

New Jersey Medical School

Peer Mentor Program
2009-2010

UMDNJ



NEW JERSEY
MEDICAL SCHOOL

University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey

Welcome Class of 2013!

On the following pages you will be introduced to your peer mentors. These students have volunteered their time to meet with you and support you throughout the year. We know that the first year of medical school is filled with many challenges as well as many new experiences. These students are here to help ease the transition into medical school and will be available to answer any questions you may have and refer you to the various resources available at NJMS. Each of these mentors is very excited about offering the help and advice they wish they had received as first-years. Please don't hesitate to contact them with any questions you have now or at any point during the year. On behalf of myself and the mentors, we wish you the best for the upcoming year!

Sincerely,

Emily Fay

Peer Mentor Coordinator

Co-director of CALM

Mentor Coordinators

- Lola Babalola
- Amy Chen
- Margaret Duffy
- Heather Feld
- Krysta Johns-Harris
- Eric Levy
- Lyndon Luk
- Divya Nadkarni
- Nick Rowan
- Anthony Scholer
- Liz Thottukadavil
- Uvie Ughwanogho
- Teresa Valentin

Meet Your Mentors!



Anika Ackerman anika.ackerman@gmail.com

Hometown: River Edge, NJ

College: George Washington University

Advice: The first half of the first year of medical school is rough to say it mildly, but you will adjust, pick up a routine, and survive. By June you will look back on all you have learned in the previous nine months, realize the time flew by, and while it was strenuous, you are that much closer to achieving your lifelong goal of becoming a physician.



Rebecca Asch rebecca.asch@gmail.com

Hometown : North Oaks, MN

College: Grinnell College and Earlham College

Advice: 1. Find a friends and family cell phone plan - you will need all of your minutes either just before or after an exam. 2. One day when you are convinced admissions made a mistake - relax, they didn't - you belong here. 3. Only share your new found humor with other medical students, they are the only people who will think you're funny.



Hina Aslam hina4587@gmail.com

Hometown : Edison, NJ

College: Rutgers- Newark

Advice: Through my first year at medical school, I quickly discovered that time management is the single most important skill needed to be successful in school. Not only will it help prevent you from having to pull all-nighters before an exam, but it will also allow you to remember that there is a world outside of medical school.



Lolade 'Lola' Babalola

lola.a.babalola@gmail.com

Hometown : Pennsauken, NJ

College: Montclair State, NJ

Advice: Don't forget to live life

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Robert Paul Bonitz rpbonitz@gmail.com

Hometown : Hamilton, NJ

College: University of Miami

Advice: "If you spend a few hours each day previewing the material for that day and reviewing the material that was just covered following lecture, it will help make studying for the class that much easier. Slow (*but not too slow*) and steady wins the race!"



Greg Bryan gab26ster@gmail.com

Hometown : Williamstown

College: Drexel University

Advice: Believe it or not, the professors tell you 99% of what you need to know. Your reading should focus on this material; save the review books and outside reading for the shelf exams. Oh, and stay organized--you have to remember all of this material for the boards!

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Carmen Castilla castilcf@umdnj.edu

Hometown: Huntington, NY

College: NYU

Advice: It is easy to get consumed by studying in medical school. Make sure you always take time out to enjoy yourself.



Amy Chen h.amy.chen@gmail.com

Hometown : Belle Mead, NJ (Montgomery Township)

College: Washington University in St. Louis

Advice: Taking the time to cook dinner with friends is the best study break - especially during exam weeks. You can quiz each other while cooking and you end up with gourmet brain food.

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Nelson Chiu nelson.chiu@gmail.com

Town: Montville, NJ

College: Princeton

Advice: Join lots of activities and try new things. You can always change your mind later!



Andy Collins collina1@umdnj.edu

Hometown: Upper Saddle River, NJ

College: Duke

Advice: Have fun and don't take yourself too seriously... it's only med school and you don't get younger over these four years. You will have time to do all of your work, just make sure you make time to do other things as well.

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Sandro Corti cortisj@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Perth Amboy, NJ

College: TCNJ

Advice: Invest in Scribe Notes, keep an eye out for the AMSA book sale and don't be afraid to take the occasional afternoon nap, it does the body good.



Thomas Cusack thomas.cusack@gmail.com

Hometown : Millstone, NJ

College: Johns Hopkins

Advice: Remember that anyone can recite something they just read in a book. Do not be intimidated by people who are always reading and reciting what they just read, thus giving the appearance of great smartness (this would be all medical students). Its the girl who is reciting it still a week or a month later after reading and rereading who you should fear and respect and if possible, be.

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Peter Dixon dixonpl@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Middletown, NJ

College: Johns Hopkins University: BA, Public Health Studies; Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health: MHS, Environmental Health; UMDNJ - GSBS: MS, Biomedical Science

Advice: Medical school is not simply a continuation of college. It is the beginning of your professional development. Treat it as such and doors will be opened that you never would have thought possible.



Margaret Duffy duffymm@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Voorhees, NJ

College: TCNJ

Advice: Give yourself time to adjust to new environment of medical school. It is completely different from anything you probably have ever experienced (feels like the twilight zone sometimes!). Be kind to yourself as you make the transition- some subject areas may be easier than others and it is not uncommon to receive grades lower than you are used to. If medicine is truly your passion and you know it is what you wish to pursue as a career, be kind to yourself, utilize outside resources (older students, professors, tutoring, student wellness center, etc.). Everyone experiences some difficulty during this transition, even if they don't speak about it openly. Everyone in your class is extremely intelligent and come from a wide variety of backgrounds, so try not to feel too intimidated (the Admissions Committee did not make a mistake in choosing you!). Every medical student at NJMS has great potential, so if you're feeling a bit overwhelmed, try not to be discouraged! Be honest w/ yourself and others and give it time!

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Jonathan Faiwyszewski faiwisyo@umdnj.edu

Hometown : West Orange, NJ

College: Rutgers in New Brunswick.

Advice: Keep your old friends close. Don't lose touch with your college crew because they will be the key to getting away from school and not thinking about the upcoming, or recent, exam.



Heather Feld heatherkay.f@gmail.com

Hometown : Towaco, NJ

College: Cornell

Advice: A small piece of advice: Don't let all the advice you are going to get overwhelm you! If you find a study habit/sleep schedule/exercise plan that works well for you, don't be afraid to stick with it even if everyone else is telling you something different.



Jing-Jing Feng jingjing_feng@yahoo.com

Hometown : Matawan, NJ

College: TCNJ

Advice: Don't over study or find yourself buried in a cocoon! Be sure to you make time for friends and family and hobbies that you have always enjoyed. And don't you dare open a book after you've had a Friday exam!



Lee Flowers lfnjms@gmail.com

Hometown : Rutherford, NJ

College: Brown University

Advice: Despite rumor to the contrary, life in medical school is indeed life. Plan accordingly... Also know that the first few weeks to months of school are very stressful for most people. Do something nice for your stressed out friends even if you yourself are in a panic. It'll help.

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Andrew Graziano graziAAA@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Wayne, NJ

College: The College of NJ

Advice: Winging of the scapula = long thoracic nerve. That's about all you will need for your first year. Seriously though, just relax, you'll make it.



Larissa Gregory larissagregory@gmail.com

Hometown : Long Valley, NJ

College: College of Charleston

Advice: Work hard but don't let all the work and stress control you. Although it may seem impossible at times try to find balance in your life. Remember to laugh!

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Dominick Guerrero guerredr@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Cresskill, NJ

College: NYU

Advice: Medical school is a big adjustment for everyone, but everyone has to deal with it in their own individual way. What took me some time to realize is, the sooner you stop worrying about how your way of handling the adjustment is different from others', the more time you'll have to focus on the actual adjusting process itself. The work load is a hefty one, but it's a LOT easier to take on if your worrying isn't on top of it.



David Gursky gurskydt@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Marlboro, NJ

College: Gettysburg College

Advice: Find a balance between studying and everything else. The amount of knowledge that you are expected to obtain in the first year can be overwhelming at times, but be sure to take a break and de-stress from time to time. Cooking and exercising can be productive ways to get your mind off of school for a little while.

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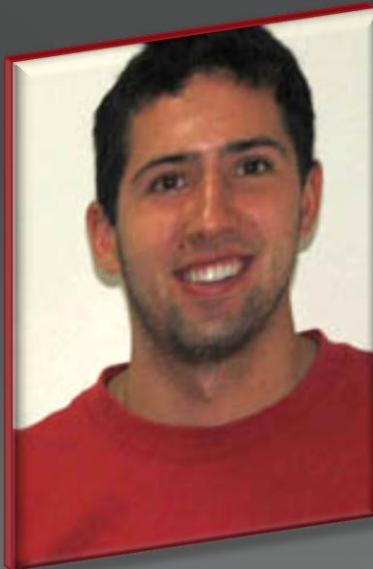


Arun Gurunathan [@gmail.com](mailto:a.guru.1229#)

Hometown : Somerset, NJ

College: The College of New Jersey

Advice: Don't give up the little things that you enjoy (like going to the gym, leisure reading, etc) during medical school... you'll find that keeping up with at least some of your extracurricular interests will lower your stress level and will actually help you academically.



Mike Hall hallmb@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Marlton, NJ

College: Lehigh University

Advice: You only get what you give. If you want it, take it. "Opportunity is missed by most people because it's dressed in overalls and looks like work." - Thomas Edison

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Eugene Han haneu@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Ridgewood, NJ

College: Johns Hopkins University

Advice: The material you memorize just for the sake of an exam is easily forgotten after the exam is over, and you never really learn it. Make the time and effort to go beyond memorizing to really understanding the material.



Ken He kenhe84@gmail.com

Hometown : Montville, NJ

College: Rutgers New Brunswick - College of Pharmacy

Advice: Don't worry...things will get better...just keep with it! Also remember to take some time off in the summer after 1st year

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Karthik Hiremath hiremaka@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Holmdel, NJ

College: Johns Hopkins University

Advice: Its is all about finding the right balance between school and the rest of your life. What works for someone else might not work for you, and don't forget to relax and do some of the activities you enjoy!



Krysta Johns-Harris johnshks@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Stony Brook, NY

College: TCNJ

Advice: Stay organized so you can still make time for things you enjoy. Medical School should not mean giving up all the things you enjoy!

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Nikolas Kappy nkappy@gmail.com

Hometown : Holmdel, NJ

College: Georgetown

Advice: Don't study all the time! Schedule time for relaxation, recreation, hobbies, family, and friends. Maintaining your sanity is way more important than any MGM test.



James Kelleher james.d.kelleher@gmail.com

Hometown : Medford, NJ

College: University of Delaware, postbac at NIH

Advice: take as many study breaks as needed; distract yourself by getting involved; be efficient with your studying; don't buy every book or piece of shiny equipment; doublebag your gloves for anatomy lab; and complain about monday exams.

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Amanda Kelly kellyam@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Union, NJ

College: Rutgers

Advice: Double glove for anatomy lab, and put soap in between the first and second layer of gloves. Blue Boxes are your friend for anatomy. Know every slide for MGM....In the midst of it all don't forget to have fun and make time for the things you enjoy doing.



Anthony Kim anthonyjkim@gmail.com

Hometown : Fort Lee, NJ

College: Columbia

Advice: No matter what happens first year, try to stay positive. Study as much as you can, but don't sacrifice your happiness. Try to find some kind of balance (stay in touch with old friends, find a hobby, relax!) or you'll go crazy

**Not
Pictured**

Andy Kistler cakistler@gmail.com

Hometown : Plainview, NY

College: Rutgers University-EMSOP

Advice: "Trust yourself. You know more than you think you do." If you're not going to do it 100%, don't do it at all."Be what you are. This is the first step toward becoming better than you are."



Michael Laquaglia laquagmj@umdnj.edu

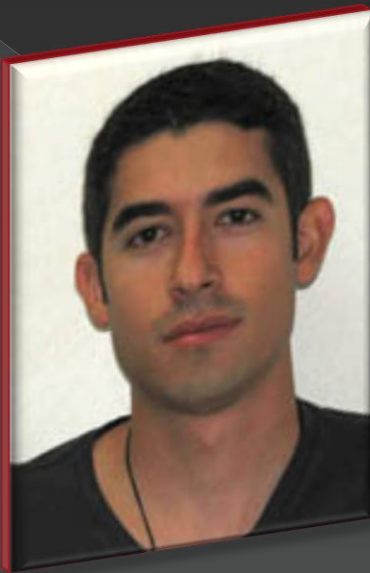
Hometown : Montclair, NJ

College: University of Pennsylvania

Advice: Establish that there is a certain level of interaction with your friends and family, without which none of this would be worth it. For instance, if I'm studying and my family celebrates a birthday, I might say 'I'm not giving up birthdays, they're a part of who I am, and I don't have the will to perform better if it means sacrificing that.' That sort of thing is very important if you want to be happy.

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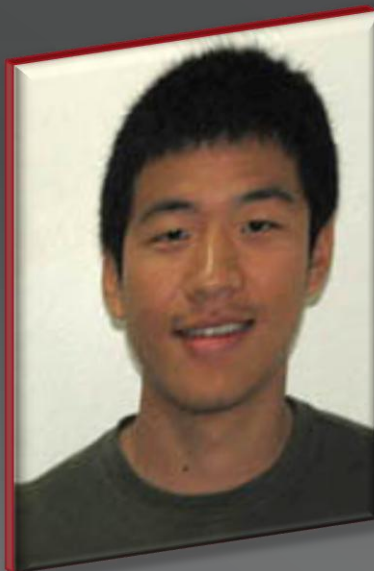


Eric Levy ericblevy@gmail.com

Hometown : Aberdeen, NJ

College: NYU

Advice: Never forget what you wrote for your admissions essay. Let it serve as motivation for you during the next four years.



James Lin linj1@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Cedar Grove, NJ

College: TCNJ

Advice: Don't neglect your family and friends. When the going gets tough, just remember that $P=MD$ and always be grateful.



Shawn Li lis7@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Randolph, NJ

College: Rutgers- New Brunswick

Advice: Start looking into what you want to do next summer asap, there are more opportunities available if you look earlier. Make sure you do something you will enjoy, padding your resume is not worth sacrificing the last summer you will ever have.



Yinan Li yiananli7@gmail.com

Hometown : Princeton, NJ

College: Rutgers- New Brunswick

Advice: Don't feel shy about asking the professors to further explain the concepts you don't understand, they can be your most valuable resource. (... also make sure your friends don't get you hooked on Call of Duty)

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Lyndon Luk lyndon.luk@gmail.com

Hometown : North Arlington, New Jersey

College: New York University

Advice: (1) - No two students are the same. Take all of the advice you're going to receive from classmates, professors and family and see what works best for you as an individual. (2) - Medical school is a marathon, not a sprint. Don't be afraid to take time off for yourself if you can feel burnout approaching. (3) - Bothering people is a great idea. Doctors are probably too busy to chase after you, but they'll always offer their time if you spend enough time chasing them. If you're interested in a particular field of medicine, check it out for yourself and see if it's the kind of field for you.



Ashley Marcus marcusah@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Livingston, NJ

College: Boston University

Advice: Don't neglect your personal relationships in favor of schoolwork."

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Theodore Markou

markouti@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Mine Hill/Dover, NJ

College: Johns Hopkins University

Advice: From your first days at NJMS, you will realize that we are a closely knit family. We are here to help each other. Do not hesitate to ask for help! We are all approachable people and we promise we won't bite (well... at least most won't). But I guess the best piece of advice I can give a first year is BALANCE and MODERATION. There is a time to study and a time to let loose. Don't let yourself get caught up in your textbooks!! It'll take a little time to find your rhythm but we find our groove in the end.



Richard May

richardemayjr@gmail.com

Hometown : Oradell, NJ

College: NYU

Advice: Make sure you do at least one elective. It makes the semester a lot more fun and will give you productive study breaks.

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Muneesh Mehra mehramu@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Chatham, NJ

College: Columbia

Advice: Take everyone's advice with a grain of salt, including mine



Ahmed Meleis ahmedmeleis@gmail.com

Hometown : Holmdel, NJ

College: Princeton

Advice: Stay the course and don't be deterred. Believe in yourself and your capabilities, and constantly remind yourself the reason you want to become a great doctor.

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Kevin Miller millerkd@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Somers Point, NJ

College: University of Delaware

Advice: While Med School is important and time consuming, you have to remember it is not the only thing in your life. Balance is important- eat well, get enough sleep, take care of your physical and mental health and be sure to schedule time for things you enjoy. And just one more suggestion- hang on to your non-med school relationships because having a conversation that doesn't invariably involve lectures, tests, or words like flexor digitorum superficialis is key to maintaining sanity.



Margaret Mysliwec mmysliwec4@gmail.com

Hometown : Springfield, NJ

College: Colgate

Advice: #1. Set aside time in your schedule to play and eat lunch. #2. Avoid eating Chinese food more than 4x a week, only two of which should be from the Wok across the street.

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Divya Nadkarni nadkards@umdnj.edu

Hometown : West Windsor, NJ

College: The College of New Jersey

Advice: Find a study method that works for you, and- though this may sound odd- don't necessarily stick to it in every class. Adaptability is crucial!



Edmund Nahm nahmea@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Ocean, NJ

College: NYU

Advice: Think positive, look at the big picture, and enjoy the moment!

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Mark Nicolau nicolamj@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Dumont, NJ

College: TCNJ (undergrad) UMDNJ-GSBS (grad)

Advice: Medical school is not a competition. But if you need to compete against someone, let it be yourself. Only you know what you need to do to succeed.



Sarah Park spark47@gmail.com

Hometown : North Brunswick

College: Wellesley College

Advice: Eat well. Life is great with happy taste buds and full stomachs.

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Ronak Patel ronak04@gmail.com

Hometown : Monroe NJ

College: Rutgers University

Advice: Try not to fall behind in school, learning the material will be a lot less stressful if you keep up with lectures. However, keep in mind that being in medical school doesn't mean you are not allowed to do anything outside of medicine; make sure you schedule some time for friends and family.



Tina Raman traman@alum.mit.edu

Hometown : Chester, NJ

College: MIT

Advice: There's no doubt that medical school is demanding and tough, but it's also unparalleled in allowing you to mature and to learn about yourself and others. Over four years, you learn to play the many different hands you're dealt, and to tackle both the intellectual and personal challenges in stride.

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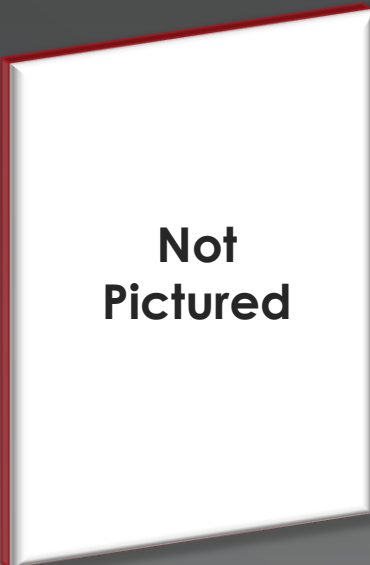


James Rankin rankinjs@gmail.com

Hometown: Livingston, NJ

College: University of New Hampshire

Advice: Don't stop doing the things you enjoy. If you don't make time for your friends, family and things you like doing, you're going to be miserable. Much of the difficulty in going to med school is the scheduling. You don't have much time and you need to get used to it, it's not going to get any better. If you find the right balance, you'll find yourself a lot happier.



Savitha Rao raosr@umdnj.edu

Hometown : North Brunswick, NJ

College: Rutgers

Advice: Take it one step at a time!!!



Eman Rashed rashedem@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Cranford, NJ

College: NJIT

Advice: In terms of studying, be organized and focused. Make a schedule and follow it. Don't think you have to know everything to do well. You don't. And if you try to study every single detail you actually will not do well. Also, try to have some fun. Don't stop seeing your friends. Stress-relievers are crucial in your first year.



Pooja Raval ravalpr@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Warren, NJ

College: Emory

Advice: First years should definitely ask the second years all their questions..what books to buy, how to study, how to charm the anatomy professors into doing your dissections for you :)

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Daniel Rodriguez danrod4@gmail.com

Hometown : North Bergen, NJ

College: Cornell University

Advice: We all need a little help sometimes, so take advantage of all of the resources you have at your disposal. Whether it's your CALM mentors and tutors, professors, administration, or fellow students, everyone here wants you to succeed.



Nick Rowan rowannr@umdnj.edu

Hometown : East Brunswick, NJ

College: Pepperdine University

Advice: Take everyone's advice, take no one's advice, just do what works. As far as my advice goes, the deep cervical lymph node, neural crest cell, and pudendal nerve have yet to let me down.

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Matthew Sabo sabomj@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Moorestown, NJ

College: Rowan University

Advice: Whether you realize it or not, by now you've already figured out not only how to study but also how to manage a myriad of other responsibilities successfully. So my advice for your first year is to realize that, although medical school may be a heavier workload, it is *simply* that, and it is not anything so foreign or new that you will lack the skills to succeed -- just relax and you'll be fine



Deepa Sannidhi deepa.sannidhi@gmail.com

Hometown : East Brunswick, NJ

College: Rutgers U, New Brunswick

Advice: In taking advice from other students or upper classmen, remember that your learning style may not be the same as theirs. Medical students have strong personalities, so don't fall for the pitch - go with your gut! Have a study plan and stick to it - wavering because of uncertainty is worse than taking the risk in spite of the fear. Remember, there are no guarantees so you have to be brave and make a decision.

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Rajkumar Sarkar sarkarra@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Cherry Hill, NJ

College: Columbia

Advice: Find out what it is you don't do well, and then don't do that thing.



Anthony Scholer scholeaj@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Nutley, NJ

College: Montclair State University

Advice: Becoming a doctor is not a sprint, but a marathon. Learn to take it easy and take one step at a time. Remind yourself everyday why you are here, to become a doctor! Good luck, have fun! Stop me anytime you would like to talk. I look forward to meeting you.

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Dipal Shah shahdp@umdnj.edu

Hometown : North Bergen, NJ

College: Brown University

Advice: Learning to maintain a balance between academics and one's life outside of school is essential to being happy during medical school.



Puja Shah pshah1986@gmail.com

Hometown : Livingston, NJ

College: Rutgers, New Brunswick

Advice: Make sure you learn how to take time out for yourself. There will always be more studying to do and more flashcards to look at so take a minute to just breathe and enjoy your life.

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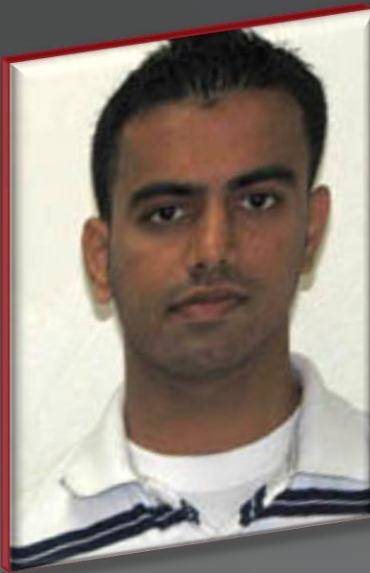


Rahul Singh singh.r81@gmail.com

Hometown : Howell, NJ

College: Rutgers- New Brunswick

Advice: Don't stress out over the workload, you get better at managing it very quickly.



Samir Shah shah43@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Parlin, NJ

College: NJIT

Advice: Don't underestimate the difficulty of medical school no matter how well you did in college. Even though it may not be difficult for some, most of you will struggle to get the grades that you are used to in the past. Remember, you will learn from your mistakes and will do better as you go along; just don't forget to ask for help when you need it.

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Swamini Sinha sinhasp@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Lyndhurst, NJ

College: SUNY Albany + Rutgers University, Newark

Advice: There are so many ways to get clinical experience (aside from SFHCC), and it is totally worth it to set time aside to get involved. Nothing erases the heavy burden of hardcore studying like a patient looking into your eyes, and saying "Thank you".



Whitney Smith smithwr@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Deptford, NJ

College: Rutgers- New Brunswick

Advice: Try your hardest not to fall behind with studying, and do not be afraid to ask for help.

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Ilya Sobol isobol85@gmail.com

Hometown : Edison, NJ

College: Brandeis University

Advice: Working hard is a must.



Christopher Stadler stadlec@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Wall, NJ

College: Rutgers New Brunswick

Advice: Medical school is crazy, but everyone already knows that. Focus on the book that's in front of you, breath, and don't forget to have fun.

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Andrew Stein acs204@gmail.com

Hometown : Marlboro, NJ

College: Lehigh University

Advice: Study in advance because cramming is not possible, but at the same time don't forget you have a life outside of medical school. Make time for your hobbies, old friends, and family is the best thing you can do for yourself.



Ben Taylor taylorbl@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Randolph, NJ

College: University of Michigan

Advice: There is enough time to do everything. Take advantage of orientation and many of the social events planned throughout the year. Making the right friends to study with and go out with can make your first year more enjoyable and easier.

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Elizabeth Thottukadavil thottuet@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Bloomfield, NJ

College: Rutgers- New Brunswick

Advice: Hold onto the things in your life that keep you sane. Whether its talking to family, praying, listening to relaxing music, or whatever else, remember that no matter how hard or overwhelming things may seem at times, you WILL get through it. We all have!



Uvie Ughwanogho ughwanuo@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Bronx, NY

College: Rutgers- Newark

Advice: While it is true that Medical Sch. is tough in every way imaginable, the truth is that the mere fact that we are all in Medical School is confirmation that we are all more than capable of excelling and becoming magnificent doctors. Don't Let anyone tell you otherwise.



Teresa Valentin valenttm@umdnj.edu

Hometown :

College: Tufts

Advice: Coming Soon!



Craig VanDien craigvandien@gmail.com

Hometown : North Arlington, NJ

College: University of Scranton

Advice: Maintain a healthy balance between school and your social life.

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Jason Wang wangjasonm@gmail.com

Hometown : Montville, NJ

College: Princeton University

Advice: Get good at managing your time. Although it's not the end of the world if you can't yet.



Alex Ward wardal@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Brielle, NJ

College: Boston College

Advice: Have fun! Always carve out a bit of time each week to relax and have a good time, even if it's only for an hour.



Yinfei Xu rainingmisery@gmail.com

Hometown : Watchung, NJ

College: Johns Hopkins University

Advice: Take good electronic notes so you can easily look it up months/years down the road because you will definitely run into it again. Reviewing is extremely important and odds are you're much more likely to bring up an old file than digg up an old notebook.



Pauline Yi pauline.yi@gmail.com

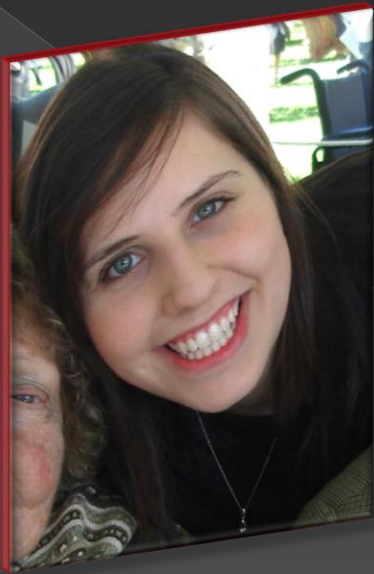
Hometown : Clark, NJ

College: Cornell University

Advice: " Pass = MD"

**NEW JERSEY
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University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey



Evelin Zegen zegeney@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Buenos Aires, Argentina and Miami, Florida

College: University of Miami

Advice: There is time to see your friends and family and do those things you enjoy, it's just a matter of organization! Watch less tv and go out more!



Jim Zhang zhangxj@umdnj.edu

Hometown : Livingston, NJ

College: TCNJ

Advice: Coming Soon!

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