



## Charles Drew: Your Pre-Med Lifeline

Charles Drew  
Pre-Medical Society

Fall 2008  
Volume 2, Issue 1

# A Letter from Our President, Victor Thompson, CC' 10

Dear Members of the Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society,

For three years now it has been my pleasure to be a member of the Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society. It is an honor to help continue what Dr. Charles Drew started so many years ago, especially when taking into consideration the trials and tribulations many undergo due to the numerous problems in the U.S. health care system

I believe that it is extremely beneficial to have an organization on campus that works diligently to increase the number of underrepresented and minority students interested in the medical field, while offering great opportunities to all premedical students that attend Columbia University. It is the Society's duty to directly instill a sense of strength, perseverance and focus into college students who have taken it upon themselves to

properly serve their communities as doctors, for these characteristics combined make up the foundation that all medical students stand upon.

The road to becoming a physician or surgeon is long, tedious and challenging, with many road blocks that sometimes seem impossible to overcome. However, the society will definitely serve as a support system that pre-medical students can use to help overcome these challenges.

I passionately believe that doctors and all other members of the health profession aid mankind in some of the greatest ways possible, and it is in this spirit I present to you the newest issue of the Charles Drew Premedical Society Newsletter, *Lifeline*.

Sincerely,  
Victor Thompson, CC'10  
President



Victor Thompson  
President

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## Previous Events Include:

- The Process of Getting into Medical School Begins Freshman Year
- Women in Medicine: "To Be or Not to Be a Female Physician, That is the Question!"
- "What Does It Take to be a Cardiothoracic Surgeon, What Does it Take to be a Researcher, What Does It Take to be Both?"
- "Mentoring Matters": Mentoring Orientation for High School Pipeline Program.

## Fall 2008 Semester Highlights

During the past semester, the Charles Drew Pre-Med Society has had many exciting events, providing pre-medical students on campus with helpful information about topics

such as medical school application process and pursuing an M.D./Ph.D. We have also taken initiative to help high school students via our newly established

pipeline program. The following articles are summaries of the special events held this semester.

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own interests rather  
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### **Event #1: The Process For Getting to Medical School Begins Freshman Year (Thursday, September 18, 2008)**

Dr. Miller, Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Equal Opportunity Programs at Weil Medical College of Cornell University, joined us for a discussion of the medical school application process. Dr. Miller emphasized the importance of adopting a competitive work ethic early on in one's college

career and dispelled the often promoted myth that poor grades freshman year will not be significant in the application review. Overall, Dr. Miller challenged pre-med students to explore their own interests rather than try to fit themselves into a standardized mold.

Considering trend among medical schools to look for holistic applicants, it is important for students to not only excel academically, but also to show their individual passions and talents.

### **Event #2: Women in Medicine: "To Be or Not to Be a Female Physician, That is the Question!" (Thursday, September 25, 2008)**

The Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society welcomed a panel of female physicians to address questions about a female's journey to becoming a doctor. The panel included Dr. Icilma Fergus, Assistant Professor of Clinical

Medicine and Attending Physician at New York Hospital Medical Center of Queens, and Dr. Hilda Hutcherson, Associate Dean at Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons and Co-Director at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center. The panel

pointed out how they overcame the obstacles to becoming female physicians and provided great advice for all of the aspiring physicians in the audience.

### **Event #3: "What Does it Take to Be a Cardiothoracic Surgeon, What Does it Take to Be a Researcher, What Does it Take to be Both?" (Thursday, October 9, 2008)**

Dr. Daniel Beckles, an attending cardiothoracic surgeon at Mount Sinai Hospital and assistant professor in surgery at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, cardiothoracic surgeon and researcher, spoke about his journey to attain both an M.D. and

Ph.D. Astonishingly, Dr. Beckles obtained his Ph.D. during his general surgery residency. One of Dr. Beckles main points was that students should pursue their passions and not be afraid of changing their course if they find out

they like something else better. It was Dr. Beckles' drive and passion for what he was doing that guided him to his eventual career choice and allowed him to complete an extremely difficult journey.

#### **Event #4: Columbia Medical School Mentor-Mentee Event (Friday, October 17, 2008)**

Members of the Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society traveled uptown to Columbia University's School of Physicians and Surgeons. At the medical school, students first heard from and questioned a panel of current medical students. After the panel, the group split into small groups to already been through the discuss specific student pre-medical experience interests such as public and the medically school health, pediatrics, and application process, will surgery. Students were serve as mentors for our also paired with current pre-meds during the medical students based on upcoming year and a survey they completed beyond. on their experiences and interests. These medical students, who have



#### **Event #5: "Mentoring Matters": Mentoring Orientation for High School Pipeline Program (Sunday, October 19, 2008)**

The High School Pipeline Co-Chairs spoke to Columbia pre-meds about an opportunity for them to dedicate their time, wisdom, and guidance to mentoring New York City high school students. They learned about becoming Pipeline Program mentors who will have the task of working with a high school student and answering any questions he or she may have about college admissions and the life of a pre-medical student. In addition, the mentors will provide invaluable advice and help the students with their college application essays and interview preparation. The main goal of the Pipeline Program is to encourage underrepresented groups to pursue careers in medicine and to make their aspirations of becoming physicians and surgeons into a reality.



#### **Event #6: The "Health Professions Recruitment and Exposure Program (HPREP)" Orientation for Pipeline Program (Sunday, November 16, 2008)**

Pipeline Program mentees to meet their respective mentors and about the college mentees and their parents joined Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society mentors at Columbia for a dinner and panel discussion. During dinner, a panel of Columbia students answered questions adjustment to life at college. The pleasant evening concluded with remarks from the president of Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society.



## Charles Drew High School Pipeline Program

This year the Charles Drew Premedical Society started a new initiative—its very first mentoring program. The Charles Drew High School Pipeline Program is a health professions recruitment and exposure program that seeks to encourage inner city high school students from underrepresented backgrounds to pursue careers in medicine as well as the sciences. By pairing the high school students with Columbia University mentors, we hope to equip each student with resources necessary to graduate from high school and successfully transition into college. Our program offers one-on-one mentorship with students from CC, SEAS, BC and GS; college admissions counseling with university administration, campus visits, pre-med workshops and panels, as well as social events. In addition to the workshops, panels, and social events the high students are also invited to the monthly events that the Charles Drew Premedical Society hosts on campus. We hope this program will allow them to better utilize their resources and gain a great deal of confidence as a result of the support system available.

On November 1<sup>st</sup>, the co-chairpersons of the Pipeline Program went up Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons to recruit our first group of motivated high school juniors and seniors. After the presentation an overwhelming amount of responses came flooding back with a whopping 40 students. Throughout the month of November the students were matched to their mentors based on their interests in the sciences as well as their

hobbies. It all finally crystallized on November 16, 2008 in the party space of Lerner when the mentor-mentee event began. Initially the room was filled with eager high school students and their proud parents. Then finally the tables were filled with high school students and their mentors forming relationships. Two of our executive board members kicked off the event with an introduction to the Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society and the presentation of the new Pipeline program. After their remarks guests were invited to indulge in some food while the panel assembled. The panel provided very useful advice about the college application process and transitioning from a high school student to a college student. The night closed with the warm remarks by the president of the society. Once we return from break we hope to have another event where our mentees and mentors have time to get to know each other better in a more relaxed setting. Soon we will begin college tours as well as financial aid and admissions workshops to greet our new recruits with important information.

Through the tireless efforts of our mentors, general body members, executive board members, and university faculty we hope to provide all of our high school students with the support, encouragement and academic tools needed to succeed in high school, college, and eventually graduate medical school. If you have any questions or would like to learn more about our programs please contact Brittany Martin at [bam2155@columbia.edu](mailto:bam2155@columbia.edu) or Johanna Miele at [jcm2179@columbia.edu](mailto:jcm2179@columbia.edu)



## Meet the Advisory Board for 2008-2009 School Year

Meet our advisory board for the 2008-2009 year. We are very excited to have these individuals supervise the events that we have planned for the year as well as offer advice and share experiences with members of the Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society. We hope to have a very successful year due in large part to the time put in by the advisory board in efforts to further the impact that the Charles Drew Society has both on and off campus. The advisory board members are inspirational individuals, motivating us to work hard and strive towards our goals of becoming medical professionals.

### Hilda Y. Hutcherson, M.D.



**Dr. Hutcherson** was born and raised in Tuskegee, Alabama. From Stanford University as an undergraduate majoring in Human Biology, she matriculated into Harvard Medical School. She then completed a medicine internship at the University of California in San Francisco and her residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Columbia University Medical Center. She is now a Clinical Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Associate Dean for Diversity and Minority Affairs at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons.

### Lynne M. Holden, M.D.



**Dr. Holden** attended Temple University School of Medicine and completed her residency in Emergency Medicine in 1995 at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine-Jacobi/Montefiore Emergency Medicine Residency Program in the Bronx, NY. For the past six years, Dr. Holden has served as a Co-chairperson of the Admissions Committee at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and as Montefiore Residency Site Director of the Jacobi-Montefiore Emergency Medicine Residency Program. Holden is also the coordinator for the Emergency Department Clinical Exposure and Mentoring Program.

### Jeannine M. D'Armiento, M.D./Ph.D.



**Dr. D'Armiento** attended Rutgers University, where she received her Bachelor's degree. She then applied and was accepted to the prestigious M.D./PhD program at UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson. After receiving her M.D./PhD, she completed her residency and fellowship in pulmonology at Columbia University Medical Center. She is now an Assistant Professor of Medicine and has her own biomedical research lab in the Department of Medicine at the Columbia University Medical Center.

### Icilma V. Fergus, M.D.



**Dr. Fergus** received her B.A. from Barnard College in 1988 and continued on to earn her MD. in 1992 at the SUNY Health Science Center at Brooklyn. In 1999, she completed her fellowship in cardiology at the Weill-Cornell Medical Center and joined Cardiovascular Associates. She has served as Associate Director of Echocardiography at New York Hospital Queens since 2001. She was awarded the Lang Center grant in 2001 for research involving measurement of mitral regurgitation and cardiac volumes in heart failure patients. She is now the head of cardiology at Harlem Hospital Center.

## Meet the Advisory Board for 2008-2009 School Year

### Carlyle H. Miller, M.D.



**Dr. Miller** attended Columbia University, earning a Bachelor's degree in Biology. After graduating from Weill Medical College in 1975, Dr. Miller completed his residency at New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell and a fellowship in gastroenterology at Weill Cornell's affiliate Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Miller has been a member of the Weill Medical College faculty since 1980 and is an active member of the Admissions Committee. Most recently, he has served as chairman of the biomedical sciences and Academic Dean at Pacific College of Oriental Medicine. Currently, he is assistant attending physician at New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell as well as has just been named new Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Equal Opportunity Programs at the Weill Medical College of Cornell University.

### Daniel L. Beckles, M.D./Ph.D.



**Dr. Beckles** received his B.A. in Biochemistry and M.S. in Chemistry from Stony Brook University. He went on to receive his M.D. and Ph.D. in Molecular Biology from SUNY Downstate Medical School and then became a resident of cardiothoracic surgery at the University of Texas. He has since then served as the Associate Surgeon of the Division of Thoracic Surgery at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Diplomate on the American Board of Thoracic Surgery, and Assistant Professor at Mt. Sinai Medical Center.

## Summer 2009 Opportunities

Are you looking forward to summer yet? Want a meaningful summer experience in New York City? If you want to get some clinical exposure or participate in exciting research, check out the following list of opportunities for Summer 2009. Be sure to check individual websites for application deadlines!

1. Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships (SURF) and Amgen Scholars Program

The Department of Biological Sciences at Columbia University offers the opportunity for hands-on biology related laboratory research. This is a chance to experience the joys of discovering something completely new while learning to overcome the challenges inherent in scientific research. Most students work either on the Morningside Heights campus or in the biomedical labs at Columbia's Health Sciences Center. You may apply to SURF if you are currently a junior, sophomore, or first-year student in Columbia College, Barnard College, the School of Engineering and Applied Science, or the School of General Studies. For Amgen, you must be a sophomore or junior. No previous research experience is necessary, and you do not need to be a biology major to apply. Students are expected to work full-time for the duration of the program. The programs run for 10 weeks, from May 26th through July 31st, 2009.

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/biology/ug/surf/>

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/biology/ug/amgen/index.html>

## Summer 2009 Opportunities

2. The Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP) at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine  
This program offers 50 college students each summer an exceptional opportunity to conduct original research in a laboratory at one of the world's top-ranking scientific institutions. The program is designed for undergraduates with a strong background in science who are considering a research career. SURP students arrive at Einstein in mid-June and spend nine weeks working in a laboratory. Students are matched to a laboratory in the area of interest they indicate on their application. At the end of the program, students present their research in a poster session.  
<http://www.aecom.yu.edu/phd/index.asp?surp>
3. Summer Medical and Dental Education Program (SMDEP)  
This is a FREE (full tuition, housing, and meals) six-week summer academic enrichment program that offers freshman and sophomore college students intensive and personalized medical and dental school preparation. Program Offerings Include: Academic enrichment in the basic sciences (organic chemistry, physics, biology, and pre-calculus/calculus), Career development, Learning-skills seminar, Limited clinical exposure, a financial-planning workshop. The program takes place at several universities each summer, including Yale, Duke, and Columbia.  
<http://www.smdep.org/>
4. Emergency Department Clinical Exposure and Mentoring Program  
Volunteer in a busy urban emergency department at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, shadow an ER physician, conduct clinical research, and participate in community service activities. African-American, Hispanic or Native American college students and premedical Post Baccalaureate students are eligible. Students intending to reapply to medical school after one unsuccessful application can also apply.  
<http://www.aecom.yu.edu/admissions/page.aspx?ID=3088>
5. Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP) at NYU School of Medicine  
The Sackler Institute of Graduate Biomedical Sciences of New York University's School of Medicine offers a Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP) for qualified sophomores and juniors who are interested in pursuing research careers as PhD or MD/PhD candidates.  
<http://www.med.nyu.edu/sackler/programs/summer.html>

**\*\*For more NYC programs or summer opportunities in your home state, check out:**

- a) Columbia University's Pre-professional website  
<http://www.studentaffairs.columbia.edu/preprofessional/health/>
- b) Health Professions Advisory Program website  
<http://hpap.syr.edu/spstate.htm#toc>

## Join our Facebook Group!

Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society  
Contact Information:

E-mail Address:  
cucharlesdrew@gmail.com

Blog address:  
<http://cucharlesdrew.blogspot.com>

Just in case you did not know, we have a Facebook group. It will be updated regularly with information about our upcoming events. It will also have information of importance to you such as volunteer opportunities and information about applying to medical school. Go to the link below to join our group or just search Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society on facebook :

<http://www.new.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2216987581&ref=ts>

facebook

## History and Mission Statement

The Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society was established in the early nineties by Columbia University undergraduates. They firmly believed that they had the duty to serve their fellow peers in order to establish a strong network off minority and non-minority pre-medical student population on Columbia's campus. Ever since then, as an executive board, we have taken greater lengths to provide the similar services we give our Columbia students beyond the gates of 116<sup>th</sup> street through community service, undergraduate/medical school student mentoring, and nor our High School pipeline program. As an organization, we are dedicated to maintain the high and premier standard of Dr. Charles R. Drew and hopefully apply such standards within ourselves and for our future generations.

**Mission Statement:** Charles Drew Pre-Med Society is an organization that works to increase the number of minorities and under-represented persons in the medical field, while offering valuable guidance and resources to pre-med students throughout campus. We continuously encourage students to delve into the sciences not because engineers, physicians, research scientists and surgeons are members of honorable fields, but because these are the persons who aid mankind in some of the greatest ways possible.

## E-board Members

Victor Thompson CC'10, *Co-President*

Tim Lam CC'11, *Co-President*

Patricia Rojas CC'11, *Vice President/Newsletter Editor*

Princess Francois CC'11, *Historian/Publicity Chairperson/Newsletter Editor*

Gabriella Reyes, SEAS'11, *Community Service Chairperson*

Brian Lewis CC'11, *Treasuer*

Britney Martin CC'11, *High School Pipeline Program Co-Chairperson*

Johanna Miele CC'12, *High School Pipeline Program Co-Chairperson*

Lacey Gleason CC'12, *Secretary*

Komal Kothari CC'12, *Public Relations Chairperson*

