

## FUTURE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS CLUB

*Dedicated to guiding future health professionals*

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This Newsletter is produced by the FHP Club at the University of California, Irvine. The FHP Club is a non-profit organization and is supported by donations and small grants.

Please e-mail us with questions or comments at [fhpclub@uci.edu](mailto:fhpclub@uci.edu)

Please visit our website: [www.ha.uci.edu/fhpclub](http://www.ha.uci.edu/fhpclub)

## A MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER

Careers in healthcare are very satisfying and rewarding. Whether it is by prescribing a medicine, drawing blood, doing a surgery, or providing advice regarding one's diet, healthcare professionals get a strong satisfaction by helping people sustain or regain their health. Although a significant proportion of youth have the interest to become a healthcare professional, they do not have the opportunity to explore different careers. Through the Future Health Professionals (FHP) Club at the University of California (UC), Irvine, we will provide opportunities for students to explore different healthcare careers and help them reach their fullest potential. We will empower youth by performing workshops, after school clubs, providing volunteer or shadowing opportunities.



Healthcare providers face challenges regarding patient care on a daily basis. Altruism, honesty and strong moral values are crucial components of every healthcare profession. Through our Newsletter and our mentorship



*"We desire to inspire a sense of professionalism and compassion in youth interested in healthcare careers."*

programs, we desire to inspire a sense of professionalism and compassion in youth interested in healthcare careers. In this issue of our Newsletter, we will ask some experts at UC Irvine to comment on a few questions or dilemmas that students or healthcare professionals face on a daily basis.

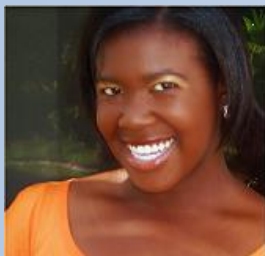
*Behnoosh Afghani, MD  
Founder, FHP Club*

## PARTNERING WITH ORANGEWOOD FOUNDATION

The Future Health Professionals Club welcomes opportunities to partner with community organizations who serve disadvantaged youth. Our recent partnership with Orangewood Foundation provides a great example. On February 28, 2008 more than 15 UC Irvine health professionals and students volunteered to expose underserved youth to different career options. By having small group discussions, the students were educated regarding the educational needs to enter different healthcare careers. Students showed a lot of interest and commented that they were more inspired to graduate from college so they can become a healthcare professional.



## Q & A: BECOMING A PHYSICIAN



Q: What is considered important in applying to Medical School?

Henrissa is a 4th year undergraduate student at UC Irvine who is interested in a healthcare career.

A: This is an excellent question. Although GPA and MCAT scores are very important for schools to evaluate your potential for continued academic success, there is rarely a specific cutoff that schools have. For example, the average GPA for a UC Irvine entering class is about 3.6 and MCAT scores are 31; however, this is only the average, and the range for GPA is usually 3.0 – 4.0 and MCAT is 26-40. With that said, many other things come into play.



Ross Moskowitz, MD is a first year Urology resident at UC Irvine Medical Center .

If you are unsure about your overall academic strength, schools do put extra emphasis on your more recent performance. Demonstrating an upward trend will add confidence in your current abilities, while increasing the likelihood that weaknesses at the beginning of your undergraduate training were the result of you getting acclimated. But to answer your question, the most important aspect on a medical application is clinical experience and showing a genuine interest in healthcare

***“The most important aspect on a medical school application is clinical experience and showing a genuine interest in healthcare and caring for others.”***

and caring for others. Volunteering at a hospital or in a clinic is the best example of how to do this, and items in this vein are the best way to impress admissions committees. Having strong letters of recommendation from these experiences also adds to their value and credibility. Applicants with the highest grades and MCAT scores who have this quality missing often do not receive acceptance letters, and likewise, applicants who have academic performances considered to be below average but are particularly strong in this regard often gain quick admission.

American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) has a very good guide-book entitled: Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR) 2007-2008: The most Authoritative guide to U.S. and Canadian Medical Schools.

## Q & A: PATIENT-DOCTOR DILEMMA

Q: A 50 y/o Chinese male with a prolapsed disc sees his doctor for back pain uncontrolled by medication. His doctor tells him that surgery is necessary to relieve his pain, but the pt wants to explore other avenues to control his pain, and request s a referral for acupuncture.



Patricia Pascual, MD is a Pediatric intern at UC Irvine Medical Center.

His doctor is skeptical about alternative treatments because he feels that treatments advocated by Western medical schools are best because they have been scientifically proven through clinical trials. He sees alternative therapy as placebos, and does not feel it is his duty to recommend them. He refuses to refer the patient for acupuncture.

Is the doctor acting ethically?

A: Although the physician in this scenario is trying to do the right thing for his patient, his position unfortunately is not supported by either scientific research or professional virtues. In terms of the science, the research on management of low back pain and herniated discs is equivocal regarding the superior efficacy of surgical versus non-operative management. Back pain patients tend to improve with both surgical and nonsurgical intervention. Further, some evidence is beginning to emerge supporting the usefulness of acupuncture with back pain, although this information is preliminary. In terms of maintaining



Johanna Shapiro, PhD is the Director of Humanities at UC Irvine School of Medicine.

an appropriately professional attitude toward one's patient, physicians should strive to be respectful of the patient's beliefs and cultural background. Although it is not clear from the case write-up, the patient may be part of a culture in which acupuncture is a widely used and popular intervention for back pain. He may also have conducted internet research of his own regarding the utility of acupuncture. In either case, by so swiftly dismissing the patient's traditions and knowledge, the physician is failing to treat his patient with respect. A key piece of information, after the recommendation for surgery is the statement that "the patient wants to pursue other avenues to control his pain." This suggests that, while the physician is

**Cont.** “skeptical of alternative treatments,” the patient may be equally skeptical of surgery. Under these circumstances, it is not ethically appropriate for the physician to use the power of his position to “persuade” the patient toward surgery. Therefore, the scientifically-grounded, culturally sensitive physician who wishes to be respectful of his patient’s perspective would agree to the patient’s undergoing a course of acupuncture (perhaps paired with other nonsurgical interventions as suggested by the literature); and reserve revisiting the surgical option if the patient experiences little or no relief. By

*“By adopting this approach, the physician may well gain the trust and confidence of his patient.”*

adopting this approach, the physician may well gain the trust and confidence of his patient; and create the foundation for a relationship based on teamwork and mutual respect.

Since the establishment of the Future Health Professionals Club in 2007, many volunteers have contributed to its success by providing shadowing opportunities, volunteering in workshops or serving on our oversight committee:

- Physicians from Pediatrics, Hospitalist Program, Internal Medicine and Geriatrics
- Nurses
- Pharmacists
- Respiratory Therapists
- Occupational and Physical Therapists
- Case Management
- Child Life Specialists

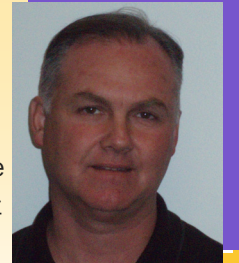
## TESTIMONIALS

As a UCLA graduate student, it has been very difficult for me to find mentorship programs that connect students to university scholars. Through my shadowing experience via the FHP Club at UC Irvine Medical Center, I have been fascinated to see the thought process of doctors and how they go about treating patients. My anxiety and fears have definitely been lessened because I know that what I am learning will be used. I am so excited to become a doctor and help people.



**Sze-Wei**

As healthcare professionals, we reach the underserved youth and present to them some hope and ideas about different kinds of healthcare careers. A lot of these kids don't know about these opportunities. This is a great program and is a way for me to give back to the community.



**Dan, Nurse**

Thank you for the eye-opening experience. I have realized how everything I have learned from UCSD really will help me later on. I am more motivated now to learn everything from my nursing prerequisite classes. Thanks again for giving me such wonderful shadowing opportunity.



**Alex, Nurse  
Joohee (Julie),  
Student**

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**THE FUTURE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS CLUB**

*Dedicated to guiding future health professionals*

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- Cathy Przeklasa  
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- Matin Ebneshrashoob  
Postgraduate student
- Ross Moskowitz, MD  
Urology Resident
- Patricia Pascual, MD  
Pediatric Resident
- Jamila Madden  
Undergraduate, UC  
Irvine minority student  
liaison

**Program Highlights**

Get involved in the FHP Club by joining as a:

- Mentor
- Student
- Volunteer
- Committee member
- Partnering organization
- Board member
- Donor

You can register online at [www.ha.uci.edu/fhclub](http://www.ha.uci.edu/fhclub) or e-mail us at [fhclub@uci.edu](mailto:fhclub@uci.edu)