



## Charles Drew: Your Pre-Med Lifeline

Charles Drew  
Pre-Medical Society

## Farewell Letter from Our Senior Advisor, Victor Thompson, CC'10



Dear Charles Drew Members

I was asked to write a Senior Advisor Farewell Letter, and up to this moment I have found the task utterly impossible: forever I will share with the Society its mission; I will never leave the Society. From the time I was enrolled into the State Pre-Enrichment Program at the Columbia University Medical Center as a high school junior, the desire to increase the number of minority and underrepresented medical doctors and health professionals to better diversify the pool within the borders of the U.S. has always been the main driving force behind all that I do in regards to attaining my goal of becoming a member of society who properly serves the sick as an academic doctor.

And through the great successes of the Society this past academic year under the direct leadership of Ms. Princess Francois and Mr. Brian Lewis, the goal of this mission, for me, has become exponentially more tangible. Although I understand that much more has to be done, the cultivation of the Society has proven that reaching this goal can be properly facilitated through a strong group effort. Thus to even think about "leaving" the Society would be blasphemy to me. Hence I am going to share with you all a few words of encouragement before I commence a new stage in my life, which is not more distant from the Society, its mission, you all, or the desire we share to properly serve the sick.

One of the few statements I made as Senior Advisor was to be sure to take the Society to heights past those attained in previous years: progress must always be; it makes no sense whatsoever to remain stagnant, especially when taking into consideration the task at hand. As you can see, these words of advice were more than taken into consideration. They were followed whole heartedly this past year. I wish share with you all this same exact message. Furthermore, I want you to remember all of the benefits you and your prehealth peers have reaped as a result of this year's hard work. There are so many more eager students who wish to feel exactly how you feel this moment; we need more students to feel exactly how you feel this moment. Understand that we wish not to increase the number of minority and underrepresented doctors just for the sake of numbers. We know for a fact that a better variety of ideas and worthwhile contributions to the health professional field can only yield better health care for everyone regardless of race, ethnicity or economic class. So I ask that you all join me in continuing to strive for a more diverse and more effective medical field that works hard to properly care for all.

Sincerely,  
Victor Thompson  
*Senior Advisor of Charles Drew*

Spring 2010  
Volume 3, Issue 2

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## A Letter from Our Co-Presidents, Princess Francois, CC'11 and Brian Lewis, CC'11

Dear Charles Drew members,

This year was by far the most exciting and productive year that Charles Drew has ever had, and it is thanks to all of you. We had many exciting events this year such as A Cut Above: A Surgeon's Perspective on Medicine, D is for Doctor: Why You Don't Need the Best Grades to be a Doctor, and Behind Closed Doors: How Medical School Admissions are Really Made. Our organization also took a trip to two medical schools: Yale School of Medicine and University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. We have many more exciting events and trips planned for next year that we know will help you as you continue on the path of a pre-medical student at Columbia.

In the future, you can expect to see many more events sponsored by Charles Drew that are tailored to your own interests. We recognize the diversity of our membership and the entire executive board plans to ensure that your needs are fulfilled; whether that is with updates on medical advancements, more study breaks to share your interests with others, or more discussions with doctors, surgeons, medical students, or pre-meds.

No organization can be successful without support from its members, and we especially look forward to getting to know you more at all of our exciting events next year.

As the year draws to a close and you take your steps into becoming sophomores, juniors, and seniors, the entire e-board of Charles Drew would just like to congratulate all of our members; you are now one step closer to achieving your dreams and becoming doctors that will shape the future. Remember that the life of a pre-med student extends off campus as well, so be productive this summer and remember that your goal of becoming a doctor is within your reach. Of course, take this time as well to take a break and relax—enjoy your friends and family because those are the people in your support system who will be there for you every step of the way.

From the both of us, have a great summer and we look forward to seeing all of you in the fall!

Sincerely,  
Princess Francois, CC'11  
Brian Lewis, CC'11  
*Co-Presidents of Charles Drew*



Princess Francois  
Co-President



Brian Lewis  
Co-President

## Spring 2010 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 the field of surgery. We have also continued initiatives to help pre-meds like you through our newly established Pre-Medical Undergraduate Mentoring Program and our

High School Pipeline Program. Furthermore, we have taken steps to help the community since our ultimate goal as pre-meds is to serve the people. The following articles are summaries of the special events held this semester.

### Previous Events Include:

- Behind Closed Doors: How Medical School Decisions Are Really Made
- D is for Doctor: Why You Don't Need the Best Grades to Become a Doctor
- Yale School of Medicine Overnight Trip
- A Cut Above: A Surgeon's Perspective on Medicine
- The Pep Talk

## Region IX Minority Association of Pre-Medical Students (MAPS) Conference at Mount Sinai School of Medicine (Saturday, January 23, 2010) *By Christina Ortiz, CC'12*

On a clear, brisk winter morning, the Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society headed out to the Region IX Minority Association of Premedical Students (MAPS) Conference at Mount Sinai School of Medicine. This year, the theme of the Conference was *"It's All About the Hustle: Humility, Unrelenting, Strength, Tenacity, Leadership, Enthusiasm."* The day's schedule was full of events; after

hearing from several inspiring speakers, there were breakout sessions, a roundtable discussion on diversity, and finally a medical school recruitment fair. At this event, the breakout sessions ranged from First Aid for the Premedical Student and a Human Simulator to Understanding Clinical Research and a Leadership Workshop for MAPS Presidents and MAPS

Liaisons. The trip turned out to be a truly positive experience. It doesn't matter what route you're taking to get to medical school or the specialty you want to pursue once you get there, there was something at the Conference for everyone.

To learn more about Region IX MAPS, visit their website at <https://sites.google.com/site/regionixmaps/>



### A few of the things we learned at the conference:

- The five F's:
  - Faith
  - Focus
  - Follow-thru
  - Fun
  - Family
- The importance of PREPARATION, PRESENTATION, and VISUALIZATION
- Know the criteria for the schools you are interested in!



MOUNT SINAI  
SCHOOL OF  
MEDICINE

Remember: *If you fail to prepare, you prepare to fail.*

### Tidbits for Medical School Admissions:

- Medical Schools are looking for academic ability, self confidence, integrity, motivation, initiative, responsibility, originality, creativity, awareness of others, and ability to communication
- Be sure to demonstrate a well-rounded profile in your application.
- **In a personal statement:** Illustrate a clear and compelling reason or passion for medicine in relation to your activities/experiences that you have had—medical schools want to be moved, touched and inspired
- **In an interview:** sell yourself to the school; always ask questions at the end; be confident and professional: THE INTERVIEW BEGINS IN THE WAITING ROOM!





## Your Summer as a Pre-Med: A Panel on Research and Enrichment Programs (Wednesday, February 10, 2010)

*By Komal Kothari, CC'12*

Charles Drew held a discussion on summer research and enrichment programs for pre-medical students. Members of the E-board talked about their past summers, which attested to the wide array of opportunities that a pre-med can take advantage of. Several students talked about doing biomedical research through Columbia's SURF program or at other universities. Two students spoke about their

participation in SMDEP, an enrichment program tailored to minority pre-medical students. Yet another student spoke about her clinical experience as a volunteer in a neonatal clinic. The audience engaged in the lively discussion by asking questions about programs that they found suitable to their interests. Handouts were even distributed with a list of places one should check out. Regardless of which program they had participated in, all

students on the panel agreed that their summer experiences were rewarding and gave them exposure to the field of medicine. If you would like any more information on programs to apply to next summer, look at the end of this newsletter at what our E-board is doing this summer, check out past newsletters, or go to our website:

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/charlesdrewsociety/summer.html>



*"Whatever happens to you is the best thing that could have happened"*

-Mr. Andrew Morrison

## Women in Medicine (Thursday, February 18, 2010)

*By ChiChi Mpamaugo, CC'13*

Dr. Hilda Hutcherson, Dr. Brenda Aiken and Mr. Andrew Morrison spent an evening talking to female premeds about their experiences being married to and being women in the medical field. Dr. Hutcherson shared her story about the ordeals she had to enduring while in medical school as the only one of two women in her residency rotation. Dr. Hutcherson relayed the importance of finding a balance in life and taking care of yourself. After some jokes about

his presence on the panel and his representation for the men in this room full of women, Mr. Morrison shared his incite as a motivational speaker, life coach, and executive director of "Mentoring in Medicine." He talked about his experience in an Ivy League school, and the challenges as well as joys of being married to a physician. He stressed the importance for women to be emotionally strong and to ask for help when it is needed. Mr. Morrison also stressed the importance for

women to take self defense classes. Dr. Brenda Aiken from Columbia University's Health Services talked about the challenges she endured when growing up. With little support and experience, she faced a great deal of difficulty in school but when she finally decided to live life for herself things began to improve and she advised women to live life for themselves and no one else.



## BSO Crossroads Speaker Series Event: Medicine and Education (Thursday, February 25, 2010)

*By Margie Cadet, BC'13*

This event co-hosted by Charles Drew and BSO, with the initiative of BSO Pre-Professional Chair David Mills, proved to be an interesting night filled with witty remarks, plentiful snacks, and realistic yet helpful advice. The speakers represented an array of fields: Dr. Vernon Jeffery, M.D./J.D.,

who helps students prepare for LSATs and MCATs and Dr. Brian Swann, DDS/MPH, a practicing dentist and instructor at Harvard School of Dental Medicine. The night involved mostly question and answers. Some of the most memorable pieces of advice they had to give centered

around knowing yourself and your study habits. For most students, figuring out what habits are most beneficial is no easy task; it takes practice followed by tons of trial and error, but once the perfect study tactics are discovered work becomes less tedious and more effective.



## Behind Closed Doors: How Medical School Decisions Are Really Made (Thursday, March 4, 2010)

*By Antoinette Allen, CC'12*

Walking in late to a discussion with Dr. Lynne Holden is never a good idea. As I quickly realized, her commanding personality and powerful voice filled up the very little room left in the Hamilton lecture hall, forcing me to inch across a wall and sit in one of the last seats left. The topic of discussion was "How Medical School Decisions Are Really Made". As the founder of the Mentoring in

Medicine program, an ER Doctor at Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx and a member of the admissions committee at Albert Einstein, she taught the crowd a thing or two about medical school admissions. The obvious was stated: good grades, high MCATs, involvement in the community, etc., but also qualified and tempered with exceptions to the rule such as financial barriers and adverse life experiences. The goal of

the night was to overcome the disillusionment faced by many pre-meds at Columbia University while encouraging and informing them of what needs to be done to distinguish themselves from every other applicant. Judging from the long queue to speak to Dr. Holden after the event, I would have to say she had done her job well.

*"It's about  
preparation and  
presentation"*

-Dr. Lynne Holden

### Quick tips:

- In an interview, "Go with the flow and ride with the tide."
- Preparation involves: self evaluation, a good support system and being committed both academically as well as extracurricularly (should include leadership, community, volunteering, shadowing, and research)



## Chillin' With My Peeps Study Break (Tuesday, March 30, 2010)

*By Kimberly Laughman, CC'11*

On the night of Tuesday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, the Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society held its *Chillin' With My Peeps* study break to celebrate the arrival of spring. The event was filled with cake, cookies, and candy,

not to mention music and new friends. Most importantly, stressed out students got to unwind and relive their childhood with the classic Easter tradition of egg decorating! It turned out

to be the therapy we all needed to face a hectic week and get through midterms in one piece. Be sure to look out for future Charles Drew Study Breaks!



## D is for Doctor: Why You Don't Need the Best Grades to become a Doctor (Thursday, April 1, 2010)

*By Akornefa Akyea, CC'12*

Dr. Adam Aponte has many titles to go along with his name. He is a pediatrician, an Associate Director of Recruitment and Retention at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, a medical director of the North General Diagnostic & Treatment Center... and a 'D' physics college student. Dr. Aponte came to talk to students with the reassuring message that you don't need all A's to get into medical school.

He told his inspirational story of growing up in a big family where he was just one of two people to go to college in his family and the first to go to medical school. He spoke about being confident in his dream of becoming doctor and how important it is to make good connections with whoever you meet. He also stressed the importance of passion and drive

and the necessity to know your strengths and weaknesses. His good humor and wit kept the impressive amount of students that came out to listen to him entertained and the passion he spoke with was enough to encourage even the most doubtful premed student to get back up after that receiving that low grade and give it another try.



## **A Cut Above: A Surgeon's Perspective on Medicine** **(Thursday, April 8, 2010)** *By Kwanza Price, GS'11*

On a hot, sticky, April night in Math 207, three surgeons arrived to talk to a room full of premed undergraduates and postbac students. Dusting off chalk-covered chairs before sitting, the three elegant physicians were happy to tell personal stories about their journeys to a career in surgery. Dr. Raymond Wedderburn—a trauma surgeon—during the conversation confessed that “bad press” had initially turned him off from pursuing a residency in surgery.

Dr. Reginald Manning, an original founder of the *Charles Drew Premedical Society*, explained that this organization was formed because minority students felt left out from the traditional premed information networks. It was a way for students to empower themselves and encourage each other to pursue medical school. Dr. Manning was accompanied that night by his lovely wife who is also from his hometown Brooklyn.

The third panelist, general surgeon Dr. Domingo Nunez, is also an alumni member of the *Charles Drew Premedical Society*. Dr. Nunez and Dr. Manning were actually friends in college and medical school at Columbia. He is currently on mission in the Dominican Republic serving a town close to the destruction of the recent quake in Haiti. Overall it was a very informative as well as inspiring night to listen to the success stories of Charles Drew alum!



## **Kaplan Events: MCAT Preview Class, Practice Exam, and MCAT Auction** *By Brian Lewis, CC'11*

This year, Charles Drew was delighted to partner with Kaplan to bring our members many exciting events such as the MCAT preview class, an MCAT practice exam, and the MCAT auction. The MCAT is a major challenge, and the final challenge in showing all Medical Schools how much knowledge you have gained in your time at Columbia. All of these events had major turnouts and we hope that these

opportunities have given you some insight into cracking the MCAT exam and obtaining the score that you desire. This semester, our reduced price MCAT class sold for \$1450, all of which will be dedicated to making bigger and better events for you in the future. Although the opportunity to claim this particular MCAT class has passed, there will be another chance next year.

Because the price of an MCAT preparation class is increasing, we encourage all of our members to consider taking the opportunity to bid on a Kaplan class when it is auctioned off next year. *Please remember that no matter when you decide to take a class, as Charles Drew members, everyone receives a 10% discount if they choose to register with Kaplan for their MCAT preparation.*



## **The Pep Talk** **(Wednesday, April 28, 2010)** *By Antoinette Allen, CC'12*

Amidst bright fluorescent lights on a raised platform, sat the epitome of what we want to make of our Columbia University experience: a student accepted to medical school. Four panelists, Mark Attiah (CC'09), George Baison (CC'10), Mabo Imoisili (CC'10) and Ashley Nieves (CC'10), gave seemingly random but

ultimately interconnected advice on how to get through pre-med and be accepted into medical school. We were afforded perspectives from a non-science major (Imoisili), a person who took a gap year (Attiah), and an international MD/PhD (Baison), all of which together covers a large part of the pre-med spectrum at Columbia. In an

unexpected twist, Baison revealed his plans to pursue an MD instead of entering a funded MD/PhD program. Their advice about applying early and applying broadly, seemed to resonate with the audience, as well as strategies for studying for the MCAT. Overall, this was a very informative event and hopefully we all will all be sitting in those chairs in the future.





## General Body Meetings and Pre-Med Roundtable Discussions (Part of the "Lifting As We Climb" Series) By Nathalie Lissain, BC'12

Meet Columbia University and Barnard College's Future Doctors!

Charles Drew Premedical Society:  
Ambitious  
Goal Oriented  
Passionate Leaders



What better way to start of the school year than meeting like-minded pre-med students who are most likely in one of your introductory classes. Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society started off the spring semester strong as it welcomed nearly 80 new and returning pre-medical students to its first of three "Lifting as We Climb" general body meetings of the Semester on January 31, 2010. At this open forum, students networked with upperclassmen and got advice on pre-med life here at the college,

internships, and other medical opportunities.

New students also had the opportunity to learn about Charles Drew and its mission here on campus. On February 28<sup>th</sup>, the Organizational Committee lead a roundtable discussion on time management. The group took a holistic approach not only touching upon topics such as Charles Drew's 10 secrets to academic success but also matters of general health and wellbeing.

In our last meeting on May 2<sup>nd</sup>: *What I Wish I Knew*, Pre-med students ended on a strong note discussing personal growth while reflecting on another fine year at our institutions. In the midst of finals and paper's, pre-med's gathered for a last hurrah discussing what we wish we had known before commencing the school year and what we hope to take with us with next year. New 2010-2011 executive board members also made a special appearance.

Of the many amazing things we learned this year from the "Lifting As We Climb" series, Charles Drew would like to present a shortened list entitled, 5 Quick Tips to success.

1. Sleep and optimal performance go hand in hand. Be sure to get 7 hours a night, if not, take vitamins.
2. Asking for help is a sign of strength not weakness! There are no stupid questions.
3. Exercise is key to improving brain plasticity and stimulating neurogenesis.
4. Form study groups: Multiple perspectives on class material will help you understand the sciences better. (Do not study with close friends: Remember it's a study session and not a party)
5. Always keep your goal in mind. As you get closer to success, don't forget to reach down and pull someone up with you!



## Spring 2010 Medical School Trip: Yale School of Medicine (Thursday, March 25, 2010—Friday, March 26, 2010) *By Connie Qiu, SEAS'11*

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, members of the Society made a trip to Yale University School of Medicine. We met with several MD and MD/PhD candidates over dinner as they were our hosts for the night. We learned about their experiences in the admissions process, their lifestyles as current students and their journeys towards their desired professions. The following morning, we had

the opportunity to meet with Richard Silverman, Dean of Admissions and Dr. Forrester Lee, Dean of Minority Affairs. This was an incredible chance to learn about the unique qualities of Yale as well as tips that we can apply to our applications to any medical school. One resonating tip was that every pre-med should show a “mature commitment to medicine” to

medical school admissions. The remainder of the trip consisted of lunch, a beautiful tour of the campus and an informal Q&A session with the students.

To learn more about Yale University School of Medicine, visit:

<http://www.medicine.yale.edu>



### Statistics and Opportunities for Prospective Students (Based off Entering Class of 2009):

- 99 Matriculated—6% Columbia University Graduates
- 52% Men, 47% Women
- 9% Black, 1% Mexican American, 2% Puerto Rican Mainland, 7% Other Hispanic/Latino, 40% Asian American/Pacific Islander
- 69% Science/Engineering Majors; 16% Social Science Majors; 15% Humanities Majors; 12% M.D./ Ph.D Program
- Mean Age Enrolled: 23.6
- Mean Science GPA: 3.76; Mean Cumulative GPA: 3.78
- Median MCAT:
  - Verbal Reasoning 10.85; Writing Section Q-R
  - Physical Sciences 12.18; Biological Sciences 12.58



### Unique characteristics of Yale:

1. Members of this selective class are required to complete a research thesis prior to graduation. Although this does require additional work on top of the existing medical school curriculum, students have the option of staying for a fifth year fully paid for in order to complete their research or pursue other interests related to medicine.
2. Yale will pay for expenses such as getting a masters degree from Yale University. They will even pay for a year abroad to do your thesis.
3. Yale has a very relaxed Pass/Fail system. No one is keeping track of how you do on exams. As a result, it is up to you to take responsibility in learning the material.

Yale University School of Medicine offers many summer opportunities for undergraduates who are under-represented minorities in the sciences. Some include:

- **Summer Medical and Dental Education Program (SMDEP):** intensive science enrichment for freshman/sophomores involving basic science classes, weekly seminars and workshops and social events. **Website:** <http://www.med.yale.edu/omca/smep>  
Benefits: Housing + meals provided; \$500 stipend + \$100 travel expenses
- **Biomedical Science Training and Enrichment Program (BioSTEP):** Each participant works for 10 weeks in the research laboratory of a Yale faculty member who serves as the mentor. The research experience also includes weekly seminars and workshops as well as social and cultural events. Preferably rising juniors and seniors.  
**Website:** <http://www.med.yale.edu/omca/biostep>  
Benefits: Housing + full travel expenses; \$4000 stipend.





## Columbia Community Outreach Day of Service

*By Kimberly Laughman, CC'11*

This semester, we joined in the campus-wide day of community service, Columbia Community Outreach. We lucked out with a great project, working with Monique Hedmann of Harlem Hospital on developing the hospital's new initiative, the *Walk It Out! Program*. The day began early and was filled with tons of free goodies including t-shirts, sunglasses, pens, and breakfast, but the best part of the day was knowing that we were working to make a difference in our community. We joined forces with High School Pipeline Program and P.U.M.P. students, the Black Students Organization, and the local community to map out safe and aesthetically pleasing walking routes through Harlem for local senior citizens. It was a fun and educational experience for us all, as we got to mingle with the amazing people whose neighborhood we share. We also learned about a lot of the environmental issues that plague Harlem streets and what could be done to alleviate them. The information we gathered will be compiled to develop new paths for walking clubs. Some Charles Drew members even signed up to lead weekly walking clubs of their own.



### Information on Programs

Columbia Community Outreach Service Day is a student organized, student run undergraduate service event was created in 1997 in order to bring students, faculty, staff, alumni and their families together on a day dedicated to volunteering. For more information, check out the website: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/outreach/> or e-mail at [outreach@columbia.edu](mailto:outreach@columbia.edu)

Walk It Out! Program was created to create safe walking paths and routes in the Harlem Community and encourage and increase access to physical activity and healthy lifestyles among Harlem senior citizens within their social networks. For those who think they might be interested in joining the Walk It Out! Program, feel free to contact Ms. Hedmann at [Monique.Hedmann@nychhc.org](mailto:Monique.Hedmann@nychhc.org) or (212) 939-4239

## Volunteering on Valentine's Day

*By Chelsea Townes, GS'11*



It was Valentine's Day 2010. I woke up bright and early excited about the day ahead. I have always been one to love the hearts, flowers and displays of affection all around. Who doesn't love, Love? However, I could sense this Valentine's Day would be like none other before. I had a special date lined up...

With none other than my PUMP mentor and the Harlem community. My mentor and I set out to walk up and down 125th street with condoms and HIV/AIDS literature packed away. It was cold but we were determined to stay until everything we had was passed out! We met people from a plethora of backgrounds, experiences and opinions. It was great to interact with the community and talk openly about safe sex. It was the perfect way to bond with my mentor as well as the many people I had conversations with throughout the day--from those who did not believe in the use of condoms to the father who lost his wife to AIDS and could only hope his sons would practice safe sex. It was a very fun and fulfilling experience!

## High School Pipeline Program Update

*By Brittany Martin, CC'11, Co-Chair of HS Pipeline Program*

This was a really exciting semester for the Pipeline Program. In addition to continuing our commitment to foster mentorship between Columbia premeds and local high school students we also hosted several events geared towards the premedical experience. The goal for this semester was to expose our high school students to the general premedical curriculum and life as a premedical student at Columbia. We started the semester off on February 5th with a mini-House marathon in Schapiro lounge. It gave the students a chance to relax, interact with other high school students interested in medicine, and of course enjoy some great episodes of House.

On March 12th we hosted a Perspective on Medical Careers discussion with Dr. Benjamin Ortiz, a pediatrician at Harlem Hospital. Students were able to learn more about the medical field in general, what it takes to become a physician and the variety of opportunities a career in medicine can offer. We ended the month of March by participating in CCO and working on a community service project at Harlem Hospital with other members of the Charles Drew Premedical Society and the Black Student

Organization here on campus. This was a really successful event because it brought members of Pipeline, the Charles Drew g-body and students from other campus organizations together for a good cause.

Throughout the weeks of April 12th and 18th mentors invited their mentees to visit the campus for a day and attend classes. This event gave the high school students a little taste of college life from the perspective of a premedical student. We ended the program for this semester on April 24th with a luncheon at Havana Central. The students were able to reflect on their experiences in the program and provide feedback for next year. Overall this was a successful year for the Charles Drew High School Pipeline Program and we look forward to working with new students next year and planning bigger and better events.

If you would like more information about the Pipeline Program or want to get involved please contact Brittany Martin at [bam2155@columbia.edu](mailto:bam2155@columbia.edu) or Johanna Miele at [jcm2179@columbia.edu](mailto:jcm2179@columbia.edu).





## Pre-Medical Undergraduate Mentoring Program Update

*By Kwanza Price, GS'11, P.U.M.P. Chair*

### *Personal Stories*



Mentee Chelsea Townes, GS'11

Not only has my mentor, Kwanza Price, been a resource and advisor but she has also been an encouraging voice of reason for me throughout my first year of the pre-med post-bacc program. Our Valentine's Day date with the Harlem community was only one highlight of our mentor-mentee relationship!

### Mentor Kwanza Price, GS'11

I loved being a mentor and was excited to start the P.U.M.P peer mentoring program this year with Charles Drew. Chelsea Townes was one of two of my protegees. Chelsea is very engaging and forthcoming. This makes it easy to mentor her - she stays in contact with me and asks questions and advice frequently. I feel very strongly that it is important to groom the next generation for success. If someone I have mentored can learn from my experiences in the premed program at Columbia, even if I don't make it to med school, I will be happy to know that someone I mentored did. The stakes are too high to let the kind of talent prevalent in the minority community at Columbia go to waste.

PUMP is finishing up its second semester in action. This year, we held a small social gathering in the Malcolm X Lounge. This was a chance for mentors and mentees to interact and get to know other minority premed students. One community service event was also planned. Partnering with the *Harlem Health Promotion Center* of the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, we distributed condoms and information about STD treatment and prevention to Harlem residents. We hope to make this an annual community service event. On Sunday, April 25, 2010, we organized a speed-networking event with NYC Medical Students in Lerner Hall. Non-PUMP members were also invited to participate. New York University, Albert Einstein, Mt. Sinai, and Columbia University medical schools were represented. Students rotated every 10 minutes to different networking stations to discuss topics such as the medical school application process, MCAT preparation, and what it's like to be a medical student. Lastly, as PUMP Chair, this spring I also participated in a free database training offered by *Big Brothers and Big Sisters of New York City*. The training will help us design a database to better manage participant information. Plans for this summer and next fall include recruiting more minority students into the program, seeking out mentor training opportunities, and developing an evaluation survey to identify program needs and student interests. We are also recruiting an associate chairperson to help coordinate the PUMP program.

For more information on becoming a mentor or mentee or about helping with events, please contact Kwanza Price at [kwanzaprice@yahoo.co.m](mailto:kwanzaprice@yahoo.co.m)

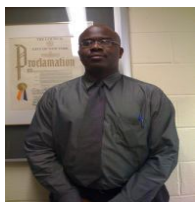




## Meet New Advisory Board Members for 2009-2010 School Year

Meet newly added advisory board members for the 2009-2010 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.

### **Vernon W. Jeffrey, M.D.,J.D.**



Dr. Jeffrey received his medical degree from the New York University School of Medicine in 2002 and did his residency in internal medicine at the Seton Hall School of Biomedical Education. He received his juris doctorate from the City University of New York Law School in 2009 and is currently working at Lehman College for the Urban Male Leadership Program in order to recruit more black and latino males into the professions.

### **Reginald E. Manning, M.D.**



Dr. Manning was an original founder of the Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society in 1973 and served as the club's first vice president before going on to graduate from Columbia College in 1974. Afterwards he proceeded to graduate from Columbia P & S in 1978 and completing his residency at Lenox Hill. Since then, he has been a practicing orthopedic surgeon at Harlem Hospital for 22 years as well as Kings County Hospital, Brookdale. In July 1995, he was named chairman of orthopedic surgery at Long Island College Hospital in Brooklyn. Currently, he has a private practice in Brooklyn's very own New York Methodist Hospital.

### **Adam Aponte, M.D., Msc, FAAP**



Dr. Aponte was born and raised in East Harlem, NY by Puerto Rican parents. From public schools in NYC, he graduated from City College of the City University of New York in 1990 with a major in Biology. Afterwards he attended Mount Sinai School of Medicine followed by a 3-year residency in Pediatrics at Mount Sinai Hospital. Some of Dr. Aponte's accomplishments include being named Crain's New York Business Magazine "40 under 40" rising stars and inducted into the Hispanic Scholarship Fund's Alumni Hall of Fame. Dr. Aponte is currently creator and director of the North General Diagnostic and Treatment Center, medical director of the Brownsville Community Development Corporation, and Associate Director of Mount Sinai's Recruitment and Retention.

### **Mr. Andrew Morrison**



Mr. Morrison is a motivational speaker who is the founder of *Small Business Camp*, an entrepreneurial training and marketing services firm. In addition, he is an adjunct faculty member at New York University and the Fashion Institute of Technology. Prior to his current firm, he built a multi-million dollar company by providing innovative direct marketing services to Fortune 500 companies. Some of his many accomplishments include being a recipient of the prestigious Young Direct Marketer of the Year Award and being featured on Crain's Magazine 40 Under 40 and Advertising Age. When he is not running a business or motivating others including Charles Drew members, he is serving as Deacon at the Abyssinian Baptist Church located in the village of Harlem. He is the husband of Dr. Lynne Holden, who is also on Charles Drew advisory board.

## New Advisory Board Members for 2009-2010 School Year

### Raymond Wedderburn, M.D.



Dr. Raymond Wedderburn, a native Jamaican, attended Brown University for his undergrad education and then graduated from Weill Medical College of Cornell University in 1986. This was then followed by completion of his residency in St. Luke's Hospital in 1991 and his fellowship in surgical critical care at the University of Miami Jackson Memorial Hospital in 1993. Currently, Dr. Wedderburn is a trauma surgeon in St. Luke's Hospital who is also serving as an Associate Director of the Department of Surgery Residency Program.

### Domingo Nunez, M.D.



Born in the Dominican Republic and growing up in West Harlem, Dr. Nunez was a former Charles Drew member in the 1970s. He received his B.A. from Columbia University in 1976 followed by his M.D. from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University in 1980. Following this he completed his residency in General Surgery at the Lenox Hill Hospital and then he completed a fellowship in endoscopy in the Department of Surgery at the University of Toronto. A specialist in general surgery and minimally invasive surgery, Dr. Nunez devoted 27 years of his life to distinguished service at Lenox Hill Hospital. Dr. Nunez is currently serving as Site Director for the Department of Surgery in St. Luke's Hospital. He also has a private practice on the East Side. Because of his work, he has been listed as one of the "Best Doctors in New York" by New York Magazine.

### Brian Swann, DDS, MPH



Dr. Swann is a dentist who, for over thirty years, has served the communities of San Jose and Menlo Park, California practicing general family dentistry. Prior to that, he was Director of the Charles Drew Dental Center in East Palo Alto, a low-income community-based dental clinic. During that tenure, he pioneered a vocational, motivational, and preventive dental/medical program in the Ravenswood City School District. Internationally, Dr. Swann has been engaged in multiple projects in Kenya, Zimbabwe, and South Africa, designing tours that bring dentists, teachers, engineers, and investors to local neighborhoods and villages in need of supplies and medical services. Dr. Swann received his dental degree from the University of California, San Francisco, in 1975, and his M.P.H. from the Harvard School of Public Health in 2008, where he was awarded the Albert Schweitzer Humanitarian Award.

### Donna Mendes, M.D., FACS



Dr. Mendes received a B.A. in Biology from Hofstra University in 1973 and then an M.D. from Columbia P & S in 1977. In her career as a practicing vascular surgeon, she has made some outstanding accomplishments such as being the first African American female vascular surgeon certified by the American Board of Surgery and participating in an outreach campaign with Maya Angelou while on the board of the Association of Black Cardiologists. Currently, she is very busy working as an assistant clinical professor of surgery at Columbia P & S, chief of vascular surgery at St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital uptown and senior vascular surgeon at this hospital where she has been practicing for 20 years. In addition she is doing clinical research, specifically focusing on the effects of race on vascular disease, seeking to discover why African American patients appear to be impacted with much more frequency and severity.

## How the E-board is Spending its Summer

The summer is a wonderful time to gain some meaningful experience, whether it is volunteering in a hospital to get some clinical exposure, participating in a summer pre-medical preparatory program or taking part in exciting research. Check out the amazing things that members of our e-board are doing this summer. It will give you some great ideas of things to do next summer!

### **Princess Francois, CC'11, Co-President**



This summer, I will be a participant in the 2010 Boston University's Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship program from June 1<sup>st</sup> to August 6<sup>th</sup>. In this 10 week program I will be conducting full-time research in a Boston University Lab in the field of neuroendocrinology, studying fertilized zebrafish eggs. I will have the opportunity to learn basic lab procedures/ techniques along with extracting RNA, manipulating genes, culturing, and analyzing by PCR-based methods. Furthermore, I will be attending weekly seminars on topics related to career preparation and current research as well as weekly informal lunches, enrichment activities, and social events. The program concludes with all the participants giving a PowerPoint presentation about our summer research. We are then invited back for an October weekend trip to present our findings in a poster format at the annual Boston University Undergraduate Research Symposium.

Benefits: free housing at a BU-apartment style dorm; up to \$550 for travel expenses; \$4500 stipend; travel and hotel during the weekend of the October Boston University Research Symposium

Website: <http://www.bu.edu/urop/surf/>

Contact: Email [uprop@bu.edu](mailto:uprop@bu.edu)

### **Brian Lewis, CC'11, Co-President**



This summer, I will be participating in the University of Michigan Biophysics Summer Research for Undergraduates Program (REU) from June 7<sup>th</sup> to August 13<sup>th</sup>. It is a summer research program dedicated to provide select undergraduates an opportunity to conduct ten weeks of summer research with leading biophysicists. I get to learn hands-on biophysical methods and various modern experimental and computational research techniques such as x-ray crystallography and NMR. I will also take part in weekly research seminars and workshops and planned social events. I will be working alongside Chris Meiners, Ph.D. in studying the dynamics of single DNA molecules.

Benefits: Free Housing, \$5000 stipend given in two checks, up to \$500 reimbursement on travel expenses

Website: <http://biop.lsa.umich.edu/REU.aspx>

Contact: Email [biophysics-reu@umich.edu](mailto:biophysics-reu@umich.edu)

### **Patricia Rojas, CC'11, Junior Advisor**



This summer, I will be doing research for my senior thesis within the Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Biology (E3B) Department. I will be doing research with Dr. Rachel Miller at the Center for Children's Environmental Health and we will be monitoring and determining the levels traffic related air pollutants in Northern Manhattan and the Bronx. The center works to protect children's health by conducting scientific studies of links between common pollutants in the environment and certain health risks. The results are then used to educate people about ways to reduce children's exposure to harmful pollutants and influence public policy.

Website: <http://www.cumc.columbia.edu/dept/mailman/ccceh/>



## How the E-board is Spending its Summer

### **Victor Thompson, CC'10, Senior Advisor (Post Graduation Plans)**



Before going to medical school I will work as a Research Assistant at NYU School of Medicine in the laboratory of Dr. Jennifer A. Philips. As a member of this research team I will be responsible for working to understand how mycobacteria survive in macrophages through both basic science and translational research. I will use this opportunity not only to fight against mycobacterium tuberculosis, the infectious disease which is responsible for 2-3 million deaths yearly, but also to better and perfect the laboratory skills I have garnered throughout my undergraduate career in order to properly formulate a solid foundation that will allow me to play an integral role in academic medicine in the future.

Contact Information: [ygt2101@gmail.com](mailto:ygt2101@gmail.com)

Personal Website: <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/victor-thompson/20/752/a80>

### **Komal Kothari, CC'12, Vice President**



This summer I will be doing a research internship at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. I will be working in a laboratory and have the opportunity to study an oncogene involved in acute myeloid leukemia. This Summer Internship Program (SIP) also includes various enrichment activities, such as guest speakers, workshops, and seminars. At the end of the summer I will present my research at a symposium along with other NIH interns. In addition, I hope to participate in Columbia's Bioethics Cultural Exchange Program (BioCEP), a two-week intensive summer internship in Thailand designed to promote educational and cultural exchange in medical ethics through lectures, student discussions and visits to clinical and research labs, hospices, and cultural tours in Thailand.

Benefits of SIP: around \$4000 stipend; no housing

Website: <http://www.training.nih.gov/student/sip/>

Website of BioCEP: <http://www.columbia.edu/~jdl5/>

<http://www.cumc.columbia.edu/dept/bec/doc/BIOCEP.pdf>

Contact Information: Dr. John D. Loike at [jdl5@columbia.edu](mailto:jdl5@columbia.edu)

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



This summer I will be participating in the Columbia Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship program for 10 weeks from June 1<sup>st</sup> to August 6<sup>th</sup>. SURF is a program that allows undergraduate students to do hands-on biology related laboratory research at Columbia. In the program, I will also be attending weekly discussion groups and attend lectures. In the end, we will present on our research in a symposium during the Spring semester.

Benefits: \$4000 stipend

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

Contact Information: Christina Panas in 744 Mudd, 212-854-2262 or email [surf@biology.columbia.edu](mailto:surf@biology.columbia.edu)

Furthermore, I will be continuing my volunteering at the St. Luke's Hospital Pre-Medical Volunteer Program, where pre-meds have an opportunity to interact with patients, be involved in the day-to-day activities of a hospital and assist in achieving higher levels of patient satisfaction.

Website: [http://www.wehealny.org/services/slr\\_volunteer/requirements.asp](http://www.wehealny.org/services/slr_volunteer/requirements.asp)

Contact Information: (212) 523-2188

## How the E-board is Spending its Summer

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



This summer I will be interning with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in the Community Affairs Department. The program is called the Health Research Training Program and I was chosen to work in this department based on my interests and what interests that department had in me. This program is designed to give undergraduate, graduate, and professional school students hands on experience with challenges of public health as well expose students to seminars, workshops, and other activities to broaden understanding of how the agency works to promote the health of New Yorkers. More specifically, I will be working full-time on the West Nile Virus Surveillance and Advocacy Program.

Benefits: Government employee for the summer, Work Laptop, Graduate level salary

Website: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/hrtp/hrtp.shtml>

Contact: [hrtp@health.nyc.gov](mailto:hrtp@health.nyc.gov).

### **Connie Qiu, SEAS'11, Treasurer**



From the end of May to the end of July, I will be a participant of the Carolina Summer Fellowship Program at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine. Rising seniors are eligible to apply for the program to experience laboratory experience in various aspects of pharmacology. I will be working specifically in the in the Siderovski laboratory, assisting an M.D./Ph.D. candidate in research revolving regulation of G protein signaling. I will also have the chance to visit pharmaceutical companies and meet with fellow participants through weekly seminars to learn about their projects.

Benefits: \$3,565 stipend, on campus housing, 15 meals per week

Website: <http://www.med.unc.edu/pharm/summer-undergraduate-research>

Contact: Kathy Justice (919) 966-1153

### **Christina Ortiz, CC'12, Secretary**



This summer, I will be working in a Brain Timing and Cognition lab at the New York State Psychiatric Institute under the direction of Professor Peter Balsam. My research will basically consist of running experiments using schizophrenic mice. I also plan to relax, read some books for fun, and perhaps begin to learn Arabic.

Website: <http://nyspi.org/>

Contact Information: [Balsam@columbia.edu](mailto:Balsam@columbia.edu)

### **Kwanza Price, GS'11, P.U.M.P. Chairperson**



My plans for the summer are:

1. Depending on my ability to find the funds, take organic chemistry lab
2. Start fund-raising for the Charles Drew documentary and develop an action plan for the proposal
3. Start preparing for a practice MCAT test and review general chemistry and physics
4. Take the Big Brothers and Big Sister's of NYC training in Mentoring Leadership
4. Try to get my master's thesis work published
5. Get in shape!
6. Go salsa dancing!

## How the E-board is Spending its Summer

### **Kimberly Laughman, CC'11, Director of Organizational Committee**



This summer I will be participating in the Diversity Student Summer Research Opportunity Program at Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University. Through the nine-week program I will be living on the campus and participating in biomedical research under the tutelage of an Einstein faculty member. In addition there will be weekly seminars, lectures, and workshops of various topics and social events planned. At the end, I will have the opportunity to present my work at a poster session as well as write a report concerning my research. I am looking forward to getting to know the medical school faculty as well as getting a taste of what their campus is like. The program is open to college sophomores and juniors who have completed biology and chemistry and is intended to give minority students the opportunity to be a part of current research. I highly recommend this program to anyone who might be interested.

Benefits: \$3000 stipend + housing

Website: <http://www.einstein.yu.edu/admissions/page.aspx?ID=9564>

Contact: Nilda I. Soto at (718) 430- 3091 or [nilda.soto@einstein.yu.edu](mailto:nilda.soto@einstein.yu.edu)

### **Melvin Green, CC'11, Publicity Manager**



This summer I will be working with Live@Lerner as an intern on campus planning the events for the upcoming academic year. Planning consist of coordinating the events throughout the year that Live@Lerner hosts which are study break sort of events. I also will be involved in the marketing aspect of the event planning. Live @ Lerner was founded in 2000 to bring the Columbia community together by providing free or low-cost events in and around the campus center. I hope to also volunteer at St. Luke's Hospital as a Spanish medical interpreter.

Website: Search Live @ Lerner on Facebook

Contact for St. Luke's Medical Interpreter Program: Maria Carla Faccini, [MFaccini@chpnet.org](mailto:MFaccini@chpnet.org) or call 212-523-2187

### **Chris Travis , CC'11, Publications Editor**



I will be taking part in the Summer Student Research Program at the Children's Hospital Oakland Research Institute (CHORI) back home in Oakland, California. For 9 weeks from June 10 to August 13, I will partake in full-time medical research under supervision of a mentor. In addition, I will attend weekly lectures on current topics in health and disease as well as research practices. This program is aimed to provide short-term training to undergraduates, medical students, and other health professional students who will increase the diversity in the field of health-related research. At the conclusion of the program, I am given the opportunity to present my research findings at the one-day Summer Student Symposium in oral or poster format.

Benefits: \$5000 stipend + travel expenses

Website:

[http://www.chori.org/Education/Summer\\_Internship\\_Program/summer\\_internship.html](http://www.chori.org/Education/Summer_Internship_Program/summer_internship.html)

Contact Information: [summerstudentprogram@chori.org](mailto:summerstudentprogram@chori.org)



## How the E-board is Spending its Summer

### Lacey Gleason, CC'12, Historian



This summer, I will be continuing my work as a research assistant for the Department of Biological Sciences. I work in Dr. Miller's cell biology lab studying intracellular protein trafficking. In addition to working, I will be volunteering at a hospital in Westchester County. In my spare time, I plan on enjoying the outdoors, taking lots of pictures, and practicing Tae Kwon Do.

### Herbert "Chip" Thornhill, CC'12, Webmaster



This summer, I will be working as a legal intern in the Division of Enforcement at the United States Commodity Futures Trading Commission. My work will provide assistance to the branch of the organization that deals with enforcement of the Commodity Exchange Act.

Website: <http://www.cftc.gov>.

## Thanking all of You!

The Charles Drew E-board would like to thank all of you, the members of the general body, for making this year a success. We appreciate anyone who our weekly events, general body meetings, medical school visits, community service events, or who joined our Facebook group. We would like to give a special thank you to anyone who participated this year in our HS Pipeline Program or Pre-Med Undergraduate Mentoring Program. Thank you to everyone who worked with us or just supported and believed in us. Next year, we promise to hold new, informative, exciting events. We will definitely be doing things even bigger and better next year. Have a wonderful summer and see you all in the fall!

## Charles Drew Documentary

The Charles Drew Premedical Society is interested in completing a **documentary** about the organization and its fascinating alumnae. To do this, we need your help. Specifically, we are looking for experienced artists who could help us put together a treatment plan, prepare a budget, and carry out the actual filming (not to start before Summer 2010). We also need Charles Drew Alumnae to interview for the documentary. Alumnae could talk about their experiences in Charles Drew, later experiences in medical school, and/or life as a physician. We also need money! If you have any ideas about how to acquire funding for the Charles Drew Documentary, please contact Project Leader, Kwanza Price, at [kop2101@columbia.edu](mailto:kop2101@columbia.edu) or 646-824-3500.

## Check out our Updated Website:

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/charlesdrewsociety/>

## Congratulations to Charles Drew Pre-Med Society on its accomplishments this year!

### Charles Drew earns King's Crown Leadership Awards

Special Recognition to the following executive board members for receiving a King's Crown Leadership Award for their individual leadership in the 2009-2010 school year:

- Princess Francois, CC'11 (*Co-President*)—recipient of the Silver Crown Award
- Patricia Rojas, CC'11 (*Junior Advisor*)—recipient of the Silver Horizon Award
- Brian Lewis, CC'11 (*Co-President*)—recipient of the Bronze Crown Award
- Victor Thompson, CC'10 (*Senior Advisor*)—recipient of the Bronze Crown Award
- Melvin Green, CC'11 (*Publicity Manager*)—recipient of the Bronze Crown Award
- Brittany Martin, CC'11 (*High School Pipeline Co-Chair*)—recipient of the Copper Crown Award
- Christina Ortiz, CC'12 (*Secretary*)—recipient of the Copper Crown Award

*Also congrats to Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society for being a finalist for the King's Crown Promise Award, which is awarded to the student organization showing the best potential for positive impact in the current academic year.*



### Special Recognition

We want to especially recognize the following who we are extremely proud of for their endless time, effort and dedication to making the organization become one of the most active groups on campus and experience great rejuvenation and success. Each and every one of you has accomplished so much this year!



**Executive Board**



**Organizational Committee**

Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society  
Contact Information:

E-mail Address:  
cuchardesdrew@gmail.com

Website address:  
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/charlesdrewsociety/>

## Join our Facebook Group!

It will be updated regularly with information about our upcoming events. 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 originally established in 1973 by a small group of minority pre-meds from Columbia College and Barnard College who firmly believed that they had the duty to serve their fellow peers in order to establish a strong network of minority and non-minority pre-medical student population on Columbia's campus. Over these past couple of years, the Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society has been improved and revitalized through the efforts of several hardworking students, helping Charles Drew establish a strong presence on campus. As an executive board, we have taken greater lengths to provide the similar services we give our Columbia students beyond the gates of 116th street through community service, discussion panels, medical school visits, regional conferences, and various levels of mentoring. 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:** The Charles Drew Pre-Medical Society is an organization that strives to guide, support, and encourage pre-medical students, with a special emphasis on underrepresented minorities, in their various endeavors to become members of the medical field.

## 2009-2010 Executive Board Members

Princess Francois, CC'11, *Co-President/Newsletter Creator*  
Brian Lewis, CC'11, *Co-President*  
Komal Kothari, CC'12, *Vice President*  
Victor Thompson, CC'10, *Senior Advisor*  
Patricia Rojas, CC'11, *Junior Advisor*  
Connie Qiu, SEAS'11, *Treasurer*  
Christina Ortiz, CC'12, *Secretary*  
Britney Martin, CC'11, *High School Pipeline Program Co-Chairperson*  
Johanna Miele, CC'12, *High School Pipeline Program Co-Chairperson*  
Kimberly Laughman, CC'11, *Director of Organizational Committee*  
Kwanza Price, GS'11, *Director of P.U.M.P.*  
Chris Travis, CC'11, *Publications Editor*  
Lacey Gleason, CC'12, *Historian*  
Herbert "Chip" Thornhill, CC'12, *Webmaster*

