

**STUDENT ROUNDS** is a new section of the *Alumni Journal* featuring reports from the president of each class as well as commentary and creative work from current College of Medicine students.

### Less "Cadaverous" MS I

**Ross Sullivan**  
President, Class of 2008

Roommates and friends of MS I's are ecstatic that Anatomy is over. We can now re-begin our medical school lives smelling less "cadaverous." However, most of the first years are sad to see Anatomy come to a close. Next we will be progressing into the study of the Brain and Behavior.

We are also becoming quite competent with essential medical equipment. The days of putting stethoscopes in our ears wrong and using the wrong size blood-pressure cuffs are over, and we are now practicing for our first CCE (Clinical Competency Exam).

Although acclimation to medical school life has been difficult, it has been a successful and rewarding journey thus far. We, the MS1's, are dedicated to becoming an important and successful component of the Upstate tradition.

Walking the Walk MS II

### Walking the Walk MS II

**Roan Glocker**  
President, Class of 2007



Roan Glocker '07

The class of 2007 is rapidly approaching the conclusion of its second year at Upstate. The second year curriculum can be grueling, with five courses running simultaneously.

We are eagerly anticipating rising out of our desks and walking into the hospitals to apply all of our new knowledge. We are especially grateful to the Medical Alumni Association for its generous gift of the Harrison's textbook.

Life as a second-year is not made up entirely of studying however. The MS II's have an active extracurricular schedule, with almost every student actively participating in one or more campus clubs or activities.

### The Undecided MS III

**Kathleen Morrell**  
Co-President, Class of 2006,  
Syracuse Campus



Kathleen Morrell '06

After six months of rotations, the third year class is enjoying its exposure to (finally!) real patients. Real, live, not-just-faking-the-abdominal-pain patients. But for many still undecided on their chosen specialty, fear has entered the picture: "What do you mean I have to decide in six months?!"

We used to have that mental list all medical students have when they arrive with a few things crossed out. "I definitely don't want to do OB/GYN." "I can't be a neurosurgeon." "I want a 9-5 schedule."

These lists are now being narrowed as each clerkship ends, but there is still the question: What will we be happy doing for the rest of our lives??

The nervousness behind the eyes of a second-semester third-year is no longer fear of being chided by an attending, but fear of the future. Residency applications begin July 15th. Gulp.

### The Trail MS IV

**Jennifer Adair**  
Co-President, Class of 2005,  
Syracuse Campus



Jennifer Adair '05

In the summer of 2000, I spent a few weeks backpacking on the Appalachian Trail. During that time, I learned about the Trail lifestyle and became, however briefly, part of a very unique social network of travelers. The time I've recently spent on the "Interview Trail" reminds me of that summer. As fourth-year students, we have settled on a specialty choice and now face the question of where we want to spend the next three to seven (or more) years.

Visiting hospitals in various cities, we meet fellow fourth-year students from across the country who are on this quest as well. Just like it was when I was hiking, we start from different points. Some of us travel north to south, some south to north, and others in a more random pattern. At each interview, just as it was at the end of the day at each trail shelter, we exchange our stories and give advice about places we have already visited. We visit each of these places for different reasons, but the one thing we have in common is that we are on a journey that is an emotional (and sometimes physical) challenge.

Traveling is stressful for some students, for others, it is a vacation. For most of us (as the Trail was for my fellow hikers) it is a mix of both. As interview season winds down, we will now reflect on our travels and make decisions about which places we'd like to call home for the next several years. However, we won't remove our backpacks just yet. Except for the few students who match early, we will continue to bear our emotional loads until that exciting and (hopefully) happy Match Day, which this year falls on March 17.

May the luck of the Irish be with us all!

### The Power of a Lens

By Jason Freedman '06



Jason Freedman '06

The eye is a precious gift. Its lens, with sleek curves and the ability to change shape, enables life to become crystal clear. Just as the human lens is able

to capture those images and help make them meaningful, my love of photography has enabled me to do the same. Even at this early stage in my medical career, I have realized that my passion for photography, and the simple rules inherent in being a great photographer, all help me focus on what is important in my path to becoming, and succeeding, as a physician.

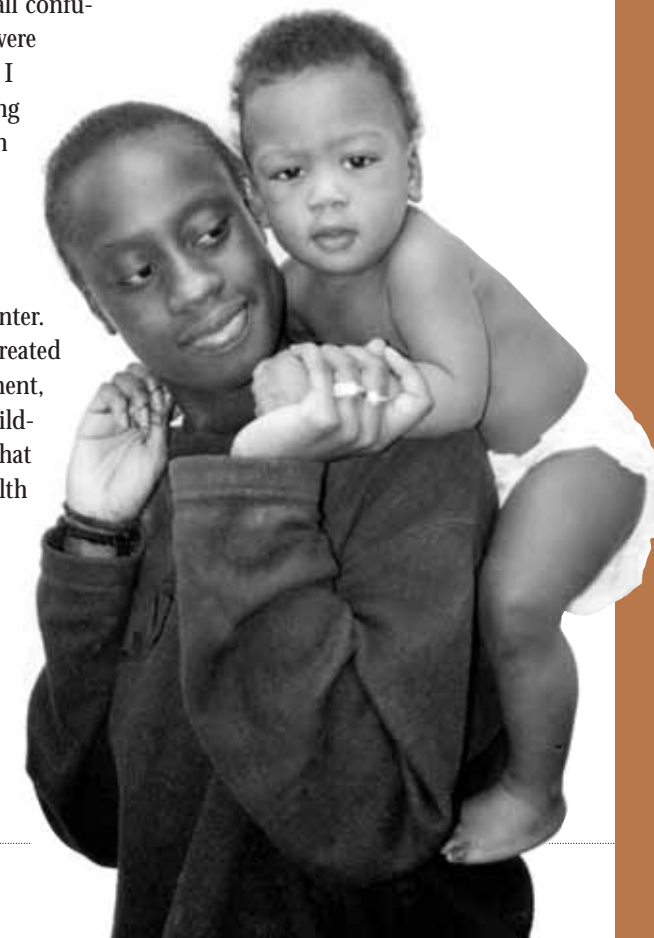
For me, the practice of medicine is so much more than ordering blood tests, making diagnoses, and prescribing pharmaceuticals. Like photography, the practice of medicine is an art. Any photographer without patience is sure to miss the perfect shot if he is rushes through the process. Furthermore, photographers quick to "zoom in" on the fine details of a flower are certain to miss the soil bed and stream in the distance that is vital to the flower's survival. Forgetting to look beyond the patient's most obvious medical concern, a physician might miss the importance of socioeconomic status, psychological well-being, nutrition and family history; all areas greatly impacting the patient. For me, the wide-angle approach I take in photography parallels the holistic technique I am striving to develop in my pursuit to becoming a careful, empathetic physician.

Besides stress relief for my soul and education for my career, photography has also enabled me to impact others. By combining my hobby and the fundamental rules of the art, photography has transformed me from a mere second-year student into an advocate, educator, and healer, with the simple click of a button and the pop of a bright flash.

My photos have afforded me great opportunity to advocate for several patients. During a visit to the pediatrics clinic, the resident was quick to question why I, a white medical student, was sitting in on a visit with an African-American family. Luckily, I had some photos with me. By showing the physician some photographs that documented my year-long partnership with the family as part of the MIRACLE Child Care elective, all confusion and pre-conceived notions were eliminated. Through the photos, I was able to demonstrate my strong connection with the family, begin to discuss matters of concern with the physician, and advocate for the best care possible. The photos included here were taken just after this empowering encounter. It is clear that my photography created a more positive healing environment, encouraged a better physician-child-parent interaction, and ensured that this family would receive the health care it both required and deserved. In looking at both the smile on Nareik's face and his joyful interaction with the doctor, most people would not know what had previously occurred.



Nareik Lassiter with his mother, Dantarah Pierre-Louis.





Pediatric Resident Rosanne Salonia, MD, measures the head of Nareik at this well-baby exam.

The power of my photography however, extends beyond the immediate medical setting. I am proud of how my work has allowed me to educate others on topics of inequality and family dynamics. Just as years of use are certain to leave smudges on the camera lens, we too are susceptible to having our thoughts clouded by biases, prejudices, and cultural insensitivities acquired throughout life. Along with the reflex hammer, light pen, and stethoscope we bring to our very first patient encounter, we also carry many assumptions around with us. When describing the strong relationship I have developed with my MIRACLE family, people are often puzzled. With a subtle snicker, they wonder how a white, Jewish boy from Queens could have anything in common with an impoverished, African-American family from Syracuse. It is at this point, where my verbal explanations fall short, that my photographs succeed. Showing friends the numerous clinic appointments, home visits, and familial interactions that I have documented,

enabled me to break down racial and socioeconomic barriers. Despite differences in skin color, background or financial status my work emphasizes that our commonalities outweigh our differences. Even without color, the universal bond between mother and child is apparent from these photos. In fact, much of my work is processed in black and white film. This minimizes color that may have tinted one's perception in hopes that all viewers will gain an equal understanding of the piece. More than just a hobby, my photos often bring a stronger "dose of reality" to my friends than any clinical lecture or ethics course.

To capture the perfect shot, you have to be prepared and willing to adjust the aperture on the camera. Even as a second-year "medical professional," I must be willing to open my mind to embrace those people around me. While some may fear working with hostile attendings and interviewing unruly patients, I know that my passion for photography has taught me to see people and situations in a different light, to change my perceptions, and to appreciate things that are not immediately apparent to others. Developing a perfect photograph takes time and precision; and becoming a compassionate, empathetic physician will not happen overnight.

*Jason Freedman is a third-year medical student from Queens, New York. This winning essay was written as his application for the Grant Hobika, MD '52 Memorial Scholarship, which recognizes medical students who actively combine creative arts with the practice of medicine. Freedman was matched with the Pierre-Louis family as part of his work with the MIRACLE Elective course, during which medical students spend 16 months at the side of an expectant mother from mid-pregnancy through birth and the first year of the baby's life. Photos by Jason Freedman.*