Leadership LIVE Shines Spotlight on P4 Students

Jessica Evans (P4 student) presented the student testimonial at the Leadership LIVE 2015-2016 Ceremony on April 18, 2016. Leadership LIVE is a program offered by the Office of Student Life and Engagement that seeks to enrich the Jefferson student body by presenting seminars and volunteer opportunities geared towards the acquisition of leadership skills. Each time a student attends a Leadership LIVE event, they gain credits towards their Leadership Certificate which, if earned, is presented during their ceremony at the end of each academic year. Jessica and Deirdre Martinez-Meehan were recognized as Senior Leadership Ambassador Students. In having completed the program last year they played a more active role this year in representing Leadership LIVE at events and worked behind the scenes with the Leadership LIVE Team. Seven other P4 students earned Leadership Certificates – James Beck, Soma Deall-Williams, Leah Doghramji, Timothy Higgins, Jacob Jasinski, Jessica Sensbach and Laura Steel (P4 ’14, SKMC ’18).

Jessica Evans was honored as the first student participant to exceed over 150 hours of service in the history of Leadership LIVE. Jessica was spotlighted as a student speaker defining how the program developed her present leadership skills to embark on a future career in medicine.

Jessica reflected on her experience in Leadership LIVE by saying, “Another academic year comes to a close, and sadly, so does my time as a Senior Leadership Ambassador for Leadership LIVE. When I first came to the post-baccalaureate program at Jefferson I had very little leadership experience. (Continued pg 2)

Laura Steel, Dr. Byrne, Deirdre Martinez-Meehan, Jessica Evans and Dean Grunwald

P4 Students go on to Medical School

Six recent graduates of the Jefferson College of Biomedical Sciences’ Postbaccalaureate Pre-Professional program (P4) began medical school at Sidney Kimmel Medical College in Fall 2015. Linking opportunities are made available for P4 students who meet certain academic requirements. All must go through the traditional interview process and the Medical College Admission Test. Linkage to the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) is also made available to eligible students. Margret Diacont and Shenel Franklin will begin their first year at PCOM in the Fall.

Front row: Michael Reynolds, Molly Allanoff, Nicholas Benvenuto, John Newland
Back row: Paul Alves, Jacqueline Early

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SKMC Linkage
LEADERSHIP LIVE (continuation)
Every time I tried to convince myself and others that I could be a leader, I was met with a less than enthusiastic reception and soon I found myself shying away from opportunities to lead. I joined Leadership LIVE with the hope that I would be able to acquire some skills, learn how to act as a leader, and find some confidence within myself. By dutifully attending seminars, keeping an open mind, and applying the lessons learned to my own life, I nurtured these skills, as well as my concept of what a good leader can be and what I wanted to be as a leader. I learned the idea of servant leadership, which simply put, means that leaders should genuinely want to serve the people they lead. And although straightforward, embodying servant leadership finally gave me a legitimate reason to want to lead others. Soon, I began finding the courage within myself to step up and assume leadership roles including applying to be a Senior Leadership Ambassador, and accepting a nomination to be on the executive board of the Minority Association for Pre-Medical Students. My final leadership hurdle required me to overcome my own insecurities about how others perceived my leadership skills. I wanted to take a leadership role in the P4 Society, and I knew I wanted that role to be pretty big. In the past, I would have stopped at simply thinking about nominating myself, but this time as I reflected on my experiences in Leadership LIVE, I chose to continue further. I nominated myself for President of the P4 Society and it paid off as my peers elected me to the position! Although I started in Leadership LIVE with very little confidence or skills, I leave with this incredible foundation on which to build a future as a leader: first, you have to be open to learning and educating yourself, and then applying those lessons to your own life; next you should genuinely want to serve the people you lead; and finally you have to find the courage and conviction within yourself to take those steps towards becoming the leader you always hoped to be. To everyone on that path I just have one thing to say: Good Luck!”

The Gap Year Experience
By Emilee Rutherford

I was fortunate enough to gain a significant amount of medical knowledge and experience throughout my gap year. I worked at The University of Pennsylvania as a Research Assistant during the summer of 2015 for the Fostering Improvement in End-of-Life Decision Science (FIELDS) Program, where I was able to complete surveys with patients, enter data, and visit dialysis clinics in the Greater Philadelphia area.
I also worked as a Medical Scribe for six months in the Emergency Department at Thomas Jefferson University, where I was able to learn an immense amount of medical terminology, as well as see many physician/patient encounters while documenting the History of Present Illness and Physical.
In September of 2015, I started a new job at Thomas Jefferson University as a Clinical Research Coordinator in the Department of Urology, where I will continue to work until I begin PA school. With this job, I am able to work directly with patients, physicians, and our clinical research team to provide different clinical trial options for urology patients. All of these experiences have made me appreciate the education I received while I was a student in the P4 Program, and they provided me with a great knowledge-base to use when I am a PA student. I am excited and honored to begin Thomas Jefferson University’s Physician Assistant Program at the end of May 2016.
MedScouts Continues to Inspire Future Leaders in Science  
By Deirdre Martinez-Meehan

A great deal of making the decision to become a physician has to do with believing in oneself. P4 students often understand how intrinsic motivation and external support can lead to reaching individual goals. This may be the reason why many P4 students dedicate their time to volunteer with Philadelphia high school students in the MedScouts health mentorship program. If we can show young people from diverse backgrounds that we have confidence they will succeed while connecting them with tools to advance their education, we make significant progress in making their dreams become a reality. Working with students from public and charter schools in the Philadelphia area for the last two years has been a great honor and tremendous learning experience. I interviewed three students from different backgrounds to learn about why they were motivated to participate in the program and what they have taken away from the experience.

DM: Are you interested in becoming a health professional? What is your dream job?  
Sommer: I'm not sure! I'm interested in the medical field but I'm also interested in computer science. I may try to combine the two.  
Haya: My dream job is to be a neurosurgeon. MedScouts has been able to assist me in one day obtaining my goal due to the fact that I have become more educated in the medical field.  
Nasir: I don’t know exactly but I want to become a physician, a kind of everyday doctor who knows everybody in the neighborhood. Maybe a family doctor.

DM: Have you made new friends through this program?  
Sommer: Yes, definitely! I feel like I'm friends with all the med students who help mentor MedScouts.  
Haya: Yes, definitely  
Nasir: Yes, the organization is becoming bigger and expanding. It is really exciting to see new people get involved. I hope more people can come.

DM: What was your favorite session?  
Sommer: My favorite session was the one where we dissected the pig hearts. It was really cool and I like gross stuff like that.  
Haya: Picking my favorite is quite hard to do since they all were amazing. If I have to choose it would be the dissecting a pig heart because I learned so much.  
Nasir: I really like the physical therapy students who came to work with us.

DM: Are you planning on attending college?  
Sommer: Yes, I’m going to go to CCP in the fall for a year and then hopefully I will transfer to Temple.  
Haya: My first option is UPenn if I get accepted but if I don’t then Drexel or Penn State. And afterwards, Jefferson for medical school.  
Nasir: Yes, but I’m not sure where yet.

DM: Do you feel more confident and/or comfortable public speaking after the program?  
Sommer: I do feel a lot more comfortable. I did have a fear of public speaking but now I'm not so afraid!  
Haya: I feel way more confident public speaking and speaking socially with people I don’t know well because of this program.  
Nasir: Definitely, yes. I have grown as the program has grown.

Next fall the MedScouts program will continue to serve young people in a larger and more sustainable form as part of the inaugural Thomas Jefferson Health Professions Pipeline Program. High school students from culturally and socially diverse backgrounds will continue to benefit from exposure to interactive science lessons, new friends, and mentorship. Similarly, Jefferson professional students will continue to have a forum to share their scientific interests, practice their leadership skills, and ultimately make a point of connection in the lives of these important young people.
Exploring Healthcare and Culture in Cochabamba

By Samia Malik

At the end of my first semester at Thomas Jefferson University, I spent a week in Cochabamba, Bolivia, volunteering in Salud Placata, a community clinic dedicated to health prevention, promotion, and community outreach. I had the opportunity to assist the nursing team taking vitals, weight, blood pressure and height and to participate in community outreach at a local elementary school for flu vaccinations as part of “Vaccination for all”, a government-sponsored program for underserved children. In addition, I shadowed a family physician who was both concerned about the physical condition of his patients and keen to learn about their psychological and environmental health. His consultations always ended with a warm embrace after sharing advice on a breadth of issues from preventing malnutrition to keeping a clean environment, all fitting within the socio-economic and cultural milieu of his patients. My trip also involved taking some introductory classes in Quechua and exploring “the city of Eternal spring”, learning about its history and culture. I had delicious saltenas at Wist’upiku, walked through Cancha, South America’s largest open-air market and began my Isabel Allende novel at Plaza del Colon not far from where the internationally renowned demonstrations against water privatization were held back in 2000. This experience exposed me to the application of global public health in the real world and to the preventive health approach in Bolivia. I was introduced to some of the challenges faced by indigenous women, and saw for the first time the effects of malnutrition and parasitic infection on the frail body of a child. It was a priceless opportunity; one that showed me the deep impact of healthcare access on underserved communities and reinforced my desire to become a primary care physician.

Thank You, From P4 Students

Shadowing physicians, dentists, physician assistants and other medical staff is an invaluable opportunity for P4 students. P4 students have been fortunate enough to witness everything from births to autopsies and surgeries to routine patient care. The medical staff who make time to teach and mentor P4 students through shadowing have our sincere thanks.

In particular, thank you to these physicians who welcomed P4 students to spend time shadowing them this year:

- Dr. Carol Shields, Ocular Oncology
- Dr. Jerry Shields, Ocular Oncology
- Dr. Edith Mitchell, Medical Oncology
- Dr. Katherine Sherif, Primary Care
- Dr. Leonard Gomella, Neurosurgery
- Dr. Kelly Healy, Urology
- Dr. Angela Soper, Refugee Medicine
- Dr. James Evans, Neurosurgery
- Dr. Kimberly Atkinson, Neurology
- Dr. Robert Diecidue, Oral & Maxillofacial
- Dr. Andrew Kleinmann, Emergency Medicine
- Dr. Corina Schoen, Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Dr. Linda Sundt, Anesthesiology

P4 By the Numbers

- **12**: The number of different states that the current P4 students hail from. Students come from as south as Texas, as west as Oregon, as north as Connecticut and as close as Philadelphia.
- **41**: The number of different undergraduate majors of P4 students, which include English, exercise physiology, international marketing, finance, criminal justice, athletic trainer, theater, foreign languages and visual arts.
- **21-37**: The age range of current P4 students.
- **10**: The percentage of current P4 students with advanced degrees.
- **180**: The average number of collective hours that the current P4 students spend volunteering each week.
- **16** (and counting!): The number of P4’s 2015 graduates entering professional school for the 2016-17 academic year.
Biochemistry Professor Catalyzes P4 Students

By Nicholas Rzeoski

I had originally proposed to Dr. Peter Huwe to meet in a cafe near campus to conduct the interview. Like any good southerner however, Dr. Huwe couldn’t resist the majesty of the evening’s waning rays. He called me at 5:15 pm “Would you want to do the interview outside, it’s such a beautiful day.” The only thing missing, according to him, was a smoking BBQ and an ice cold beer.

A native of Corinth, Mississippi, Dr. Peter Huwe has always been committed to the sciences. Although an envisioned career in orthopedic surgery was diverted by an accident shortly after graduating high school, he still desired to make a difference in both the sciences and in the lives of future doctors as a researcher and professor.

The first notion of his talent for teaching came during his genetics class at Mississippi College. “The professor was awful; half the class was failing, everyone was completely lost, I said to myself, I can do a better job than this guy.” A couple weeks later, Dr. Huwe was tutoring most of the class and noted significant improvement among his peers. This is the aspect of teaching that continues to enthuse Dr. Huwe: “Research is great but sometimes you work for years and years without any progress. With teaching, there is instant gratification when a student learns something.”

Mississippi College is also where Dr. Peter Huwe met his wife who is training to be a PA. Hailing from Mississippi as well, she had an Algebra teacher, as Huwe recounted, who gave lectures on the gulf coast beach by her high school. Waves washing over granular quadratic formulas lapped over my thoughts for the rest of the interview.

However both would eventually leave the South to pursue their graduate degrees in the Northeast. “While looking at graduate programs,” Dr. Huwe told me, “I primarily made my decision based on average snowfall. Harvard, MIT, and Michigan were quickly off the list so I settled on the University of Pennsylvania. My first winter in Philadelphia, there was 78 inches of snow.”

Despite the city’s erratic winter weather, Philadelphia has grown on Dr. Huwe over the last 7 years. “I have made some of my best friends in Philadelphia,” he happily states. Although research at Fox Chase Cancer Center and teaching at Jefferson consume most of his time, Dr. Huwe and his wife enjoy cooking and hosting friends over for dinner. Deviating slightly from his humble self, he insists that his créole red beans and rice are truly superb. The two also enjoy attending concerts, whether it be classical, indie, or bluegrass music.

When asked if his literary interests extend beyond his scientific research and instruction, he admits to no longer being able to find the time to sit down and flip through a book. Pausing a second however, he corrects his initial response: “…but I rock audio books like a CHAMP.”

Dr. Huwe has experienced various academic environments throughout his career in science. From the conservative Mississippi College to the rather liberal University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Huwe has enjoyed life at Thomas Jefferson University thus far. Speaking of his colleagues and students, he said, “Everyone is great, the staff have been so helpful and really are there for not only me, but also for the students. As for the students, I see them all making fine future physicians.”

Moving forward, Dr. Huwe hopes to one day have his own laboratory where he can combine research with teaching. Though Philadelphia has become a second home to him, he does one day hope to return below the Mason-Dixon to be closer to family. As Lynyrd Skynyrd said: “You can take a boy out of ol’ Dixieland/but you’ll never take ol’ Dixie from a boy.” For the time being however, Hark the herald students sing, glory to the sight of Dr. Huwe on his way to class!
P4 Students Ride for a Cause

I rode my bike 4,000 miles from Virginia Beach, VA to Canon Beach, OR with Bike and Build, a non-profit dedicated to raising money and awareness for the affordable housing crisis in the U.S. Participants raise funds, build with Habitat for Humanity and give affordable housing presentations during the trip. I think that just about any place is best discovered from the seat of a bicycle, and with Bike and Build, we were able to simultaneously give back to the communities we visited. With so many global crises, it is easy to miss out on the contributions we can make in our own back yard. The trip opened my eyes to a multitude of underserved communities in the U.S. and inspired my goal of someday working with the National Health Service Corps to provide healthcare in some of our country's most neglected regions.

By Lisa Sussman

I began my cross-country journey with Bike and Build in Portland, Maine. After collectively fundraising $160,000, working on over a dozen affordable housing build sites across the country, and pedaling just shy of 4,000 miles, our group of 34 hit the sandy beaches of Santa Barbara, California. While I had notions of dedicating myself to life of service prior to the start of this adventure, having spent many years as a volunteer EMT in my community, Bike and Build further opened my eyes to the positive impact that we can all have, whether it is serving close to home, across the country, or around the world. I will keep these experiences close to me as I continue forward in my career in medicine.

By Aaron Miller

The summer after I graduated from college, I embarked on what would become the most exciting adventure of my life (so far!). With the Ulman Cancer Fund, I cycled from Baltimore, MD to San Francisco, CA in 70 days with 30 other young adults. The 4K for Cancer program raises money and awareness for young adults affected by cancer, and all proceeds from the ride are used to benefit the patient navigation system that supports patients and their families while they undergo treatment in Baltimore. The physical challenge of cycling up mountains everyday was rewarding and instilled patience, motivation, and determination in me, but the most rewarding experience was volunteering with local communities and cancer centers across the country. Having just recently lost my father to cancer, it was very empowering and fulfilling to see the energy and enthusiasm that emanated from all cancer communities across the country. I am very grateful for this opportunity and I encourage anyone considering it to hop on a bike and "cycle inspire unite!"

By Linnea Cripe
**Former P4 Student’s Bone Marrow Donation Saves Stranger’s Life**

Molly Allanoff, a current first year medical student at Sidney Kimmel Medical College, signed up to be a bone marrow donor when she was 18. Her father’s long-term experience with lymphoma had inspired her. She was completing prerequisites for medical school in the P4 program when she found out she was a match for an individual living across the world in Tel Aviv, Israel. That individual was Avi Ruderman. In September 2015, shortly after beginning her first year of medical school, Molly received a call. The transplant was successful and a few short weeks after, Ruderman and his family flew to Philadelphia to meet Molly. They embraced as they exchanged tear-filled stories. The families still keep in touch. Ruderman has invited Molly and her family to his daughter’s wedding in Israel. “It is my treat, my gift,” he said. “You are family now.”

*Excerpt from the Thomas Jefferson University Review Spring 2016*

**JeffHEALTH Goes to Rwanda**

This past summer P4 students Ashley Cafferty and Jenna Bergman went to Rwanda with the organization JeffHEALTH, which stands for Jefferson Helping East Africa Link to Health. It is a student run organization that sends a group of students to Rwanda every year. The purpose of the trip was to educate village healthcare workers on 8 topics that the Rwandan Ministry of Health provided. Furthermore, they were there to strengthen our relationship with the medical students at the University of Rwanda and improve upon their joint effort to implement public health initiatives around the country. Their mission was to get better insight into the health care system of Rwanda and the population’s biggest health issues. Although their time in Rwanda passed by too quickly, they were able to accomplish their goals and returned to Jefferson with more knowledge and experience in global health.

During the weekdays they taught in two villages on the outskirts of Rwanda’s capital city, Kigali. They lived in the village Parish House with four priests. The villages had no running water or electricity. The amount and accuracy of healthcare knowledge varied greatly amongst the locals. They spent the mornings preparing our lessons on the 8 topics given to us by the Rwandan Ministry of Health. The topics were: family planning, prenatal care, drug and alcohol abuse, cervical cancer/HPV, breast cancer, oral hygiene, HIV/AIDS, soil transmitted diseases and helminths. In addition to discussing these topics and answering any questions, they created materials for the village healthcare workers to use and reference.

On the weekends they would leave the parish house for the capital or some other city to explore the country (and shower). A lot of their time outside of the village was spent with Rwandan students. The students were studying medicine, pharmacy, and public health. “We were so lucky to experience a lot of the country with the students we met because the locals always know the best places to see,” said Ashley. Jenna added, “We created friendships that will last long after our time as students pass.” She mentioned they all have intentions to see one another again at some point. JeffHEALTH is going to Rwanda again this summer and they hope the P4 community continues to participate.

*Ashley Cafferty and Jenna Bergman*
A Day in the Life of P4: In the Lab, In the Classroom, In the Community

SAVE THE DATE

Welcoming New P4 Classes

Accelerated 1-Year P4 Program
Class of 2017 - May 25th

2-Year P4 Program
Class of 2018 - August 31st

P4 information sessions for prospective students:

http://www.jefferson.edu/university/biomedical-sciences/admissions/information-sessions.html

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