

UME NEWSLETTER

Letter from the UME office

11/06/2023

Greetings NCOM students, staff, and faculty.

When we welcomed new and returning students in the August newsletter, the trees were solidly green and the Weiskotten courtyard was bristling with activity, especially at lunch time. Now, with November on the calendar, there aren't many leaves left on the trees (they've all blown into my back yard) and the few people eating outside are warmly dressed.

But none of that is a surprise. Changing seasons are part of the charm of Upstate New York! Change is an integral part of the Norton College of Medicine, too. Each year brings varying degrees of innovation and growth. We're on the high end of the change scale this year!

After finishing their expanded orientation, new clinical skills intensive (bootcamp), and MCM (Molecules, Cells and Microbes) course, first year students started the new Longitudinal Clinical Preceptorship (LCP). Approximately every other week, they spend an afternoon with a physician, discussing and practicing clinical skills, working to understand themselves, and starting to explore specialties. I've heard from several students that they have really enjoyed these sessions.

Another change this year for MI courses is an emphasis on active learning (AL) modalities, such as team-based learning, polls, and small group discussions. Because these techniques can help us better understand, apply, and retain important concepts, we are trying to incorporate them into all four years. We are even starting to use AL in our faculty and staff meetings. At some, we've assigned pre-work, had breakout sessions, and reported back to the group. Next, we will try some IRATs and TRATs. We probably will be asking our students for help!!

Inside this newsletter you will find lots more information about happenings in Phases 1 and 2, the UME Office, and other important areas including the Office of Evaluation, Assessment, and Research. Be sure to read about individuals who have been recognized for their contributions to our learning environment.

If you are a faculty member and would like to get involved with LCP or any other NCOM courses or clerkships, please do not hesitate to contact the UME office. We will gladly share current and future opportunities with you!

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. We welcome your feedback. Please feel free to visit or email us with any comments or concerns.

We wish you a colorful fall, a bountiful and restful Thanksgiving break, and a successful semester!

Sincerely,
Leann Lesperance, MD PhD FAAP
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education



The chapter you're learning today, is
going to save someone's life

Your partomorrow. text

-Khangal Weheartit



Contact Info

www.upstate.edu/ume

Suny Upstate Medical University
Undergraduate Medical Education Office
Setnor Academic Building
Suite 4508
766 Irving Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13210

[Google Maps & Directions](#)

Phone: 315 464-3826

Fax: 315 464-6025

Hours:

8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Our Mission Statement:

Improve the health of the communities we
serve through education, biomedical
research and health care

The UME Office is responsible for managing,
coordinating and evaluating the medical
school curriculum. In addition, we provide
support to the students, faculty, and
administration.

For questions regarding this
publication, please contact:
Susan (Anderssu@upstate.edu)

Extra! Extra!

Read more from:

Phase One,

Phase Two,

Accreditation and Compliance

&

Evaluation Assessment and

Research.

Phase 1



Dr. Rebecca Greenblatt



Dr. Rachel Hopkins



Dr. Thomas Poole

Students, faculty, and staff:

Our incoming MS1 and returning MS2 students are settling into the academic year and are just over midway through the fall semester. MS1 students are well into their longitudinal courses including the new Clinical Neuroscience course, completed two of the 6 health systems science intensive courses, and are starting their final organ system unit of the semester, Musculoskeletal. MS1 students are also now fully engaged at clinical sites through the new Longitudinal Clinical Preceptorship course. We were excited to learn of the newly elected class officers and are eagerly working with them to effect meaningful change. The officers hit the ground running presenting thoughtfully prepared student requests, several of which we were able to accommodate and implement right away. This includes shifting weekly summative assessments to later in the week to better match the learning session and study schedules of the majority of students.

MS2 students have completed two organ systems courses and are about midway through the Renal Reproductive and Endocrine unit. Everyone is getting adjusted to the pace of classes and studying while looking forward to the Thanksgiving and winter holidays. MS2 students, we know that the Step 1 licensing exam weighs heavily on many of your minds. In January, you will take the NBME's Comprehensive Basic Science Examination. This required exam serves as a key diagnostic measure to help you gauge the knowledge and stamina necessary to sit for Step 1. Know that course directors, faculty, and staff are available to help you with your preparation and provide guidance.

Our contract for the Kaplan bank of learning resources was approved and processed by the State University of New York system. MS1 and MS2 students now have access to a comprehensive bank of videos and practice questions about a wide variety of high-impact Step 1 topics. Faculty and staff now also have access to Kaplan's secure bank of exam questions with rationales, which will help us to maintain and improve the quality of our exams. Three cheers to Mary Ann Grandinetta, who shepherded the rather lengthy process from start to finish. Training sessions for students, faculty, and staff are being scheduled.

We are excited to welcome newly elected MS1 class officers in October. Class officers provide a critical communication conduit between students, courses, and leadership.

We hope that everyone is soon able to take some time over the holidays to rest and spend time with friends/family. Be well.

Phase 2

Dear students, faculty, and staff,

Our fourth-year students have applied to residency and are navigating interview offers and approaching interview season. We wish you all the best of luck on your interviews, and hope you are all able to find a residency program that fits what you are looking for!

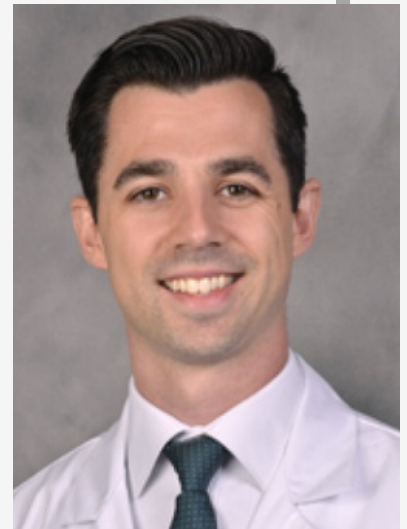
Our 3rd-year medical students are getting close to being halfway through their clerkships. With the daylight getting scarcer and the weather getting colder, it can be tough to stay motivated and prioritize studying, finishing charts, and complete evaluations. Students, keep at it! Remember to make a schedule of study activities that you need to stick to each day. Find ways to study for a few minutes at a time if there is downtime during your rotations, and hold yourself accountable to study goals over the duration of your rotation. Faculty, let's set a good example by getting our student evaluations done as soon as possible. It has been shown that student evaluations are more accurate if completed soon after working with the student. Over the next few months, the monthly MS3 class meetings will include topics like preparing for the 4th year, the Step 2 exam, 4th year electives and Acting Internships, away rotations, letters of recommendation, and the residency application process.

We would like to thank all our faculty, staff, and students who help make the environment in which we take care of patients and learn from one another as positive as possible. Thank you for being courteous to one another, setting good examples for those learning from you, and for taking the time to teach each other even when you are busy! Remember that we can recognize each other for positive experiences and impacts on learning! Anyone can go to the "Gold Star" website on the Upstate page (scan QR code to the right). A Gold Star can be given by anyone to anyone they feel deserves recognition for the great work they are doing, whether it is faculty, staff, resident, or student.

Thanks to all of you for all your hard work and dedication to education and learning!

Matt Mason, MD

Assistant Dean for Clinical Sciences



Dr. Matthew Mason

"Thank you for being courteous to one another, setting good examples for those learning from you, and for taking the time to teach each other even when you are busy!"

-Dr.Mason

Report Gold Star



Update from the Office of Accreditation and Compliance

On October 1, our MS2 students along with medical students from 154 other institutions received an email from Y2Q@aamc.org containing a private, unique link to the Y2Q survey and most likely it was followed by a couple of reminders. These reminders will continue until you the survey is either completed or at its conclusion on January 2, 2024. The web-based questionnaire will ask participants to share thoughts on a variety of topics including learning climate, adjustment to medical school, and future career plans. The results of the survey, which will be issued and shared with you next March, aim to help Upstate Medical University staff better monitor the learning environment. We would strongly encourage you to take the time to fill out the survey as these surveys are used to help us understand the climate and culture and evaluate the program to improve the medical student experience.



Terry Pudney

Accreditation and Compliance



Here is some of what we learned about those who responded to the 2022 Year Two Questionnaire (Y2Q), and these highlights provide insights into the state of medical education, student experiences, and career aspirations in 2022.

Improved Satisfaction with Medical Education: In 2022, there was a slight increase in overall satisfaction with the quality of medical education, with 83.0% of second-year students reporting that they were satisfied, up from 80.2% in 2021. This suggests a positive trend in the perception of the quality of medical education.

Increase in In-Person Attendance: Second-year medical students in 2022 were more likely to attend in-person pre-clerkship courses or lectures compared to 2020. The percentage of students attending in-person "most of the time" or "often" increased from 34.2% in 2020 to 41.5% in 2022. This indicates a trend towards a return to in-person learning.

Awareness of Mistreatment Policies: More students reported being aware of procedures for reporting mistreatment (76.6% in 2022) and school mistreatment policies (93.2% in 2022), compared to the previous year. This suggests increased awareness and reporting mechanisms regarding student mistreatment.

Reduced Feeling of Isolation: In 2022, a higher percentage of students disagreed with feeling isolated at school (25.9% compared to 18.5% in 2021). The mean student-student interaction rating also increased. This indicates that students in 2022 felt more connected and less isolated within their medical learning environment.

Career Aspirations and Considerations: The majority of second-year students in 2022 expressed a desire to have a career providing patient care (97.7%). Additionally, considerations such as "work/life balance," "a stable, secure future," and "the ability to pay off debt" were deemed essential by a significant percentage of students. This reflects the importance of these factors in their career planning.

Graduate Questionnaire Findings

Here is some of what we learned about those who responded to the 2023 Graduate Questionnaire (GQ), and these highlights provide insights into just some of the areas of focus in 2023-24 and beyond.

Learning Environment Indicators Are Up Across All Medical Schools
Based on insights gathered from the 2023 Graduate Questionnaire (GQ), it is evident that the positive learning environment indicators for recent graduates have reached their highest levels in half a decade. Notably, the "Emotional Climate" score for the 2023 cohort registered at an impressive 9.8, marking a noteworthy increase from the 9.6 observed over the preceding four years. Conversely, Upstate experienced a slight decline of 0.8 compared to the previous year.

Similarly, the "Student-Faculty Interaction" score surged by a comparable margin, ascending from 14.2 to 14.4 in the past year, while Upstate recorded a 0.3-point decrease from the preceding year. In the upcoming academic year 2023-2024, Upstate remains committed to implementing deliberate strategies to further enhance these indicators for the benefit of the 2024 graduates and beyond.

Awareness of Mistreatment Policies and Procedures Are Very High
In the realm of awareness regarding policies addressing the mistreatment of medical students, the 2023 GQ responses underscore exceptional levels, with a staggering 97.8% of respondents affirming their knowledge. Upstate's student body, although slightly higher at 98.3%, witnessed a marginal decrease from the consistent 100% observed over the previous four years. Additionally, 91.3% of students indicated their familiarity with the procedures for reporting mistreatment, although Upstate experienced a notable drop from 95.5% in 2022 to 87.9% in 2023, contrary to the Y2Q results where an increase was seen in 2022.

In the forthcoming academic year of 2023-2024, Upstate remains committed to proactively raising awareness of the policies and procedures, as well as fostering a culture where students feel empowered to report instances of mistreatment when they encounter them.

Accreditation and Compliance

Student Exposure to Infectious and Environmental Hazards

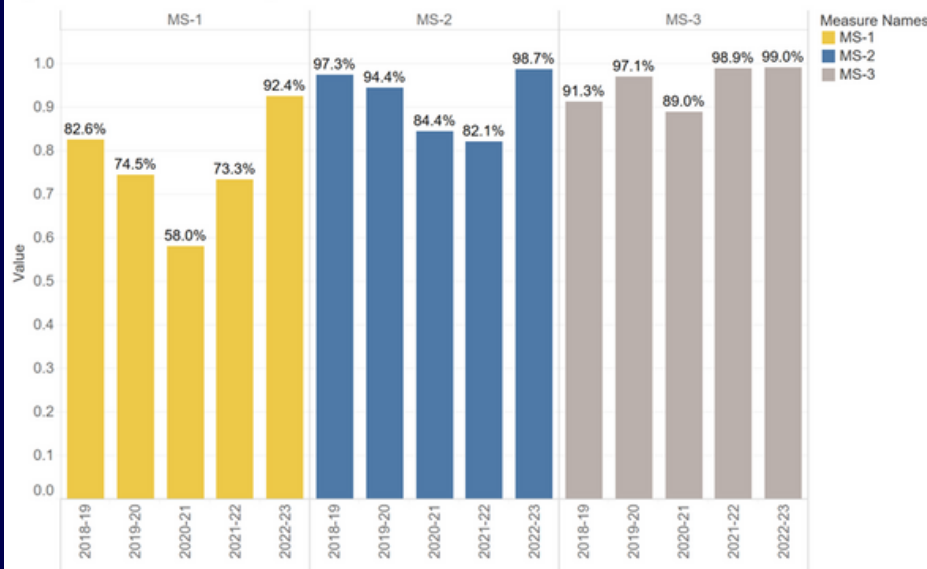
In 2023-23 a greater percentage of MS1, MS2, and MS3 students responded "Yes" to "Are you familiar with the protocol following exposure to infectious and environmental hazards? " on the End of Year Evaluations.

12.8 Student Exposure Policies/Procedures

A medical school has policies in place that effectively address medical student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards, including the following:

- + The education of medical students about methods of prevention
- + The procedures for care and treatment after exposure, including a definition of financial responsibility
- + The effects of infectious and environmental disease or disability on medical student learning activities

All registered medical students (including visiting students) are informed of these policies before undertaking any educational activities that would place them at risk.



Please click the links below and remind/refresh yourself on these policies:

Upstate Medical University's Policy on Student Occupational Health Exposure

Upstate Medical University's Policy on Blood/Body Fluid Exposure Follow-Up

Security, Student Safety, and Disaster Preparedness

Upstate Medical University ensures that adequate security systems are in place at all locations and publishes policies and procedures to ensure student safety and to address emergency and disaster preparedness.

The Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan establishes the policy, procedures, and organizational structure to respond, control, and recover from emergencies.

Policies and Procedures

Policies are the "what to do". Procedures, on the other hand, are the "how to" that encircles the policy. Procedures are also the "how to" carry out a course of action in the event of non-compliance. What to learn more about what to do or how to? Visit our MD Policies and Procedures page on our website.

Report Mistreatment

An environment that optimizes learning and is built on respect and dignity is Upstate Medical University's expectation. The way we treat others (faculty, students, residents, staff) either realizes this expectation or interferes with the learning process.

Discrimination, humiliation, and harassment simply can't be tolerated.

Please fill out this electronic form or use the QR code to find procedures and report confidentially any incidents or concerns regarding mistreatment or harassment.

Report Gold Star

An environment that optimizes learning and is built on respect and dignity is Upstate Medical University's expectation.

The Office of Undergraduate Medical Education provides several opportunities for students to provide feedback on faculty, residents, and staff to highlight individuals who have enhanced their experience on campus.

Please fill out this electronic form or use the QR code to highlight examples of faculty, students, or staff who have demonstrated exemplary professional behaviors.





Recent Gold Star Recipients

Join us in congratulating and celebrating some of our recent Gold Star recipients.

Dr. Margaret Maimone

“Dr. Maimone is an amazing professor. She goes above and beyond to ensure students have a strong understanding of material and have good study and learning habits. Dr. Maimone spent 2 hours with me going over a practice exam so she could help me work on my test taking skills. She is truly the best science professor I have ever had.”

Kyle Nameth – MS2 Student

“Kyle Nameth demonstrated excellent professional behavior on 14 August, 2023 when he greeted me upon my arrival in the New Academic Building, room 4414 B/C at approximately 0800 am. As I entered the lecture room searching for an available seat, my fear of not finding an unoccupied spot was mercifully released when Kyle moved his backpack slightly away from the seat on his left, gesturing that I was welcome to sit in said chair. At that moment, my feelings of weariness and fatigue for the new academic year were lifted thanks to Kyle's affability and concern for his fellow peer. This action managed to lift my spirits and raise my engagement that permitted me to engage with the subsequent presentations. Thank you Kyle Nameth.”

Ben Carguello – MS1 Student

“He sorted all the learning objectives for the unit into 1 sheet which aided me tremendously in reviewing for the exam.”

Amber Gray – Staff

“Miss Amber Gray has been incredibly helpful and responsive in both course organization, directing, and leadership. She has gone above and beyond her new position for the student body. Personally, she has been extremely helpful and responsive in helping me gain remote access for Epic. I have heard and read so many appreciative comments for her efforts, especially from the MS1s. Miss Gray has gone out of her way to match them in their preferred specialty in their new Longitudinal Clinical Preceptorship course. Moreover, she has done a spectacular job with directing and leading POM2 for the MS2s. Her spreadsheets are beautiful, and the most organized I have ever seen! The date of this example cannot be restrained to one specific date, for she has been going above and beyond since June 2023 (to my knowledge), and perhaps even earlier for others, because I believe it is in her nature to! Her job and tasks are dynamic and complex, and I hope many can and will see that she is exceeding expectations.”



Levi Elliot – MS2 Student

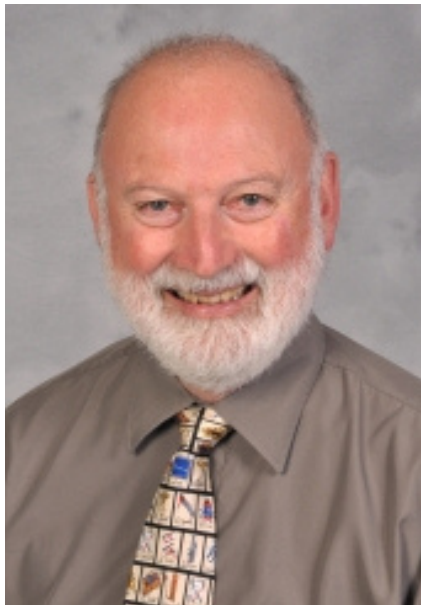
“Elliot has shown compassion for his fellow classmates by sharing his comprehensive study resources & coming to aid of students who are not as well versed in managing outside resources. He takes the time to assist students individually & uses his stellar knowledge base to facilitate the learning process in the most professional & respectful manner. His work ethic & selflessness is not only appreciated but also highly admirable. He is expertly rebranding the infamous medical student stereotype: Gunner.”

Naveed Rahman – Chief Resident

“I am an MS3 who was lucky to start my surgical clerkship with Naveed on transplant. I had no idea what I was doing in the OR when I showed up and he patiently taught me. He found ways to involve me in cases and helped me get hands on experiences, often stepping back from the surgical field so that I could step in to see as he explained details of the anatomy and the surgery. I never felt overwhelmed as he did a great job balancing involving me but not giving me too many tasks. It also seemed like he had a good relationship with the younger residents, as he treated them with patience and kindness as well. (shoutout to Alice Wang, she was awesome on transplant too!!). As a med student, it is easy to feel in the way or like a burden, so I was sad to leave transplant as Naveed never made me feel left out! His new program will be lucky to have him. Good luck and thanks for being a great teacher Naveed!”

Julia Natoli – MS3 Student

“Julia is one of the most helpful and kindest classmates I have known. She has consistently gone out of her way to help her peers in their understanding of the material and ensuring that we all are aware of deadlines and other important information. She is always eager to help, whether in sharing notes or explaining her tricks to understanding material. She also showed exemplary resilience; when she had multiple losses in her family, she still showed up to her clerkships and did not fall behind on her work. She always has a positive attitude and outlook. For these and many more reasons, Julia deserves all the gold stars!”



The Norton College of Medicine recognizes exceptional teachers with the monthly “Exceptional Moments in Teaching” program. Honorees are selected via student assessments from courses and clerkships. Recognized teachers—including medical faculty, residents, nurses and other educators—are those who challenge students and provide an exceptional learning experience.

Robert Roger Lebel, MD, a professor of Pediatrics at Upstate Medical University, is the October 2023 recipient of the Exceptional Moments in Teaching recognition.

COMMENTS FROM DR. LEBEL’S STUDENTS:

“This professor has challenged me to not only practice my skills outside of the classroom, but to go above and beyond to shadow and critically evaluate providers and their skills so that I may integrate what may be deemed “best practice” into my own skillset. He has also inspired me to think ethically about clinical decisions and to put the patient first in everything that I do, from my classwork to my extracurricular research and organizational activities. He has been an exceptional role model and mentor that I am grateful to have and aspire to be like.”

“Dr. Lebel’s passion about this topic was infectious, and I found myself excited to learn about his work. The implementation of real-life examples that he has seen in his clinic was fascinating and also helped me to understand the foundations for most of his lectures. I really enjoyed his passion for the topic along with the great anecdotes provided.”

“Dr. Lebel came to class with experience in the field he was teaching. He had stories for us about treating or encountering the diseases that we discussed, as well as gave us practical advice about what to do if we encounter a patient with a suspected chromosome abnormality. He invested a great deal of time and effort into making his lectures practical and engaging at the same time.”



The Norton College of Medicine recognizes exceptional teachers with the monthly “Exceptional Moments in Teaching” program. Honorees are selected via student assessments from courses and clerkships. Recognized teachers—including medical faculty, residents, nurses and other educators—are those who challenge students and provide an exceptional learning experience.

Mashaal Dhir, MD, an associate professor of Surgery at Upstate Medical University, is the November 2023 recipient of the Exceptional Moments in Teaching recognition.

COMMENTS FROM DR. DHIR’S STUDENTS:

“Dr. Dhir taught me about the agony that we might face one day when the disease is beyond our capability to treat. Dr. Dhir was performing a Whipple procedure on a patient, and as he continued, he realized that he may have to abort the operation due to the advanced disease process and prior treatments that made the operation technically difficult, if not impossible. As I watched, I could see the agony in Dr. Dhir as he weighed his choices. He explained the pending decision to the resident and myself, asked colleagues in the OR for a second opinion, and tried his best to continue the operation. But the choice became clear, even to me as a medical student. I think what made Dr. Dhir an exceptional teacher was that it would have been very easy to lose composure, and not explain to the trainees in detail about his thought process. And yet even with this immense pressure, Dr. Dhir maintained his professionalism, and expressed humility at this terrible disease that he could not treat. Being right there as he made this impossible decision, perhaps I will be able to emulate Dr. Dhir if I am ever faced with such a choice.”

“Dr. Dhir is an all-around great person to be around. He provided lots of excellent teaching points. Super friendly with patients even when giving challenging and sad diagnoses. Skilled surgeon and always very nice to students. I appreciate Dr. Dhir and his hard work for all his patients.”

Evaluation, Assessment and Research

***Greetings from The Office of Evaluation, Assessment, and Research! ***

We hope you are all having great Fall semesters! We have had a busy fall, and we are excited to share our work with you.

****MS1s: A Milestone Achieved****

Congratulations on completing your first two units of medical school! We know that it's no small feat. We are committed to your success here at Upstate and are proud to have worked with Drs. Greenblatt and Duncan, as well as the college leadership, to help develop the Med-Ready Assessment you completed during orientation. In fact, Ms. Suser is a co-author on a presentation Dr. Greenblatt gave at the IAMSE virtual conference about the success of the Med-Ready Assessment.

****MS2s: A Strong Correlation****

We hope you had a restorative summer, and it's so nice to see you back on campus! We have worked with Ms. Maryann Grandinetta and Dr. Margaret Maimone to analyze the relationship between MS2 performance and Step 1 outcome. There is a strong correlation, so we encourage anyone concerned about their performance to reach out to Ms. Grandinetta for guidance.

****MS3s: Enhancing Clerkships****

As you may know, each year, all clerkships undergo an extensive annual review. We are proud to work with college and clerkship leadership to make these reviews as meaningful as possible as they play a pivotal role in continuous quality improvement. Included in the annual reviews are clerkship comparability reports, which aim to ensure that students at the two sites are learning and performing at the same high levels. Additionally, clerkship teams read all the evaluations students have completed thus far in the year and all last year to decide what changes to make in the upcoming year.

****MS4s: A Remarkable Match Rate****

As many of you may remember, SUNY Upstate had a 100% match rate this past year! And now, we have received the Resident Readiness Survey, a survey conducted by the AAMC (Association of American Medical Colleges) where Residency Directors can supply feedback on how residents are performing. We received feedback on 60% of last year's graduating class, and nearly all of them are meeting expectations, with nearly 25% exceeding them!

****Scholarship Projects: A Focus on Fairness and Equity****

We are currently working on scholarship projects with faculty in 7 different departments, and our work is/will be shared at 3 medical education conferences. Much of our scholarship this fall is centered on fairness and equity in grading and assessment. We are members of the Medical Educators Dedicated to Collaboration for Assessment, Representation & Equity (MEDCARE) Community of Practice, and Dr. Germain gave an invited talk at an AMA ChangeMedEd pre-conference workshop about this ongoing work. With MEDCARE colleagues, we also submitted a paper to Academic Medicine (awaiting peer review) and a grant application to the Spencer Foundation. In November, our project with colleagues at Northwestern will be presented at the AAMC conference (Employing Natural Language Processing to Evaluate the Impact of an Intervention to Reduce Narrative Bias Within Medical Student Clerkship Assessments), and Ms. Suser's work examining the data for the MedReady Assessment was presented at an IAMSE virtual conference by Dr. Greenblatt.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to excellence in medical education.

As always, please feel free to reach out with questions or concerns.

- Dr. Lauren Germain: germainl@upstate.edu

- Ms. Josie Suser: Suserj@upstate.edu



Dr. Lauren Germain

"Congratulations on completing your first two units of medical school! We know that it's no small feat. We are committed to your success here at Upstate"
-Dr. Germain



get to know us better.

Emma Callahan-Brittain

Pre-Clerkship Curriculum Coordinator



What's your favorite Movie or Show?

Feel Good, from Netflix

What's your dream vacation location?

Amalfi Coast, Italy

What's your favorite quote?

"You're doing amazing, sweetie"-Kris Jenner

Who is your hero?

My Mom

What is something that always makes you smile?

Iced Coffee. (Even when its cold out.)

Brianna Supensky

Pre-Clerkship Curriculum Coordinator

What's your favorite Movie or Show?

Dead Poet's Society

What's your dream vacation location?

Edinburgh, Scotland

What's your favorite quote?

I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put it to rout all that was not life..." Henry David Thoreau

Who is your hero?

Audre Lorde or Kimberle Crenshaw. (I love how they helped change Communication Theory to welcome inclusivity.)

What is something that always makes you smile?

Peaks Coffee shop. I love Kelsey, the owner, and her incredible baristas that always make trips so wonderful . I look forward to going every week.

