INSIGHT: A First-hand Look at the Medical Profession

By Rakesh Patel

The School of Medicine and the School of Dentistry welcomed 38 students to the summer pre-matriculation program. The program is an optional opportunity for students who have accepted entrance into the schools and are seeking additional preparation for the first year’s basic science courses.

Participating students began an online portion of histology, biochemistry, and gross anatomy courses on June 20, which concluded two weeks later. During the online phase, students received introductory information for each course.

Once on campus, participants received four weeks of direct instruction from Dr. Gongchao Yang in gross anatomy, Dr. Audra Schaefer in histology, and Dr. Maryam Syed in biochemistry. In each course, innovative instructional techniques and technologies were used to improve engagement and academic performance and build students’ confidence as they prepare to begin regular coursework. Each course provided students with an opportunity to learn and practice skills conducive to their upcoming experience as professional students.

Beyond traditional academic coursework, students met weekly with the School of Medicine’s academic counselor, Dakota Bibbs, and participated in clinical correlations, small groups, and wellness events. In addition, teaching assistants, current M2s, provided students with review sessions and served as student mentors.

Empowering Students Through Education and Effective Mentorship (ESTEEM)

By Dr. Dan Coleman and Jeffrey Holland

Thirteen percent of the medical school class of 2025 at the University of Mississippi Medical Center identify as African American, in contrast to a state population of thirty-eight percent of people who do so. One of the largest hurdles to bridge this gap is the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). To help more African American students and students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds get into medical school, second-year medical student Libby Kabachia created an 8-week MCAT tutoring and mentorship program called ESTEEM, Empowering Students Through Education and Effective Mentorship.

Twenty students scoring below a 500 on the MCAT participated in ESTEEM. Throughout the 8-week program, the students studied MCAT material and practiced test-taking strategies. The ESTEEM participants also strengthened other aspects of a medical school application, such as the personal statement. The participants met frequently with an assigned mentor and tutor, all of them current students at UMMC, who guided the participants in their studies and held them accountable to the rigorous schedule necessary to perform well on the test.

Furthermore, the participants took four practice MCAT tests every other week, and they used these tests to assess weaknesses and tweak strategies. In all, the three tenets of accountability, education, and test-taking strategies sought to increase the performance of students on the MCAT to or above a 500 to help bridge the disparity between physician and patient demographics.

School of Medicine Mission Statement

The University of Mississippi School of Medicine is committed to training skilled and compassionate physicians to provide high quality and equitable health care particularly to the state’s residents, including diverse and underserved populations. The school prepares learners to provide excellent care through programs of innovative education, state-of-the-art research and comprehensive clinical practice.
The Mosaic Summer Enrichment Program seeks to expose rising juniors and seniors from rural high schools to careers in health care. During the first week of June 19, students from across Mississippi participated in a week of activities facilitated by each of the seven schools on UMMC’s campus. Students resided at Millsaps College and came to UMMC’s campus each day to participate in 12 hours of activities.

This programming covered a range of topics from an overview of the various health care careers offered at UMMC, pathways to these careers, as well as simulations in these careers. Students participated in activities throughout the day focusing on ACT prep, lessons on the science of learning, test taking skills, time management, and financial literacy. Each Mosaic participant was certified in “Basic Life Support” as well as “Stop the Bleed”. A second cohort of 23 students participated in the same programming during the week of July 10-16.

The program is sponsored by Improved Primary Care for the Rural Community through Medical Education or (IMPACT the RACE), a program funded by Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Ultimately the purpose of Mosaic is to inspire students from rural areas to seek careers in health care to change the mosaic of Mississippi’s health care system to look more like its people: diverse and resilient.

Promoting Recruitment Opportunities in Medicine with Individual Study Experiences (PROMISE) Program Conference is an early assurance program for students underrepresented in medicine. The main goals are to introduce students to career opportunities in medicine, engage the students in enrichment programs that will help strengthen their academic foundation, and expose the students to faculty that are active in medicine. In addition, the program guides students through the processes of applying to and attending medical school, such as providing preparation for the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT).

Thirty-three PROMISE students, 18 rising seniors and 15 rising juniors, attended this summer’s PROMISE Program Conference from June 14-17. Activities during the week included lunch with faculty and administrators, medical-themed Jeopardy, a suture lab, an auscultation lab, a neurology workshop where they learned about the differences between small and large strokes and different dementias, a lecture on maintaining an open mind when deciding on a specialty, and shadowing a physician in a specialty of their choice. Students also learned about the pathway to becoming a physician, attended a panel of our most exemplary medical students and physicians, and attended presentations focused on MCAT preparation. The program was funded by the Improving Primary Care for the Rural Community through Medical Education (IMPACT the RACE) grant.

The Office of Medical Education and Learning and Research and Integration teams in DIS are working hard to prepare SEAtS for academic year 2022-2023. With the fall semester quickly approaching, schedule changes for the M1 and M2 courses are inevitable. If the need arises for the removal of a session in SEAtS, faculty and administrators must use the Cancel option to allow the Canvas calendar to be updated. Deleting a session will not update Canvas and could create issues impacting the interface running between the two systems.

Follow these steps to ensure SEAtS and Canvas are updated correctly using the Cancel functionality in SEAtS.

1. Click on the appropriate session from the Sessions list in SEAtS.
2. Click the drop-down menu for Room Actions on the top right corner of the screen.
3. Click Cancel Class
4. Select Yes in the pop up to confirm your action.
5. Notice the change in the Sessions list. Cancelled is displayed for Building and Room information.
6. The nightly interface will update the Canvas calendar event.

SOM Annual Town Hall Meeting

The SOM Annual Town Hall Meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 17, at noon in the School of Medicine Education Building in Lecture Hall 124.

Dr. Jackson-Williams will provide a summary of key metrics for the SOM, identify upcoming focus areas, and provide an opportunity for faculty, staff, and students to engage in discussions about the medical education program.