomedical science. Talk to them!

3 Be Passionate

Do things related to health care that resonate with you. You have to find your passion. If you are not passionate about being in the health profession, your impact will be limited. Love what you do. Find your passion.

AAMC Updates

By: Faizah Chowdhury

In 2021, the AAMC has announced a few updates regarding the status of the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) applications, MCAT exam registration, and the Summer Health Professions Education Program (SHPEP):

According to the AMCAS calendar, the AMCAS application will open for students to begin filling in information on May 3rd, 2021 for the 2022 cycle. As of February 16th, 2021, paper transcripts delivered by February 9th and electronic transcripts delivered by February 16th were marked as "Received". Applications that reached "Ready to Review" status and Academic Change Requests submitted by February 15th are currently being processed.

For those planning to take the MCAT exam, registration for dates in April, May, and June began on February 17th at 12 P.M. ET for Group A test centers and on February 18th at 12 P.M. ET for Group B test centers (click [here](#) to see which group includes your location). In the event that an exam is cancelled, test takers will be notified at least ten days prior to their exam date, and rescheduling fees will continue to be waived until further notice. The third registration date for exams in July, August, and September will be in May, and details are yet to be announced. Scores will be reported within 30-35 days after the test date.

Lastly, AAMC has announced that the Summer Health Professions Education Program for 2021 will be held virtually due to the pandemic. The application deadline was February 5th, and decisions will be released on March 15th, 2021.

Check out more at the [AAMC](#) website.

COVID Updates

By: Harshal Shah

New Jersey has begun distribution of the vaccines and is rolling them out in phases. Phase 1A consists of healthcare personnel, including both paid and unpaid people, who are serving in the healthcare field with the potential of having direct or indirect exposure to infectious patients or materials. This includes licensed healthcare professionals, EMS workers, nursing home and hospice workers, and other paid and unpaid individuals in the healthcare setting. Phase 1B includes first responders, mainly law enforcement and firefighters. It also includes HAZMAT and Search and Rescue services. The other half of Phase 1B includes individuals aged 65 and older and ages 16 to 64 with medical conditions that put them at a higher risk of severe illness from the virus. These medical conditions include cancer, chronic kidney disease, COPD, down syndrome, heart conditions, obesity, severe obesity, sickle cell disease, smoking, and type 2 diabetes mellitus.

Currently, these are all the individuals that are eligible for the vaccine in New Jersey. The remainder of Phase 1 will include additional essential workers and individuals at high risk. Afterward, the completion of Phase 1 will be followed by Phase 2, where the vaccine will be available to the general population. Registration and pre-registration are currently available on covid19.nj.gov, the official site of the state of New Jersey. The website details how to register for the vaccine and also provides vital information about the state's response to the virus and its timeline towards reopening.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Student Health Professions Club

- MCAT Talk & Nomination

- MCAT Talk on Feb 24 at 3 pm
Nominations / Elections TBH



Alpha Epsilon Delta

- Initiation TBH

Additional:

- [Peer Mentor Program Sign Up](#)

- [Mock Interviews Sign Up](#)

"Have any healthcare related topics you are interested in or passionate about?"

If you want to submit a piece for our next newsletter or if you know of a student who deserves a shout out in our Student Highlight, please contact us at duckmedicine@gmail.com!

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