



Hackensack Meridian
School of Medicine

March 2022

CAMPUS QUARTERLY

HMSOM NEWS

Dear HMM Team Members,

It is with the deepest sadness that I write to you today. The Hackensack Meridian Health family has lost a beloved leader, and we have lost a true friend, as Bonita F. Stanton, MD, the founding dean of the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine and president, Academic Enterprise, Hackensack Meridian Health, passed away this morning, January 19, 2022.

It is impossible to overstate her role in bettering, and saving, countless lives over the course of her career as a pediatrician and visionary in medical education. Leaders of positive change, those who really move the world to a better place it would not otherwise reach, are few and far between. Dean Stanton was such a person - a figure whose legacy extends from the impoverished parts of the developing world to the most prestigious halls of academia, including the medical school she helped create in a totally new mold, amid the promise of a better 21st-century future: the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine.

She earned her Bachelor of Arts at Wellesley College and her M.D. at the Yale University School of Medicine (YSOM), performing her residency at the University Hospitals of Cleveland and YSOM. She served on the faculty of University of Maryland, West Virginia University, and Wayne State University (Detroit, Michigan).

To say that Bonnie led a remarkable life and accomplished more than most of us can expect to is an understatement. The following is an incomplete list of her achievements. She made major research contributions toward global HIV prevention and was continuously funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as a

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The loss of Dean Stanton was sudden and shocking, and our community is still recovering from the loss of this incredible person of integrity and vision. But we will continue her mission for the school, using everything she imparted to us in five years of unparalleled leadership. And I know we will fulfill her considerable legacy, working as a community and a team.

Interim Dean, Dr. Jeffrey Boscamp



Principal Investigator for the 25 years from 1991 to 2016. She authored more than 350 peer-reviewed manuscripts and served as an editor of several textbooks, including the Nelson Textbook of Pediatrics. She was the consulting editor for "Pediatric Clinics of North America," and was a member of the editorial board of *Clinical Keys*. She served on countless study sections for the NIH and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. With fellow female faculty members, she established the still-thriving Phyllis Bodel Infant and Child Care Center at the



Yale School of Medicine. She served on the American Board of Pediatrics Global Task Force and Planning Committee and the Macy Conference on Pediatric Professional Education. She served as president of the Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs, and chaired the Women in Pediatrics Federation of Pediatric Organizations Task Force on Women in Pediatrics.

In her own words, however, the five years early in her career working for the World Bank in Dhaka, Bangladesh - saving an untold number of lives through the prevention and treatment of diarrheal diseases - "is fundamental to our vision for the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine, and has driven my whole career since that point."

We were delighted that she joined our family in February 2016 as the Founding Dean of the medical school. No one other than she, in six short years, could have inspired the school's Vision and Mission, assembled such a remarkable leadership team, partnered in the development of HMSOM's governance, secured accreditation from five separate institutions, established the school as an independent Institution of Higher Education, and pivoted the institution through a pandemic. She relished the opportunity, delighted in welcoming the 2018 Cohort, and proudly sent 18 of its members to graduate this past June to enter residencies across our health network.

Funeral arrangements will be private. At the request of Bonnie's family, a memorial service will be held at the School of Medicine in the future. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that donations be made to the Bonita F. Stanton, MD Scholarship Fund.

Our Vice Dean, Dr. Jeffrey Boscamp, will now assume acting Dean responsibilities.

The Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine, Hackensack Meridian *Health*, and all of us who knew her and worked closely with her will continue to work toward implementing the totality of her vision and mission, both honoring her memory and striving to eliminate the disparities of health outcomes "in New Jersey, and in the United States, regardless of race or socioeconomic status."

We will not fall short of her considerable expectations for what good people committed to good works can do, with effort and compassion.

Bob Garrett
CEO, Hackensack Meridian *Health*

MINDS Program featured in NorthJersey.com Magazine

The Record and [NorthJersey.com](https://www.northjersey.com) profiled the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine's innovative MINDS program for high school students from diverse backgrounds in their Health Quarterly in October.

M.I.N.D.S. (Medical Internship Navigating Diversity and Science) is a six-week paid internship for underrepresented or financially disadvantaged high school juniors and seniors who are interested in pursuing a career in medicine. Interns participate in a broad array of hands-on, shadowing, test-prep, and classroom activities accelerating their exposure to, understanding of, and passion for different medical professions, health disparities in New Jersey, and the social determinants of health.

"We need better education for all future doctors and to have a vehicle to address health disparities and outcomes based on race in New Jersey," said Tadé Ayeni, Ed.D., Director of the Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) at the School.

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Senior Associate Dean Kountz Awarded Mastership in American College of Physicians

David S. Kountz, M.D., MBA, MACP, has been awarded Mastership in the American College of Physicians (ACP), the national organization of internists.

"I am honored to receive this distinction. I consider it a validation of the work we are drawing through the medical school, and at our network's clinical sites," said Dr. Kountz, Professor of Medicine and Senior Associate Dean, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) at the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine

and Vice President, Academic Diversity and Co-Chief Academic Officer for Hackensack Meridian Health. (Dr. Kountz also serves as Vice President, Academic Affairs at Jersey Shore University Medical Center.)

Election to Mastership recognizes outstanding and extraordinary career accomplishments, according to the ACP. Masters must have made a notable contribution to medicine, through teaching teaching, outstanding work in clinical medicine (research or practice), contributions to preventive medicine, improvements in the delivery of health care, and/or contributions to the medical literature.

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HUMC, School of Medicine Receive State Health Grant to Address Health Equity for COVID Prevention

The Department of Emergency Medicine at Hackensack University Medical Center has received a \$352,000 grant from the New Jersey Department of Health to address Health Equity for COVID Prevention. The funding will support a pilot study focused on COVID risk factors in patients with chronic diseases and behavioral health concerns who come into Emergency Departments in six hospitals in the Hackensack Meridian *Health* network.



The initiative — led by Chinwe Ogedegbe, MD, MPH, FACEP, professor of Emergency Medicine, in collaboration with Ramon Solhkhah, MD, chair of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health at Hackensack Meridian Jersey Shore Medical Center, professor and chair of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health and Pediatrics, Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine — will facilitate the continuation of related work that has already been under way at Hackensack Meridian *Health*. The funding will enable patients to be linked to Tobacco Quit Centers, the state Tobacco Quitline, and relevant social services as well as to behavioral health and primary care providers.

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HMSOM and Seton Hall Expand Prescribing Treatment Program for Opioids

An innovative opioid treatment federal grant program will fund critical training through the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine, the Seton Hall University College of Nursing and the Seton Hall University School of Health and Medical Sciences.

The “Expanded Interprofessional Medication-Assisted Treatment Training Program” is a three-year grant totaling about \$450,000 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA), a branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The grant allows the training of future clinicians to prescribe medication-assisted treatment (MAT) services for individuals with an opioid use disorder (OUD). The new three-year grant follows a former three-year grant which concluded this summer with a major conference.

“This collaborative project allows us to make an impact at the very foundation of medicine, providing training to future clinicians to raise awareness of, and impart solutions to, the challenges brought about by the opioid epidemic,” said Stanley R. Terlecky, Ph.D., vice dean of Research and Graduate Studies, and chair of Medical Sciences at the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine, one of the project’s core leaders. “We look forward to continuing and indeed, expanding this good work for another three years.”

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AROUND THE SCHOOL

2020 Cohort Starts Clerkships

In what has become an annual rite of passage, the 2020 cohort started its clerkships near the end of 2021. Read more about this major milestone from our feature when the [first-ever HMSOM cohort started in clerkships in 2019](#) (pictured). In part: “The clerkships will bring the students through different rotations, at different clinical sites, over the next year.

“They include participating on the clinical team in inpatient and outpatient settings. The school has a focus not only on the inpatient setting, as most medical schools historically have, but also on the outpatient setting – where the majority of medical care in the U.S. takes place. There will also be a core curriculum covering clinical skills, specialty-specific content, and clinical reasoning. These will occur utilizing case-based active learning, high-fidelity and task-based simulation, Standardized Patient sessions, procedure training, and other opportunities.”

Dr. Kimura Designated ‘Master’ by American College of Rheumatology

Yukiko Kimura, M.D., professor of Pediatrics, Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine, and chief, Division of Pediatric Rheumatology, Joseph

M. Sanzari Children’s Hospital, Hackensack University Medical Center, recently achieved a major career distinction.



Dr. Kimura was designated a Master by the American College of Rheumatology. According to the ACR:

“Recognition as a Master of the American College of Rheumatology is one of the highest honors the College bestows. The designation of Master is conferred on ACR members... who have made outstanding contributions to the ACR and the field of rheumatology through scholarly achievement and/or service to their patients, students, and profession.”

“Receiving the ACR Master award represents a pinnacle of my career,” said Dr. Kimura. “Being recognized by my esteemed peers in the ACR and being in the company of such great leaders who have shaped and elevated our field of rheumatology is an exceptional honor that is both uplifting and humbling at the same time.”

Dr. Kimura has been a leader of the Childhood Arthritis and Rheumatology Research Alliance (CARRA) and is currently the Co-Chair of the CARRA Registry and Research Oversight Committee (RROC). She is also co-PI of the CARRA Registry for pediatric rheumatic diseases, which has now enrolled more than 11,000 patients across North

America and will follow them for at least 10 years. She is the Principal Investigator of the PCORI-funded STOP-JIA study of 400 patients across more than 50 sites in North America. She recently presented the 24 month results of STOP-JIA, which provided evidence that early biologic treatment improves long-term outcomes for many patients with polyarticular JIA.

School Adds State-of-the-art Learning Space and Advising Core

The fourth-floor construction project concluded this fall in time for pre-omicron in-person classes. The spacious amphitheater (pictured) and the large, divisible learning studio have brought our classes and curriculum further into the 21st century. For a bit of a walkthrough and some of Dean Stanton's thoughts on what it means to the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine, [watch this video here](#).





FEATURED FACES

Voices of HMSOM: Batash Recognized by Federal Agency for COVID Work

COVID-19, like any crisis, has accelerated new perspectives and revelations amid a time of turmoil and change. In many cases, it has brought out “the best” in people.

Amid worldwide tragedy, one Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine student seized opportunities to make a difference. Ora Batash, a student in the 2019 Cohort, organized internal and external groups, both through the School and out in the community, that made an impact – so much so that she was awarded the United States Public Health Service Excellence in Public Health Award.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recognized Batash’s “commitment to public health” amid the challenges of the pandemic, in distinguishing her.

For the self-professed “non-traditional” medical student, the award is a big milestone to mark her growth as a budding doctor, considering her attempts to help out both through the School and in her community over the trying times since the pandemic changed virtually everything in early 2020.

“Whatever I do in my career, I want it to be in direct service,” said Batash recently. “This is how I found my way to this calling.”

“Ora brings a great spirit and a sharp mind to our

student body, and we anticipate great things from her through a long and exciting career in medicine,” said the late Bonita Stanton, M.D., founding dean of the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine.

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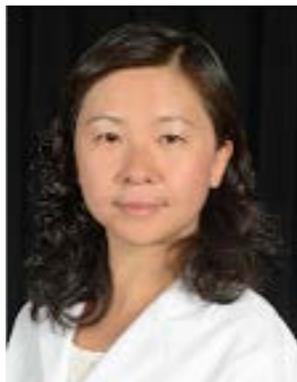
Headline: New Arrivals Around Campus

Jaime Dodds is the new Clerkship Coordinator for Psychiatry. She is a former small business owner who decided to change career paths in 2013, going back to school and receiving a BA in Health Care Administration. Since then, she has primarily worked in a variety of different roles in home care, spending the last 5 years as an Internal Care Coordinator and then a Client Care Manager at Comfort Keepers in Montclair. Married for almost 18 years with three beautiful children who keep her busy, the oldest is a freshman at Ohio State University... GO BUCKEYES!! Jaime is an avid crossfitter and loves to run: “I almost always have a competition or a race scheduled. I am so happy to be joining the team here at Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine and am eager to learn and grow with this institution. Thank you for the opportunity.”

Erica Spindelman is the Clerkship Coordinator for ObGyn and Advanced Clinical Rotations (ACR). She brings a long history selling optical supplies to doctors and helping them to make their practices more efficient and profitable. “I am excited to be a part of SOM and to assist wherever I can. Outside

of work my greatest joy is being with my kids. I also love to travel, cook, and spend as much time at the beach as possible!”

Dr. Tanchun Wang earned her medical degree from Fudan University, China and her Ph.D. in Physiology and Pharmacology from Drexel University. Dr. Wang completed her post-doctoral training in Cell Biology and Kidney Disease branch at National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) in 2015 and joined Touro COM in the same year. Dr. Wang is a committed medical educator and an active researcher. She has publications in the fields of cardiovascular and kidney disease and currently serves as Associate Editor on the Journal of American Osteopathic Association Editorial Board.



Shania Hemphill attended New Jersey City University, graduating this year with a B.S. in Health Sciences. Prior to joining HMSOM, Shania previously worked in early childhood education. Shania is passionate about working with children and hopes to attend medical school and become a Pediatrician. She is happy to be a part of Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine and to be part of the Student Affairs and Wellbeing team in order to learn more and better understand the medical school experience.



Alexandria O'Brien

started here in May as a temp in Student Affairs and Wellbeing and was recently hired as a full-time Administrative Assistant. She is a recent graduate of Ramapo College of New Jersey where she received a B.A. in Psychology. In her free time, she enjoys reading poetry and fiction novels, watching movies, and playing video games. She is passionate about advocating for underrepresented groups in America and about issues regarding mental health. She is excited to be part of the HMSOM team and is looking forward to learning more about the positive impact Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine has on both its students and employees.



Jessica Lucas, new Director

of SAW. Jessica was born and raised in New York to Dominican parents. She received her BA from Binghamton University and a Master's of Public Administration from Penn State University. With more than eight years of experience in Student Affairs, she is an avid advocate for student's needs, quality of life, and wellbeing. She began her career in Student Affairs at Albert Einstein College of Medicine; subsequently, Jessica served as the Director of Student Activities and Associate Director of Student Wellness where she oversaw all the non-academic quality of life programming and events which included student wellness initiatives, career advisement programming, student governing board and student clubs and interests' groups, and the planning of the commencement ceremony and MD orientation week.



Jared Johnson is the School's new AV Technician, football fan, and seafood lover. Hailing from Middlesex County NJ, Jared has more than ten years' experience in Audiovisual Technology and has provided support for organizations including Google, Netflix, and the NYC Department of Health. Jared spends much of his non-work time sketching, writing and coaching vocalists. "I'm an artist by nature. So, no matter the activity my goal is the same: identify the artform, learn its principles, and put them into practice... I see the 'bigger picture' and work towards it. I'm not just supporting video calls and presentations, I'm supporting future doctors and healthcare professionals. It is truly a privilege to provide service here at HMSOM!"

Monique Fletcher, a former teacher and project manager, is the new Office of Medical Education Team Member. She graduated cum laude from Kean University's Public Administration program and holds a degree in Marketing from the Art Institute of Philadelphia.



"In my spare time, I like to binge-watch medical shows on Netflix, Grey's Anatomy, and Chicago Med are my favorites. I am very excited to join the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine team and I can't wait to work with all of you!"





New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Plays the Winter Garden

The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra brought their sweet sounds to the Winter Garden twice, on November 15 and December 13, 2021. The four-piece ensemble played holiday favorites, as passersby from the IHSC community enjoyed some light refreshments and otherwise took a break from a packed schedule of classes and exams. We look forward to having them back in the future. The appearances come through a partnership with Hackensack Meridian Health and the HMH Culture Champions.

Medicine as Poetry, and Vice-Versa

Announcing New Poetry From 2021 Cohort Maya J. Sorini

This winter, two publications are printing poems by Maya J. Sorini. Snapdragon: A Journal of Arts and Healing will be publishing "In Defense of the ICD System" and Tofu Ink Art Press will include, "The Body Only Speaks Her Own Language," "Bone Seam Song," and "Psalm for My Body".



Each poem explores different facets of life in a body



HMSOM UPDATES

and the experience of healthcare with an embodied perspective. These poems are part of a larger collection of work in progress, "Bleeding Experiments," forthcoming.

Stay tuned to the HMSOM website for a "Voices of HMSOM" feature story on Sorini and her work that is soon to come.



Helping Build Naloxone Kits, Battling Opioid Crisis

Our students make an impact, even before getting their degrees. The Harm Reduction and Addiction Medicine student group, led by co-presidents Ilona Fishkin and Nicholas Lozano, put together Naloxone kits to assist in the efforts of the New Jersey Harm Reduction Coalition. The team of about a dozen students assembled 500 kits in a single afternoon.

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