AMSA Medical Humanities Scholars, 2010-2011

Aubrey Raimondi

Aubrey is a first year medical student at the Medical School for International Health in Israel. She graduated in 2008 from Cornell University with a degree in Biochemistry. She has been involved in basic science research for the past two years at Harvard Medical School. Through the Medical Humanities Scholars Program she hopes to explore the use of narrative and journalism as a way to inform and educate the public about the basic sciences and preventative health care. She is interested in reporting on and writing about the intersection of economics, public health, research, and the human experience as it relates to medicine.

Yun (Rose) Li

Rose is a first-year MD-PhD student at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, where her primary research interests are focused on the cellular mechanisms involved in neurodegeneration. At the age of 16, Rose matriculated at Bard College at Simon's Rock, the nation's only early college, liberal arts institution and graduated *summa cum laude* with a BS in chemistry from Duke University. Her thesis focused on understanding the molecular coding of mammalian odorant receptors, for which she was honored as the Duke University Faculty-Scholar. As an undergraduate, she led a campus initiative to train undergraduates as ESL instructors for the Latino community and served as an editor for the Journal of Young Investigators, an international undergraduate research journal. She has been inspired by her volunteer work at the American Cancer Society and community free clinics to use her passion for writing to give voice to the medically underserved and hopes that the Medical Humanities Scholars Program could help her achieve this goal.

Derek Monette

Derek is a second-year medical student at the University of Miami School of Medicine. He graduated in 2007 with a degree in neuroscience from Johns Hopkins University, where he was a varsity athlete and actively involved in autism research. Before medical school he worked in New Hampshire for a non-profit organization that served adults with developmental disability, deepening his interest in neurology and end-of-life care. Inspired by participation in this year's AMSA National Writers' Institute, he looks forward to exploring how writing may serve as an outlet to reflect upon and be more limbically present in the medical school experience. He is most inspired, however, by his favorite storyteller – his grandmother.

Jason Reminick

Jason is a second-year medical student, though currently in his third year of the combined MD/MBA program at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry and the Simon Graduate School of Business Administration. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 2007 as part of a four-year accelerated, joint BA/MS program, earning his MS in Chemistry and BA in Biochemistry and Theatre Arts with honors. While uncertain as to what specialty he will ultimately pursue, Jason is committed to increasing patient access to care and improving the standard of treatment through medical entrepreneurship. He has worked the past two years as part of a collaborative project to provide subspecialty care via telemedicine (web-based video conferencing) to Parkinson's disease patients in rural and underserved communities. Jason's interests in medical humanities lie at the intersection of theatre, medical sociology and narrative medicine, and their ability to explore the personal and distal consequences of illness. He is the student leader of the Medical Reader's Theatre Project in the Division of Medical Humanities at Rochester and is thrilled to be a part of Medical Humanities Scholars Program. He hopes the experience will broaden his interests in the humanities and medicine and perhaps even provide him with the inspiration to finally write that musical that he keeps putting off.

Trisha Kissoon

Trisha is a 2nd year student at Florida International University Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine pursuing an MD/MBA. Trisha grew up in rural Central Florida and now resides in Miami, two regions which opened her eyes to the inequalities that exist in access to medicine within our borders. She hopes to pursue a career in pediatric oncology that promotes the cause of quality equitable health care. She believes that the humanities are essential to building the relationships that distinguish between a physician who treats and one who heals by instilling hope, inspiring livelihood, and easing pain. Trisha looks forward to her experience as a Medical Humanities Scholar because she views writing as a creative outlet for effective communication, inspiration, and advocacy.

Ameer Farooq

Ameer Farooq is a first year medical student at the University of Alberta in sunny (but cold) Edmonton, Alberta. Before starting medicine, he pursued a Bachelors degree at the University of Alberta with a major in biology and a minor in linguistics. Ameer is an avid speech arts performer and currently holds Performers Degrees from the Royal Conservatory of Music (Toronto) and Trinity College (London), as well as being a second dan black belt in taekwondo. For Ameer, medicine is a powerful way to integrate the analytical and creative aspects of his personality, as well as a means for helping people around the world. Through

the Medical Scholars Humanities Program, he hopes that he can develop his ability to write creatively and to explore the connections between science, the humanities, and medicine.

Alexander Krach

Alex is an applicant to the post-baccalaureate program at the Temple University School of Medicine in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and a number of other post-bacc programs. He is probably the most non-traditional student in our group having worked as a city planner, emergency medical technician and now as an emergency nurse in Medford, Oregon. This past spring Alex was the program director of the Humane Medicine Film and Lecture Series, which explored the intersection of the arts and medical practice, and presented lectures by Abraham Verghese, Atul Gawande and many others. Alex hopes to someday work in an academic setting that values the humanities not only as a means to train physicians, but to give insight to the best of who we can be in our communities, our families, and ourselves. He looks forward to meeting everyone in the group, learning from some terrific authors, and making some new friends.

Annie Tubman

Annie is a third year medical student at the Medical School for International Health, a collaborative program between Columbia University and Ben Gurion University in Be'er Sheva, Israel. Annie wrote her first poem at age seven, and has been an avid writer ever since. She plans to pursue a residency in Family Medicine and focus on Women's Health, continuing a trajectory of global health practice that has carried her to Peru, Honduras, Uganda, Israel/Occupied Territories, and immigrant communities in the US. In her heart, she hopes to eventually return to the lush green of the Pacific Northwest. Annie enjoys cooking and playing music with her professional chef of a husband, and looks forward to the adventure of being a first time mother.

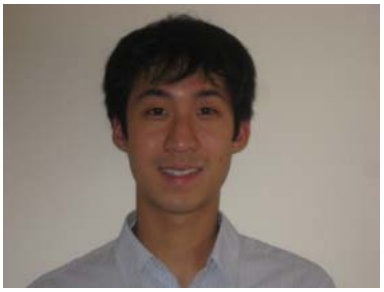
Alla F Sverdlik

Alla is a fourth year medical student at St. George's University, Grenada, West Indies. She completed her Master's in Public Health at the University of Los Angeles, California and one year of her PhD in epidemiology before attending medical school to become more involved in direct patient care. Prior to this, she worked on multiple clinical trials related to Alzheimer's disease as well as quality of life research in end of life care. She is interested in international medicine and hopes to incorporate her public health background with clinical medicine to improve the healthcare of those in resource challenged areas. She is excited to participate in the Medical Humanities Scholars Program. She believes it is as critical to understand the individual with an illness, as it is to understand the illness itself, because healing can happen on so many levels. The humanities reflect this aspect of medicine and provide the language and lens through which all of life unfolds.

Ani Ramesh

Ani is a second year medical student at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. He graduated from Cornell University in 2009, having studied Asian Studies and Biology. He enjoys traveling, reading literature and religious/philosophical texts, and writing short stories. This past summer, Ani furthered his appreciation for the role of spirituality and religion in the illness experience. Ani is excited to be a part of the Medical Humanities Scholars Program in order to learn how to better convey the delicate intersection of the mind, body, and spirit, as viewed through the lens of medicine.

Kevin Liou



Kevin is a first-year medical student at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University. As a high school student, he played piano for Alzheimer's patients, and later became convinced that there is more to healing than simply prescription drugs, surgical operations, and high-tech procedures. He began to realize that each of us is not only a body, but also a story. Kevin carried this philosophy with him to Brown University where he received his undergraduate degree, completing an independent concentration program in Narrative Approaches to Medicine. During his time at Brown, he explored art and music therapy at a psychiatric hospital, studied Chinese medicine with doctors in the local community, and traveled to Germany and China to learn about their healthcare systems and alternative healing practices. One day, Kevin hopes to establish an integrative medicine clinic that combines the best of all healing traditions from the East and West, bringing together doctors of diverse specialties to explore innovative treatments for diseases and to offer holistic, individualized care that tends to the whole person. He looks forward to joining with the students and doctors in the Medical Humanities Scholars Program to promote a more humanistic vision of medicine.

Rannie Tao

Rannie is a second year medical student at the University of Alberta in Canada, with a previous Bachelor's degree in Pharmacology. After living most of her life in China, she has developed a genuine interest in international works in hopes to foster learning *with* each other. Currently serving as VP External in her Medical Students' Association, she hopes to bring the concept of global healthcare closer to home, the "Western curriculum". Her desire to experience the full realm of what it means to be a physician, the physical, emotional, and spiritual realms of healing, brought her to Humanities in medicine. In the future, she plans to do a fellowship in Traditional Chinese Medicine, and looks forward to work in the field of preventative healthcare, while being involved in medical education. She enjoys the universal language of music, hugs, dancing, and listening not just with ears to the experiences of lives around her.

Aaron Kilber

Aaron is a fourth-year medical student at the Oregon Health & Science University. He graduated from the University of Oregon with a BA in Arts & Letters with an emphasis in Semiotics. He worked in book and magazine publishing as an acquisitions editor and publishing executive in San Francisco, CA and Melbourne, Australia for more than ten years. He decided to make a mid-life career change to medicine and is determined to bring his two passions together. His biggest area of interest is using the best of the humanities to teach critical thinking and humanistic understanding to future physicians. He intends to practice primary care and pursue an interest in tropical medicine at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

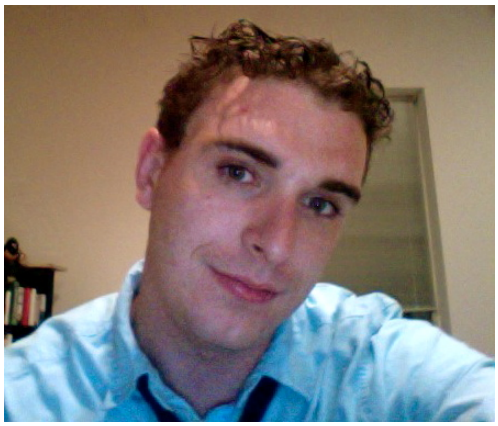
Charisse M. Chin

Charisse is currently a second year medical student at A.T. Still University in Mesa, AZ. After graduating from the University of Southern California, she completed a graduate degree in Public Health from Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. She has a passion for social justice and women's health issues and would like to pursue a career in Maternal-Fetal Medicine. Charisse looks forward to participating in the Medical Humanities Scholars Program as a means to further enrich her voice as a future physician-writer.

Rachael Maciasz

Rachael is a third year medical student at SUNY Downstate Medical Center where she is a member of AMSA, Downstate Medical Student Council, and the AAMC's Organization of Student Representatives. She is interested in how human nutrition and culture affect wellness and health. She studied Cultural Anthropology at the University of Michigan and worked as a highschool student health educator and mentor for the non-profit organization Healthcorps before coming to medical school. She is interested in traveling, food, smiles and happiness.

Andrew Buchholz



Growing up, Andrew wanted to be a doctor, an astronaut, or a dinosaur. With colorblindness and poor proficiency in genetic engineering eliminating the two latter options, he is happily pursuing the former at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey – School of Osteopathic Medicine. Prior to medical school, he earned his MPH from Drexel University, became a Fellow of the Royal Society for Public Health, and was a high school health teacher. Andrew's

"writer's bug" had been in remission for many years until he was reinoculated at this summer's AMSA Writer's Institute. Now, he looks forward to the Medical Humanities Scholars Program to act as a launching pad for the creation of his planned University-wide literary journal. Andrew lives in historic Old City Philadelphia, where he must constantly restrain himself from intentionally giving the wrong directions to tourists.

Co- Directors, Medical Humanities Scholars Program

Aliye Runyan

Aliye is a third year medical student at the University of Miami School of Medicine. She is currently in a research year before her 4th year of medical school, working at the NIH in Bethesda, MD. Aliye is going into OB/GYN, and intends on being a physician writer, international health care provider, and professor of the medical humanities.

Aliye founded the AMSA Medical Humanities Scholars Program in 2008 while serving as AMSA's Community Coordinator for the Humanistic Medicine Action Committee, to provide a much needed outlet for humanities education within medical education.

The first year, which focused on the themes "Narrative Medicine" and "Becoming a Physician-Writer", was a dramatic success and she is thrilled to be leading the AMSA Medical Humanities Scholars Program for the second year!

Maggie Schneider

Maggie Schneider is a student in the PSTP program at the University of Cincinnati. She is currently a first year graduate student in Neuroscience studying the neural underpinnings of executive function in adolescents with bipolar disorder. Maggie is a graduate of Boston College, where she majored in psychology. Before starting medical school, she spent three years as a fellow at the National Institute of Mental Health, where she studied emotional and reward processing in young people with psychopathic traits. At UC Maggie helped to write the oath of professionalism for her medical school class, and has served as an advisor to the oath writing committees for the two classes that have followed. This past summer, she was a proud participant at Bearing Witness, the first ever AMSA Writer's Institute, and is currently working to expand the curriculum in the humanities for UC medical students. An avid reader and writer, Maggie is excited to help coordinate the Medical Humanities Scholar's Program and hopes that she'll be able to refine her own skills and use what she learns to help create medical humanities programs that will enhance the education of other future physicians.