



Welcome from...

Marja M. Hurley, M.D.

*Professor of Medicine
Associate Dean & Director
Health Career Opportunity Programs
University of Connecticut Health Center*

This year has been a tremendous year for the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs. The impact of these programs on helping students realize their dreams of becoming health professionals is seen in many different ways. This year all graduating seniors participating in the high school Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative (Aetna HPPI) Saturday Academy were accepted into a four-year college.

We had over 200 middle school, high school and college students participating in our 2011 Aetna HPPI Summer Programs sponsored by the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs (HCOP). During the academic year 2011-2012, we anticipate over 1,000 students participating in our after-school, partner high schools, Aetna HPPI Saturday Academy and college programs. Early exposure to the various fields in the biomedical sciences will ultimately increase the diverse pool of students who pursue careers in medicine.

HCOP is an integral part of the Schools of Medicine, Dental Medicine and Graduate educational community at the UConn Health Center. The Schools of Medicine, Dental Medicine and the Biomedical Graduate Program are actively committed to the recruitment, retention and graduation of diverse medical, dental, and graduate stu-

dents who are capable of providing culturally competent health care.

The Aetna HPPI Programs and activities are designed, coordinated and implemented through this department. They have proven to be top-notch because the underrepresented students who have successfully completed their undergraduate degrees have actualized their goals of entering medical, dental and graduate school. It is for this reason that the programs and activities sponsored through the HCOP Department are recognized as a national model. To date, we have accomplished our goals and continue to develop new programs and fine-tune existing ones.

I would like to thank our entire faculty, staff and students at the Health Center and partner institutions for their dedication and support of these programs. I would also like to thank all of our funders for their continued financial support of our programs. A special recognition goes to the legislators of the State of Connecticut who have provided Aetna HPPI with state funds to support some of our existing programmatic initiatives. We are also very grateful to Dr. Peter Lopez for his generous gift that established an endowed scholarship in support of our programs.

Read about the Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative and Pipeline programs at:

www.hcop.uchc.edu



A note from...

Granville Wrensford, Ph.D., C.R.A.

*Assistant Dean & Associate Director
Health Career Opportunity Programs
University of Connecticut Health Center*

The year has been very exciting with the many programs and activities that the HCOP Department sponsors. Interest among students, parents and educators alike has been increasing. We have visited many middle and high schools as well as colleges and universities throughout the State of Connecticut. We have also visited a few colleges in Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Georgia.

We held discussions with some additional middle schools that are interested in our Great Explorations after-school middle school program and we hope to add a few more during the next academic year. We also held discussions with several organizations that are interested in collaborating with the department in the activities.

During our annual Upward Bound Conference in December, students and counselors from the Granville Academy participated for the first time. This year also saw an increase in the number of students participating in our annual Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Conference.

We had over 500 students participating in our summer and academic year programs. We interacted with numerous additional students during recruitment and informational sessions. It pleases me to see such a large number of students excited about the health sciences and careers in the health professions. I am grateful to the many individuals who have contributed to the success of the programs.

During the past year, the HCOP Department has added two new staff members - Michelle Thomas and Marlyn Davila. I would like to welcome them to the department.

As we prepare for another year, I must acknowledge the parents, guardians and students of the programs for their firm commitment. A special thank you also to Dr. Hurley and the HCOP staff, faculty and other professionals here at the Health Center and the larger community who have volunteered their time to mentor and interact with the participants in our programs, Dr. David Williams and Dr. Menard of the Greater Hartford campus, Dr. Lee Aggison Jr., and Dr. Ruth Washington at the Storrs campus for their invaluable help.

Summer 2011 Aetna HPPI Academy Staff (Greater Hartford Campus)



Mr. Keith Carter, M.H.R.
Community Based Educational
Specialist and Aetna HPPI
Academy Program
Coordinator.



Ms. Shaneca Napier
Lead Peer Counselor.



Ms. Judy Abogunde & Mr. Mark Montalvo
Peer Counselors.



Ms. Cecilia Ortega & Mr. Adrian Howell
Peer Counselors.

*Dr. Wrensford and his staff would like to thank Dr. Menard
and his staff at the University of Connecticut,
Greater Hartford Campus.*

Congratulations to...

Kevon Rennie, D.M.D.

Dentist, Dental Student, Mentor



Dr. Kevon Rennie was born in Trinidad and Tobago where he graduated from Presentation College, San Fernando, Trinidad. He arrived in the United States in January 2005 to attend college at Florida A&M University, where in 2007 he earned his bachelor's degree in Biochemistry. He is currently completing his General Practice Residency Program at Danbury Hospital, where he serves

mainly minority populations. His goal is to continue working with underserved populations in the future.

Dr. Rennie's first contact with HCOP came in the summer of 2007 when he was selected as a candidate for the Summer Research Fellowship Program. Because of his strong pledge to give back to the programs, Dr. Rennie worked intimately for several years during dental school as a mentor with the students of the Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative Academy. His contributions to the programs are above and beyond expectation.

Dr. Rennie recalls that his best HCOP experience was mentoring and teaching the Junior Doctors Academy students. He states, "I discovered a joy for reaching out to the younger students and inspiring them to do great things, regardless of their background or situations in life." He leaves the following words of advice and encouragement to all up-and-coming students interested in the health professions. "Don't give up. Never give up. The road ahead may be difficult at times but keep the faith, believe in yourself, surround yourself with others that believe in you and keep your eye on the prize."

Dr. Rennie wishes to recognize the following people as the most influential people who contributed to making his dream a reality: Dr. Marja Hurley for believing in him and giving him the opportunities to challenge himself and allowing him to grow into the person he knew he could become; Dr. Sarita Arteaga for her continued support and driving him to be the best he could be; and Dr. Cynthia Hodge for helping him carve out a career path and setting his dreams of becoming a dentist in motion.

He would like to express gratitude to all of his professors,

including Dr. Yvonne Grimm-Jorgensen for taking the time to help him through the tough classes; Dr. Ellen Eisenberg for teaching him the power of questions and to never stop asking questions until a complete answer is given; and Dr. Melissa Ing for being patient, kind, and supportive through his tough clinical years. Above all, he would like to thank his family and friends for the unwavering support throughout the years.

Shanica Napier, B.S.

Formerly a Jumpstart Student, Now UConn Alumna



Born in Jamaica and emigrating to the United States at the age of three, Shanica Napier remembers being moved from place to place without knowing how long it would be before her family would find a place they could someday call home. This was not something she enjoyed, but at a young age she discovered she could create positive experiences

out of her harsh environment.

Napier participated in the Aetna HPPI Academy, where she met a very inspiring person, Petra Clark-Dufner, who possessed the educational influence she longed for. "If it was not for the love and support Mrs. Clark-Dufner had shown me I don't know how I would have found the strength to continue my fight," says Napier. She has never forgotten the positive reinforcements she gained during the years she participated as a student in the Aetna HPPI Academy. Napier's involvement with the Aetna HPPI Academy extends over seven years. Whether it was participating in the various programs offered by the pipeline, or lending a helping hand she always found herself giving back to the same programs that helped her.

She is currently the lead peer counselor with the Aetna HPPI Academy and holds her position with the highest esteem. On May 8, 2011 Napier received her Bachelor of Science in Allied Health Sciences from the University of Connecticut. Her future plans are to pursue a master's degree in Public Health and Nursing. Napier says "Being a first generation college

graduate is an accomplishment, but my conscience will not allow me to settle for a bachelor’s degree, and I definitely will not be fulfilling my destiny with the completion of a master’s degree. Education is very important in today’s fast paced economy and I seek to acquire as much knowledge as possible. I must also continue to set the pace for the rest of my family who shall follow in my footsteps; meaning I must take large steps and leave deep impressions so that they will understand the adversity I had to overcome.”



Lekesha Williams, M.S.

Friend, Supporter, and former Aetna HPPI Academy Peer Counselor, Now a 2011 Graduate of Neuroscience



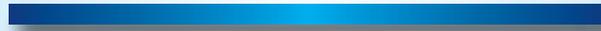
Ms. Lekesha Williams began her educational journey in Anderson, South Carolina, where she graduated from T. L. Hanna High School in 2001. She received numerous academic awards, including being named Gates Millennium Scholar, Clemson/Coca-Cola Scholar, top minority student graduate, and Who’s Who Among America’s High School Students. She earned her

Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences from Clemson University in 2006. While pursuing her high school and college education, she found ways to combine her love for the sciences with her drive to help underrepresented and disadvantaged youth succeed at life. Williams began her journey with the Aetna HPPI Academy via Kaplan where she continues to work as a program coordinator and liaison for the Aetna HPPI Academy. Prior to her work with the HCOP Department, Williams provided similar academic enrichment to K-5th grade students in South Carolina, and K-12th grade students in Tennessee.

In 2011, Williams received her Master of Science in Neuroscience from the University of Hartford. She plans to continue to be a positive influence in the lives of youths, including the bright students in the Aetna HPPI Academy. Ultimately her plans are to pursue a Medical Doctorate Degree, specializing in pediatric neurology. She looks forward to continuing her service towards helping young under-representative individuals navigate through diversity and accomplish their educational dreams.

Congratulations Senior Doctors Academy Graduates 2010-2011 Academic Year

- Addison, Dajee
- Brady, Kyle
- Burge, Alison
- Garcia, Lilliana
- Gomes, Rosemarie
- Haynes, Nicola
- James, Dante
- Mendoza, Diana
- Mitchell, Meadeshia
- Pawshuk, William
- Walker, Serika
- Almonte, Megan
- Brennan, Daniel
- Edwards, Robert
- Garcia, John
- Griffiths, Nnyeko
- Headley, Jarrett
- Lor, Joshua
- Miller, Marissa
- Montero, Katerina
- Valentine, Anthony



Congratulations to Our Mentors

University of Connecticut Health Center Medical and Dental School 2011 Graduates

- Kevon Rennie, D.M.D.
- Yuriy May, D.M.D.
- Anya Rappoport-Rost, D.M.D.
- Robert Claycomb, M.D./Ph.D.
- Tariq Lescouflair, M.D.

Sharon and Peter Lopez Endowed Scholarship Established

Dr. Peter Lopez, an orthopedic surgeon in Tampa, Florida and a UConn School of Medicine Alumnus, has donated a gift of \$25,000 in support of the Health Career Opportunity Programs activities.

The gift established the Sharon and Peter Lopez Endowed Scholarship. This is a merit and need based scholarship for students, with priority given to students from underrepresented populations. Dr. Lopez was also the keynote speaker at the summer closing ceremonies on July 22, 2011 (see story on page 14).

A Returning Face...



Former Aetna HPPI Academy Student Now a UConn Student

The Aetna HPPI Academy welcomed one of their own back during the academy's closing ceremony. Faith Crittenden, an Aetna HPPI Academy graduate who is now enrolled at the

University of Connecticut, took a break from college life to deliver a message of hope and encouragement to the students. Crittenden is a Connecticut native who graduated from Metropolitan Learning Center in Bloomfield. While in high school, she earned several awards and certifications including, Red Cross certified life guard and three varsity letters in swimming. She was the president of the Metropolitan Learning Center National Honor Society, served as an in-school ambassador for exchange students, and served on the student leadership committee. She also managed to find enough time in her busy schedule to volunteer, assisting the school medical official to broaden her own understanding of the medical field. Crittenden received honors of distinction while at Metropolitan Learning Center. She was a National AP Scholar, a Capitol Scholars Award recipient, and her biggest honor, a 2010 Gates Millennium Scholarship award recipient. She enjoys playing jazz and classical flute, is an avid reader, and loves to knit and crochet.

Crittenden received acceptance letters from Quinnipiac University and the University of Hartford to name a few but she followed her heart and decided to attend the University of Connecticut where she is majoring in Chemistry with a minor in Molecular and Cell Biology.

2011 Award Recipients

John and Valerie Rowe Scholarship

Each year, the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs provides scholarships in the form of book awards to students from the Aetna HPPI Academy who will enroll as freshmen at the University of Connecticut. The 2011 John and Valerie Rowe book awards recipients were announced at the May 5 closing ceremony of the Aetna HPPI Academy. They are John Garcia and Jarrett Headley. Both recipients participated in numerous high school programs sponsored by the Health Careers Opportunity Programs.

Friends of the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs Scholarship Fund



In honor of Dr. Boake Plessy's contributions, the UConn Health Center has established a scholarship fund that will be used to support educational enhancement for students who participated in Aetna HPPI Academy and are planning to continue their education at the post-secondary level. The Friends of the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs Scholarship was awarded to William Pawshuk on May 4, 2011 at the Academic Year Recognition Closing Ceremony.

To contribute to these funds, or for more information about philanthropy to support the Health Center, please call Dina Plapler, Vice President for Development, at 860-679-1122.

Community Award Recipients

The HCOP department is also proud of two of our own, Dajee Addison and Mubera Becirovic, who are recipients of The Jacob L. and Lewis Fox Foundation Scholarship. Congratulations to both of them for this well-deserved award.

In the Spotlight...

Ms. Caryn Baseler

Sport and Medical Sciences Academy
Biology Teacher



Every student has at least one teacher in their daily life who influences them and the students of the Sport and Medical Sciences Academy (SMSA) are no exception. Biology teacher Caryn Baseler continues to build brighter

futures for her students.

Baseler, who serves as the Science Academic Team Leader and Freshman Team Leader, joined the SMSA team in 2008, the same year the HCOP Programs transferred to SMSA. She has been involved with the HCOP Department through the 9th and 10th grade College Science Partnership Program. She credits the HCOP Department for a number of her students' achievements, such as improvement in their lab and research skills. According to Baseler, the school's science CAPT scores have steadily been improving as a result of student participation in the HCOP program. A number of her students have received awards to assist them with college as well. Baseler feels proud when the students are participating. She said that she can see the spark igniting, creating excitement and interest among the students.

For her outstanding service to the Aetna HPPI Programs as well as at her school, Baseler received the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs Recognition Award during the program's 2011 Aetna HPPI Closing Ceremony. Baseler shares this honor with Dr. Joshua Beebe who also received recognition for his outstanding contribution to the Aetna HPPI and the students of SMSA.

Enrichment Programs...

Great Explorations



The Great Explorations Program is an after-school program designed to provide extracurricular activities in math, science, and language arts to 7th and 8th grade middle school students.

Students participating in the Great Explorations Program are currently enrolled in one of six Hartford public middle schools, Bellizzi, Greater Hartford Academy of Mathematics and Science, Jumoke Academy, Kennelly, Naylor, and Sport and Medical Sciences Academy. Great Explorations offers a four-week summer academic enrichment program for approximately 35 rising 7th and 8th grade participants. The program is held at the Greater Hartford Academy of Mathematics and Science. Students receive instruction in math, science, and language arts. The Great Explorations Program targets any racially ethnic group.

Aetna HPPI Academy



The Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative Academy (Aetna HPPI Academy) is designed to provide educational opportunities

which may not be available to a number of Connecticut high school students. The purpose of the Aetna HPPI Academy is to provide access and preparation to students interested in health professions who come from backgrounds where they are the first in their family to earn a four-year degree, come from modest family means, and/or are from backgrounds traditionally underrepresented in healthcare. Students participating in the Aetna HPPI Academy are generally recruited from the Hartford area schools and have chosen to pursue careers in the health professions. The Aetna HPPI Academy students aspire to become doctors, dentists, bio-medical research scientists, pharmacists, and/or nurses.

The Aetna HPPI Academy has two major components: the summer program and the academic-year program. Both components are offered at the University of Connecticut Greater Hartford campus. The summer and academic year programs are designed to advance students' academic skill levels in math, science and language arts. The programs promote personal growth through extracurricular experiences designed to help students develop the skills necessary to succeed in the Pre-Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), and the American College Test (ACT) testing.

High School Mini Medical/Dental School Seminar Series



The High School Mini Medical/Dental School Seminar Series offers eight to ten weekly lectures and demonstrations presented by

faculty members of the University of Connecticut Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine. Topics include molecular biology, pharmacology, cardiology, oncology, and dental medicine. Participants of the High School Mini Medical/Dental School Seminar Series are eleventh and twelfth grade students who are in state residents and selected by their school guidance counselors or science teachers. All students have shown a strong interest in pursuing careers in medicine, dental medicine and the biological sciences. Sessions are also broadcast live to high schools throughout the State of Connecticut. For more information contact Anna Curtin at 860-679-3484.

College Science Partnership

More than 100 students from Sport and Medical Sciences Academy participated in the 2010-2011 College Science Partnership Series sponsored by the Health Career Opportunity Programs. Under the leadership of Dr. Kathy Martin-Troy (Molecular Biological Sciences Department at Central Connecticut State University) students participated in five biology and chemistry labs at Central Connecticut State University.

Epidemiology



The Epidemiology Program, a series of five programs, was held for seniors from Sport and Medical Sciences Academy (SMSA) to introduce basic concepts and terminology used in

the study of epidemiology. Under the direction of Dr. Scott Wetstone and Dr. Richard Stevens, the program provided an introduction to general epidemiology as well as descriptive, applied, and analytical epidemiology and screening. Twelve 11th and 12th graders attended sessions at the University of Connecticut Health Center on two occasions and Dr. Wetstone and Dr. Stevens visited SMSA on three occasions.

Teens as Teachers



The University of Connecticut School of Medicine, Principles of Clinical Medicine course (PCM) is the clinical training component for

medical students. The course helps students prepare for the clinical aspects of medicine by training them in history taking, physical examination, utilization of community resources and community collaboration for improved patient care.

Part of the course involves training on adolescent health. Medical students learn about the importance and specialized aspects of the adolescent history, and practice their skills with real teens recruited from the Sport and Medical Sciences Academy who act as patient instructors. The medical students then receive feedback on their performance from the adolescent patient instructors. The participating adolescents are given health education workshops and training, and are invited to the Health Center for lunch and a tour.

High School Student Research Apprenticeship Program (HSSRAP)



Seventeen students had the opportunity to be a part of a research team and learn laboratory techniques in the 2011 HSS-

RAP Summer Program. As part of the 2011 program, eight students commuted daily to Central Connecticut State University and nine students commuted daily to UConn Health Center for their research project. At the end of the summer each student gave an oral presentation of their research results during a special research symposium.

Pre-College Enrichment Program



The Pre-College Enrichment Program is a six-week residential enrichment program for incoming students at the University of Connecticut

Storrs campus. Designed to provide solid development of scientific, mathematical, communications, problem-solving, and test-taking skills, it is intended to enhance the college preparedness of freshmen students. It allowed the students to experience life on a college campus prior to their matriculation in the fall. This past summer, 13 students participated in either an academic track or a research track. Students in the academic track concentrated on academic courses, while those on the research track completed a research project. All participants also engaged in numerous enrichment activities at the Health Center.

College Enrichment Program

The College Enrichment Program is designed for college sophomores. The program's curriculum focus on critical math and science skills needed for success. A total of six students are selected annually to participate in this program. The pro-

gram is held at the University of Connecticut in Storrs. In addition to academic preparation, students participate in weekly enrichment lectures at the UConn Health Center.

Medical/Dental Preparatory Program



Medical/ Dental Preparatory Program students are selected from various universities throughout the country to work on academic skills and foundation as well

as on preparation for the MCAT or DAT examination. A total of forty participants are bussed daily to the University of Connecticut Health Center for classes, guest lectures and enrichment programs. The Medical/Dental Preparatory Program is housed at Central Connecticut State University.

Summer Research Fellowship Program



The Summer Research Fellowship Program is a nine-week research enrichment experience designed for college sophomores, juniors, seniors, and

recent graduates who are interested in a career in medicine, dental medicine or biomedical research and for applicants who have completed some college coursework in biology and chemistry (preferably through organic chemistry). In the summer of 2011 a total of ten students participated in the program. A faculty sponsor is identified for each student. Faculty develops and makes available suitable project descriptions. The student contacts his/her faculty sponsor in April or May and develops a research protocol. Minority Access to Research Careers (MARC) students are encouraged to apply. Students devote approximately 30 hours per week of work on a research project and 10 hours per week of clinical experience.

Clinical Summer Research Fellowship Program



The Clinical Summer Research Fellowship Program is a six-week clinical enrichment experience designed for rising college sophomores, juniors, seniors

or recent graduates. In the summer of 2011 a total of six students participated in the program. The program is designed to provide the following: clinical research and enrichment experiences, an introduction to health disparities across cultures, principles of clinical medicine, public health research and interventions, an overview of cultural definitions, public health issues, and discussions of specific techniques for working with diverse populations in community settings.

Parental Seminar Series

The fall Parental Seminar Series is designed for parents or guardians of scholars enrolled in the Aetna HPPI Academy. Guest speakers are from the UConn Health Center and the University of Connecticut. The University of Connecticut Greater Hartford campus hosts the event. Topics are chosen based on the interest of the parents or guardians. Each fall, participants complete a survey indicating topics and areas of interest. The topics are divided into two general areas: health related topics and college admissions topics. This past year the health related topics and speakers included: Dr. Beatriz E. Tandler, Assistant Professor at the UConn Health Center who spoke on diabetes, hypertension, and sodium and Dr. Wilmer Samson, Assistant Professor at the UConn Health Center who spoke on blood pressure, hypertension, and stroke indicators.

An overwhelming sentiment among the participants was the need for additional information on the college admissions process and financing college education. Dennis Seymour, from the UConn Undergraduate Admissions, Greater Hartford campus, and Jillian Baird-Burnett, from the Office of Admission at Wesleyan University, provided valuable information on college admissions financial aid and completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form. For additional information please contact the Office of Financial Aid at www.financial.aid.uconn.edu.

College Lecture Series

The Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative offers a series of lectures from different health care providers at the University of Connecticut Greater Hartford campus and Storrs campus. The lecture series is geared towards students with an interest in health professions.

This past academic year, speakers included Dr. Edward Thibodeau, Associate Dean for Dental Admissions at UConn Health Center, who spoke about admissions to dental school; Dr. Barbara Kream, Professor of Medicine and Director of the combined M.D./Ph.D. Program, who spoke about admissions to the program; Dr. Jeffrey Gross, Chairman, Department of Anesthesiology, Professor of Anesthesiology and Pharmacology at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine who spoke about anesthesiology; Dr. Granville Wrensford, Assistant Dean and Associate Director, HCOP, who spoke about preparing for graduate and professional school.

For additional information, please contact Keith Carter at 860-679-8031.



Dr. Courtney Hayes answering questions posed by the participants.

2010 Upward Bound Conference

The Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs held its annual Upward Bound Conference on Saturday, December 11, 2010 at the University of Connecticut Health Center. The conference is held annually for students in the Upward Bound Program from the UConn Storrs campus. Joining the Upward Bound students this year were 32 high school students and nine adult volunteers of the Granville Academy of Waterbury.

A total of 70 high school students participated in various health related activities. Ninth and tenth grade students listened to presentations from Sherry-Ann Brown, an MD/PhD student, who spoke about medical lessons learned. Keisha Ashe spoke about discovery in research and her path to graduate research. Ashe is

a graduate student conducting research in the laboratories of Dr. Cato Laurencin.

While the ninth and tenth graders were interacting with Brown and Ashe, the eleventh and twelfth grade participants were busy conducting dental forensics on a "crash scene" led by Dr. Michael Goupil. A team of dental students guided the participants in a series of activities that enabled them to identify "crash victims" through dental forensics.

The conference concluded with a panel of Health Center medical, dental, and graduate students answering participants' questions.

2011 Bridge Conference



The 2011 annual Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Conference was held on Saturday, April 9, with approximately 170 high school and college students participating. The students were from diverse backgrounds. They were brought together with UConn Health Center faculty,

staff, medical, dental and graduate students to interact in a series of activities to raise awareness about health and biomedical science careers and the admissions process for medical, dental, and graduate schools. The HCOP Department, the University of Connecticut Chapter of the Student National Medical Association, Student National Dental Association and the Hispanic Student Dental Association Chapters sponsored the conference. The Jack and Valerie Rowe Health Professions Scholars Program Fund also supported the conference.

Enrichment activities for high school students included presentations on preparing for a career in the health professions and surgery by Dr. Linda Barry and cardiology by Dr. Peter Schulman. There was also a college admissions panel from UConn Storrs, UConn School of Pharmacy, Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia and Central Connecticut State University who provided the students with valuable information. Led by a group of medical students, the high school students also participated in some hands-on activities such as recording blood pressure and surgi-

cal suturing. College students who participated in enrichment seminars learned about the admissions process for graduate, medical and dental programs offered at the University of Connecticut Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine.

The college students participated in a mock admissions process where they served as potential Admissions Committee evaluators. Student participants ranked prospective applicants based on their academic profiles, letters of recommendation and DAT/MCAT scores. Led by facilitators, the participants engaged in discussions and activities similar to the admissions committees at the Health Center. This process helped the students better understand what admissions committees are looking for in qualified candidates.

For a second year in a row the Dental Impressions Program for college students interested in dental medicine was held. This program consisted of a series of information sessions specifically related to dentistry, in addition to several hands on activities such as taking dental impressions and touring the dental labs at the Health Center. Approximately 60 college students participated in this component of the conference.

Both the high school and college students had an opportunity to listen to personal anecdotes from students currently enrolled at the University of Connecticut Schools of Medicine, Dental Medicine and the Graduate Program in Biomedical Sciences. The medical, dental and graduate students shared their progression through their respective health professions school and allowed the high school and college students to ask questions. This was a very informative dialog for all participants.

Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Conference



Alumni Speakers for the Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Conference and Summer Closing Ceremonies

Alumna Dr. Tamara Gravely-Griffin



On April 9, the annual Bridge To The Future Science Mentoring Programs Conference was held for approximately 170 high school and college students at the University of Health Center. The keynote speaker was Tamara Gravely-Griffin, D.M.D., M.S. During the summer of 1993; Dr. Gravely-Griffin was a participant in the Medical/Dental Preparatory Program. She received her D.M.D. from the University of

Connecticut School of Dental Medicine in 2000. During dental school, Dr. Gravely-Griffin was very active in community service projects and conducted research in the laboratory of Dr. Marja Hurley, at which time she developed an interest in academic dentistry. In 2003, she completed a residency in Endodontics at Baylor College of Dentistry – the Texas A&M University System Health Science Center in Dallas, Texas, where she received a Certificate in Endodontics and M.S. in Health Professions Education. In 2001, she was a recipient of the American Association of Endodontics Educator Fellowship. Her most recent academic appointment was at Meharry Medical School of Dentistry in Nashville, Tennessee, where she served as Chair of Endodontics. Formerly, Dr. Gravely-Griffin was a full time faculty member at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center College of Dentistry in Memphis, Tennessee. Currently, she is in private practice at Charter Oak Endodontics in Dickson, Tennessee. Dr. Gravely-Griffin held several University appointments including Assistant Professor and Chair, Department of Endodontics, Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry; Assistant Professor, Division of Endodontics, Department of Biologic and Diagnostic Sciences, University of Tennessee College of Dentistry. Dr. Gravely-Griffin currently works at Charter Oak Endodontics in Tennessee.

Alumnus Dr. Ronald Birmingham



On May 4, the closing ceremonies were held for the 100 participants of the Jumpstart Program, Junior Doctors Academy, and Senior Doctors Academy. The keynote speaker was Ronald Birmingham, D.M.D. Dr. Birmingham became involved with programs sponsored by the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs during the summer of 2000. He participated in numerous enrichment programs over his high school and college career. The summer of 2000, he worked in the lab of Peter Setlow, Ph.D. as a participant in the High School Student Research Apprentice Program (HSSRAP). On August 4, 2000, he presented on "The Effects of a Transcription Factor on Bacillus Subtilus Spore Resistance to Stress" at the HSSRAP Symposium and Fifth Annual Commencement. After graduation from high school and prior to matriculating at college, Dr. Birmingham participated in the 2001 Pre-College Enrichment Program on the University of Connecticut Storrs campus. During college, he participated in the 2002 College Enrichment Program, 2004 and 2006 Medical/Dental Preparatory Program BMS Track, and the 2005 Medical/Dental Preparatory Program DAT Prep Track. Dr. Birmingham graduated from the University of Connecticut in 2005 with a degree in Physiology and Neurobiology. During the summer of 2007, between his first and second year of dental school, he served as a tutor for the participants in the Medical/Dental Preparatory Program DAT Prep Track. Of the seven students he tutored, six are attending dental school. In 2010 Dr. Birmingham received his D.M.D. from the University of Connecticut Health Center School of Dental Medicine. Dr. Birmingham received his Doctorate of Dental Medicine May of 2010, receiving the Health Careers Mentorship Award. He is currently completing a General Practice Residency Program at Bronx-Lebanon Hospital Center in Bronx, New York and looks forward to returning to Connecticut.

Alumnus Dr. Peter Lopez



On July 22, Peter Lopez, M.D., was the keynote speaker at the closing ceremonies for various college summer enrichment programs. Dr. Lopez attended the University of Connecticut School of Medicine receiving his degree in 1991. Dr. Lopez completed his General Surgery Internship at Columbia University in 1992 and his Orthopedic Surgical Residency Program at Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Montefiore Medical Center in

New York in 1997. He completed a Hand and Upper Extremity Surgical Fellowship at Loma Linda University Medical Center in California in 1998. Dr. Lopez joined Brandon Orthopedic Associates in 1999 and specializes in hand surgery, as well as general orthopedics. He is an expert in the treatment of complex traumatic and degenerative upper extremity conditions, and has a particular interest in arthroscopic rotator cuff repair and endoscopic carpal tunnel release. Dr. Lopez is one of a few surgeons around the country performing arthroscopic thumb arthroplasty. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery (Board Certified), a Fellow of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons (FACS), and was re-certified in 2009. Dr. Lopez and his wife Sharon are childhood sweethearts having met at Francis Lewis High School in New York City. They married in 1998 and have two children, Daniel, age 6, and Breanna, age 2. Dr. Lopez and his family reside in Tampa, Florida where he enjoys weight lifting, windsurfing, and is training for his first triathlon.

State Senator Toni Nathaniel Harp



On July 29, the closing ceremonies were held for the participants of the Great Explorations, Jumpstart Programs, Junior Doctors Academy, Senior Doctors Academy, High School Research Apprentice Program, Pre-College Enrichment Program, and the Summer Research Fellowship Program. State Senator Toni Nathaniel Harp was the keynote speaker. Senator Harp is the Deputy President Pro Tempore of the Senate, Chair of the Budget-

Writing Appropriations Committee, Vice Chair of the Committee on Aging and Member of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee and the Legislative Management

Committee. Senator Harp is serving her tenth consecutive term representing the 10th Senatorial District and the residents of western New Haven and northern New Haven, Connecticut. Throughout her tenure, Senator Harp has prioritized many initiatives including managed care reform, providing insurance for uninsured children, raising the minimum wage, advocating economic development for cities, encouraging an early detection system for child abuse, prohibiting drive-through deliveries, supporting truancy court, and ensuring the safety of children in child care. Her standing has been recognized by the American Lung Association of Connecticut, End Hunger Connecticut!, the Connecticut Psychological Association, Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc., the Connecticut Psychiatrists Society, the Connecticut Local Administrators of Social Services (CLASS), Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, African-American Affairs Commission, Connecticut Council of Family Service Agencies, Connecticut AIDS Residents Coalition, and the Connecticut Women's Consortium, Children in Placement – CT/CASA (CIP). Senator Harp received the 2007 Dr. Nathan Davis Award for Outstanding Government Service. She has been active in efforts to reform Connecticut's corrections system, led the fight against Big Tobacco as an outspoken proponent of the state law to mitigate second-hand smoke through a ban on indoor smoking in places of public accommodation. In 1999, the Connecticut Chapter of the NAACP selected Senator Harp to receive its Clarence Mitchell Political Action Award. She was cited for her outstanding leadership in a number of issues, including managed care reform, the increase in the minimum wage, economic development for cities and making insurance coverage available to uninsured children, among others.

Also in 1999, Senator Harp received the Phoebe Bennett Award from the Connecticut Association of Mental Health Clinics for Children. In 1998, she was selected by the Council of State Governments for its prestigious Toll Fellowship Program. She was also honored by the U.S. Congress as the 1996 Woman of the Year from Connecticut's Third Congressional District for "her achievements and contributions in public service and the advancement of women's issues." Senator Harp has twice been honored by the Connecticut State Medical Society, first for her "advocacy on behalf of patients," and most recently with their Legislative Service Award for her record of preserving and enhancing quality medical care. In 1995, she was awarded citations by the National Association of Social Workers, the Connecticut Association for Human Services, the New Haven Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the New Haven Club of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Incorporated. Senator Harp has also been honored as one of New Haven Business' 20 Noteworthy Women. She is a member of Links, Inc., the New Haven Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, Incorporated, a public service sorority, and The Coalition of 100 Black Women. Senator Harp has lived in New Haven for more than 25 years and is currently employed as the Homeless Service Director at the Hill Health Center. She is married to Wendell Harp, an architect, and is the proud mother of three children—Djana, Jamil, and Matthew.



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Dates to Remember

April 14, 2012

Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Program

May 9, 2012

Aetna HPPI Academy Closing Ceremony

June 18, 2012

Start of the Aetna HPPI Summer Academy

Application Deadlines

February 2012

- Clinical Summer Research Fellowship Program
- High School Mini Medical/Dental School Seminar Series
- High School Student Research Apprenticeship Program
- Medical/Dental Preparatory Program
- Summer Research Fellowship Program

April 2012

- Aetna HPPI Academy
- Aetna HPPI Great Explorations
- College Enrichment Program
- Pre-College Academic Enrichment Program
- Pre-College Research Program

We Welcome Your Comments

Please feel free to provide Keith Carter or Marlyn Davila with your suggestions, ideas and comments for the next issue of the Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative Pipeline. You can contact Keith Carter at (860) 679-8031 and Marlyn Davila at (860) 679-4522.



If you would like more information about the University of Connecticut Health Center's Pipeline Programs...

- Great Explorations Middle School Program, 6th- 8th grades
- Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative Academy 6-week Summer and 20-week Academic Programs, 9th-12th grades
- Bulkeley High School, 9th-12th grades
- Sport and Medical Sciences Academy, 9th-12th grades
- Health Careers Discovery Program, 11th and 12th grades
- High School Summer Research Apprenticeship Program, 12th grade
- Mini Medical/Dental Series, 11th-12th grades
- Pre-College Enrichment Program, 13th grade
- College Enrichment Program, 13th-14th grades
- Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program, 13th-14th grades
- Medical/Dental Preparatory Program, 13th-15th grades
- Summer Research Fellowship Program, 15th-16th grades
- Post Baccalaureate Program, post-16th grades
- BS/DMD Joint Degree Program, 13th-16th grades

See the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs website at:

www.hcop.uhc.edu



**University of Connecticut
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