Farewell, Allison — Welcome, Jessica — Thank You to our HPA PAs!

HPA saw staffing changes this year that, while bittersweet, added new energy and a fresh perspective to the office. After over four years with the office, Associate Director Allison Smith left for a new opportunity in September. In January, Jessica Matzko joined Kate Fukawa-Connelly and Jennifer Samarel on the HPA team. In the interim, our HPA Peer Advisers were especially helpful in covering drop-in hours and advising younger peers. Since Jessica arrived, they have helped us get her acclimated and implemented new initiatives like Frist Late Meal tabling, dinner conversations, and an Organic Chemistry MCAT Boot Camp. A special thank you to our graduating HPA PAs: Isao Anzai, Bri Christopher, Bernardo DaSilva, Marisa Salazar, Jake Schade, Steven Tsai, and Maechi Uzosike!

Popular Posts This Year

- ER Doc struggled to tell 25-year-old that she was about to die— newsleader.com
- An apolitical profession wake up: Trauma surgeons speak out about gun violence— salon.com
- Princeton MD / DO Acceptances Map
- Latina accepted by 11 med schools has a message for those who credit affirmative action— huffingtonpost.com
- 8 of Top 10 2017 US News and World Report’s 100 Best Jobs are health careers
- One Man’s Quest to Change the Way We Die (Princeton alum BJ Miller) — nytimes.com
- Code Black: The most valuable lesson in medical school — huffingtonpost.com
Pre-Health is more than Pre-Med!

HPA supports students interested in many health careers and seeks to educate students about all of their options. Each month, we highlight a “Career of the Month” – check out our careers from this year!

Allopathic Medicine | Optometry | Naturopathic Medicine | Medical Anthropology

Dentistry | Physician Assistant | Audiology | Public Health | Nursing

2016-17 HPA Programming

In addition to the programming offered by student organizations, HPA hosted over 60 events in 2016-17 for current students, prospective students and families, and alumni.

Collaborations with other offices:
- LGBT Peer Educators educated us about Trans Health and Health Care
- Study Abroad and Fellowships Advising helped us explore ways to explore health abroad
- Princeton AlumniCorps discussed P55 Fellowships
- The International Internship Program highlighted health-related internship opportunities

HPA Peer Advisers shared their wisdom through:
- Majors & Careers Panel
- MCAT Panel & Organic Chem MCAT Boot Camp
- Frist Late Meal Tabling
- “Food for Thought” dinner conversations

Alumni shared their knowledge in our Doctor is In and Doctor (to be) is In series:
- Jason Adleberg ‘14 M1 at Drexel Med
- Alicia Agnoli ‘05 MD, MPH
- Elizabeth Cai ‘13 M2 at Rutgers—RWJMS

Admissions Representatives visited from:
- Columbia College of Physicians & Surgeons MD/PhD program
- Columbia University MS in Nutrition
- Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai
- NYU School of Medicine
- Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
- Sidney Kimmel Med at Jefferson
- Washington University in St. Louis School of Medicine
- University of Queensland
- University of Pennsylvania School of Dentistry
TigerDocs in Training: 2017 Matriculant Profiles

Michael Chang ‘16

Pursuing an MD at Harvard Medical School

Molecular Biology concentration

Most significant college activities: Thesis with the Ploss Lab in Peru, Breakout Trip Leader (NYC, DC, South Dakota), Dana-Farber Cancer Institute intern, E-Waste Service Project in Ghana, TropicalClinics Rural Health (President), Oxford-Princeton Biochemistry Exchange, Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences internship, Let’s Get Ready (Head coach/tutor), UMCPP & Hospice volunteer

Post-college activities: Lab Research at The Rockefeller University in New York, writing therapy volunteer at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Especially after being away from Princeton for the past year, I’ve come to realize how special this institution is in terms of the opportunities it affords its students, especially those who are premed. At times it may feel a bit disappointing not having a medical school or academic hospital on campus, but I think that this encourages premeds here to develop an intimate community and to also explore interests in activities and hobbies that may or may not be related to medicine. To that end, find time to pursue opportunities at Princeton in research, service, athletics, arts, or whatever else that speaks to you. My most valuable growing experiences as an undergrad were all supported by the university because they allowed me to connect with people from different parts of the US and in several countries abroad. I highly encourage premed students, especially, to spend at least a semester, summer or glide year experiencing a culture different from their own — not only are your college years the best time to do this, but these intangible learning experiences will stick with you for the rest of your life and shape how you view the world.

I also want to highlight that the path to becoming a doctor is a long one and that there are bound to be challenges along the way. Please don’t be discouraged if you feel like schoolwork can be overwhelming. It takes time to adjust to Princeton’s academic demands, and I certainly struggled with classes as an underclassman. As long as you continue to do your best and work hard, that is what is most important at the end of the day — and not just for your medical school applications. And remember to rely on your friends; Princeton is filled with wonderful people. Striking a balance and finding your niche within this space is hard at first, but it is important and will ultimately allow you to be your best self.

New Connections: Rutgers RWJMS Early Assurance Program

Thanks to the dedication of numerous offices and individuals at both Princeton and Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJMS), a new Early Assurance medical school program is being piloted this summer. Five Princeton sophomores, Fernanda Fernandez, Mateo Gilsilvetti, Rebecca Mindel, Chidinma Nwachukwu, and Denay Richards, will spend five weeks at RWJMS. They will work together in a cadaver-based anatomy class, attend seminars, shadow in the hospital, enjoy mentorship opportunities with clinicians and medical students, and generally gain a taste of what medical school might be like. Participants will be eligible to apply for a linkage to the medical school, which would allow them to bypass the MCAT and regular admissions process. This program aligns with the RWJMS commitment to students from diverse backgrounds, including students who are first generation, from economically-disadvantaged backgrounds, and from ethnic groups underrepresented in medicine.

We look forward to supporting students in this program, which joins the Penn Access Summer Scholars (PASS) Program, Innovation and Design Application (iDeA) at Sidney Kimmel Medical College, and the Icahn School of Medicine FlexMed program as the fourth Early Assurance opportunity available to Princeton sophomores. Princeton alumna Archana Pradhan, MD, MPH, has been especially instrumental in the creation of this program. She adds, “We are particularly excited about this program because we know that closing persistent health disparities among women and minorities requires the increased presence of these groups as practitioners in medical specialties.”
TigerDocs in Training: 2017 Matriculant Profiles

David Mazumder ‘17

Pursuing an MD/PhD at Harvard Medical School and MIT

Molecular Biology concentration and certificates in Neuroscience, Quantitative and Computational Biology, and Language and Culture of Ancient Rome

Most significant college activities: Wilson College RCA, Princeton Pianists Ensemble (social chair, treasurer), Princeton Katzenjammers (music director, tour manager), Alcohol Initiative Fund Board (chair), UMCPP volunteer, Research Assistant at Lewis-Sigler Institute for Integrative Genomics, New Jersey Junior Classical League (officiant)

I didn’t really settle into being pre-med until I was actually applying. Often, whether while staying up too late studying for classes or thinking how you have to write a dozen more essays before you can move on to the next round of scrutiny in the application process, doubt about whether you should be doing this will creep in. Some measure of that is healthy and forces you to articulate really why you want to go into the health professions, but I always dealt with the lowest parts by leaning on friends and family and digging deep into the life at Princeton. Mentorship and music have been big parts of my life here, and random history courses have been super fun. Doing what you love will keep you energized, motivated, and happy, and you won’t be missing out on the incredible opportunities our school has to offer while we’re on campus and when we’re off. Princeton is a place that can easily surround you with dance shows, rehearsals, practice, volunteering, trips with friends, crazy courses that expose you to something new, incredible classmates interested in all kinds of amazing things - let it.

Maechi Uzosike ‘17

Pursuing an MD at Stanford

Ecology and Evolutionary Biology concentration, Neuroscience certificate

Most significant college activities: diSiac (vice president), Black Student Union, Princeton African Students Association, Frist Welcome Desk, semester abroad in Australia, clinical research at Johns Hopkins

My best piece of advice is to get involved in things you are genuinely interested in and passionate about. Sometimes here we feel so pressed for time that activities that we would do purely for interest get pushed to the wayside in favor of hitting all the “recommended” pre-med activities, but when you are truly passionate and involved in something, you end up learning so much (oftentimes a unique set of skills that — upon further reflection — will be invaluable moving forward in pre-med and in life). I would apply this same rationale to almost anything you do during your time at Princeton and beyond, including picking a major and choosing classes.

Also, its so important to take time to relax, spend time with friends or on a hobby. Once again being in “The Bubble”, I sometimes felt like I should always be studying or doing this or that, and that later I would have time to rest and just have fun, but the truth of the matter is that if you do not make time now and start to build good work habits, you’re no more likely to develop this really important skill in the future.

Finally I would say take advantage of the opportunities Princeton offers. Not just the set programs like Global Sems or PIB, but maybe even more importantly, take advantage of the network and less formally structured resources. I conducted my thesis research in Australia in a lab that I found online and was interested in, and my advisor happened to know the researchers and connect us. Also, I used the alumni network to set find a doctor who worked in a department I was interested in at Johns Hopkins. We worked together to create a unique internship where I became a real and depended on part of the department and team, which was an amazing experience.
Isao Anzai ‘17

Pursuing an MD at Columbia
Molecular Biology concentration, Global Health and Health Policy certificate
Most significant college activities: Research in Ando Lab, Summer volunteering in Peru, Big Sibs mentorship program, Team U runner, Peer Academic Advisor in Mathey, HPA Peer Advisor, and UMCPP volunteer

My biggest advice for any Princeton premed would be to major in the subject you’ve come to love the most. Many students think that the expected major for a premed is biology (because it is, after all, the most popular one) or conversely think that they should major in something different because it’ll stand out to the admissions committee. In fact, for a long time I considered a chemistry major in part for this reason, but I cannot express how grateful I am that I chose MOL after discovering my passion for biology through the MOL core requirements. Writing a JP and thesis and being able to articulate why you have chosen your intended major in an interview is infinitely easier when it’s one that you actually love and appreciate. On a separate note, however, I would also encourage people to explore a wide range of courses outside one’s major to show that you’ve had diverse intellectual experiences that can enrich your future academic and professional pursuits.

Nicole Hung ‘14

Pursuing an MD at UCSF School of Medicine
East Asian Studies concentration
Most significant college activities: Women’s Varsity Basketball (co-captain), medical/teaching mission trips to China (volunteer, teacher), Princeton Assists 4 Africa (co-founder), Camp Wonder (volunteer counselor), Chinese American Princeton Siblings Program

Post-college activities: Princeton in Asia Teaching Fellow at Mae Fah Luang University, STEM Tutor at Atelier Tutors in Los Angeles, ABC Day Health Center (volunteer), Research Assistant at the Department of Emergency Medicine (RADEM) at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Premedical Intern at Stetson Powell Orthopedics

During my time at Princeton, I felt unsure about being premed: I lacked true, personal motivation to pursue a career in medicine. Playing Varsity Basketball left me with limited free time for introspection about my career path or for exploration of other interests. When my senior year rolled around, I didn't feel ready to apply. Rather than rushing into the process, I did a post-grad teaching fellowship in Thailand through Princeton in Asia, which helped solidify my decision to apply to med school. This brings me to my first piece of advice: take the necessary time to figure out your own motivation to pursue medicine. Take advantage of all of the incredible resources at Princeton (OIP, PiA, PiLA, P55, and more) to explore your other interests and to discover new ones. You’ll learn more about yourself as a person, which will in turn provide clarity for your career path. Secondly, get to know your professors. Starting freshman year, I made a goal to get to know at least one professor each semester. I’m still in touch with many of my professors, including my freshman seminar instructor, who have all been incredibly supportive throughout this process. Go to office hours, ask questions, follow up on interesting lectures -- the faculty support system that you create will be influential for your Princeton career and beyond. Good luck!
The Office of Health Professions Advising (HPA) provides support to Princeton students and alumni by many means as they consider careers in the health professions, and prepare for admission to medical, dental, veterinary, and other health professions schools.

HPA seeks to help students make informed decisions about the choice of a health professions career; to promote academic excellence by providing accurate guidelines for completing pre-health coursework, for understanding admission requirements, and for using all available resources; and to encourage student involvement in the health care community, primarily through clinical work, service, and research.

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HPA Post-grad Job Board

Seniors: Looking for jobs?

_USE OUR JOB BOARD AS A TOOL IN YOUR SEARCH!

Alums: Looking to recruit?

_CONTACT US AND WE’LL LIST YOUR POSITION

HPA.Princeton.edu/Post-Grad-Job-Board

NOTICES WILL ALSO BE FEATURED IN HPA VITALS FOR FOUR WEEKS.

Question of the Week: Last Minute Advice by Class Year

Q: Hi HPA—anything else I should know in terms of my pre-health prep before I leave campus for the summer?

A: We will miss you all over the summer! While our appointment times are limited while we write committee letters, be in touch if you need us!

Seniors: please be sure that we have your permanent contact information, especially if you plan to apply to health professions schools in the near future. We will send you announcements as upcoming application cycle events unfold. You can share your contact info via this form: https://goo.gl/forms/KvZMRbgGOGGcAWpF2

Juniors: Do some soul searching. Think about your development as a future professional, particularly in light of the core competencies that are sought in future physicians (e.g., communication skills, teamwork, service orientation). Consider ways to develop in these areas moving forward. Consider taking the MCAT if you might apply to med school in the next 2-3 years.

Sophomores: Reflect on your year. What went well, socially, academically, personally? What could have been better? Consider potential steps for improvement in the coming year. Find alumni health professionals near you by searching by location in the Tigernet Directory and do some shadowing.

First-Years: Read some medical books to understand patient or physician perspectives. Pick up The Health Care Handbook for an overview of US health policy. Read past HPA Questions of the Week for insight on what your peers have wondered about in regards to pre-health preparation.

This is a special edition of our weekly Vitals newsletter sent to interested pre-health students, alumni, and campus collaborators. The newsletter includes campus events, internship/job postings, the Question of the Week, and important news items. This special edition is shared more widely with alumni. Any alums who would like to receive the regular newsletter may subscribe by emailing hpa@princeton.edu