

(1) What is Healing through Humanities?

Bhavesh: Healing through Humanities is a dynamic club, that brings together pre-health students and humanities undergraduates into an environment that fosters the idea of participating in our shared narrative: through stories, through interaction and through observation.

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Nazaret: You know early on in our endeavor when we began shaping the club into what we thought it could be, we knew we had a rare opportunity here. To bring together not only the brightest young minds on our campus who shared our vision, but to merge that with the foundation that the humanities provide us, which is a better understanding of who we are as applicants.

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Bhavesh: You know, to understand who we are, we often look toward the past for guidance, whether that is through reading the writings of Hippocrates or more modern physicians like Atul Gawande, I could confidently say that I am who I am today due to the confidence, guidance, and teachings instilled in me from the physicians of the past.

(2) Goal of Healing through Humanities?

Nazaret: So on a whole the goal of our club is to create a more well-rounded health professional for tomorrow. And now what do we mean by that?

I think that, early on we realized that one of the goals of being a great practitioner was being a great communicator. It was great if you could learn all the material, master all the coursework, but if you could not translate that into some real-world scenarios, then you had some work to do. Ineffective communication is probably one of the largest complaints heard from patients in our modern healthcare system. And, we believed that, well yes this is something that you traditionally learned in residency, that bedside manner was something reserved for grueling hours next to patients, while your beeper was going off and you had 15 scripts to fill out at the same time.

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Bhavesh: But, we thought why not give our students a leg up on the competition. Introduce our members to this now so that they could begin to gear themselves up toward a lifelong mission of providing care and make them a better applicant while we were at it. Because in the end we are judged on the quality of candidates and health practitioners we introduce into the world, so why not pool all our resources together to create the best professionals possible for the future.

(3) So how do we accomplish this?

Bhavesh: It starts with a strong foundation. And that really is our discussion sections. Our goal here was to create an environment where everyone could share pieces of literature that they found meaningful and helpful toward the development of our shared narrative, as well as on some level give them insight into their future.

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Nazaret: And we have really found that the unity and connectivity we can develop in our discussion sections then extends into all areas of our club, in creating more participation, more enthusiasm and overall a better experience for everyone involved. So, in a typical discussion section, we would have a few of our board members prior to the meeting pick a piece of literature that they would like to discuss. And this responsibility revolves around to different board members every week. We also encourage non-board members to bring in a piece that they have found and would like to share, and that could stem from a journal article to a piece of satire.

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Bhavesh: The next layer to our club is our Medical School Class Sit-Ins, now these have been the bread and butter of our club for a long time. They are provided through the generosity of Dr. Shapiro and Program in Medical Humanities and Arts. So how it works is, is students who regularly attend our meetings are allowed to sign-up for the Medical School class of their choice, barring approval from Dr. Shapiro and the medical students in the class, because some of these topics can be personal. This is really where medical students begin to learn the art of bedside manner of how Dr. Shapiro calls it the Art of Medicine. And, the fact that our members get this early exposure is really great because it helps them focus on their future, and see where they can end-up with hard-work and diligence.

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Nazaret: And now the last part, the part we are excited to announce is we recently received approval from the Pediatrics Department of UC Irvine Health to allow for our students to rotate in the Pediatrics Practice of Dr. Murata. We are really excited about this opportunity, and we believe it is a culmination of the hard-work and effort we have put into the club. Now, we are working with the UC Irvine Health Internal Medicine Residency Program to have our students shadow as well, which would be a great addition as well. We envision our students rotating with different physicians for 1-month periods were they would get a glimpse into their practice and how they practice the Art of Medicine.

(4) Where we plan to go in the future?

Bhavesh: We plan to expand our shadowing program. We are looking toward other clinics in the UC Irvine Health System as potential partners. We feel that rotations in Clinics and Residency Programs are ideal for our members because they are environments that focus on utilizing communication and bedside manner to diagnosis patients, and these are environments where medical students are also taught the Art of Medicine.

(5) How we fit into the Medical Humanities Initiative?

Nazaret: We as a club believe that the holistic education of our students will give way to well rounded practitioners in the future. So, the invest now in our undergraduates will yield us unmeasurable gains in the future. In how our graduates are regarded in the healthcare field and how our graduates treat patients, changing the landscape of medicine for the better. So, in order to further that goal we would like to become the official support group of the Medical Humanities Minor. Where students who are not enthusiastic and motivated to get involved in Medical Humanities can congregate and further explore topics. We would like to act as a gateway for students in the Humanities and Sciences to gain exposure to the medical field, and exposure to the importance of the Humanities in our curriculum and development into health professionals.