UCONN PRE-MED & PRE-DENTAL OFFICE NEWSLETTER

We have organized our summer newsletter into the following four categories:
1) Current 2024 Cycle Applicants
2) Alumni Currently Attending Health Professional School
3) New Pre-Health Huskies
4) Additional Opportunities: for current students & students in their growth years

SECTION #1: Current 2024 Cycle Applicants

Please note: AMCAS will not start sending out verified primary applications until 6/30. Thus, any MD applicants for whom we still need to submit a letter packet for are not at a disadvantage. Currently, we are prioritizing Dental applications first and DO applications second. We will submit as many packets as possible before 6/30 and expedite the turnaround time for letter packets once we address our existing backlog. Individuals concerned about letters arriving on time are encouraged to contact us via email.

Primary Applications:

- Submissions for AMCAS, AACOMAS, and AADSAS are currently open.
- Ideally, you have submitted your primary application or are prepared to do so by the end of June.
- Before submitting your primary application, we strongly advise meeting with our office for a coaching session. To schedule your coaching session, you must first submit your Health Professions Applicant Portfolio (HPAP). Please submit your HPAP as soon as possible if you haven't already done so.
- It is important to note that your letter packet (HPLP) does not need to be submitted before you can click the "submit" button on your primary application. You should submit your primary application without waiting to complete your letter packet (HPLP). While your primary application will undergo a verification process, letter packets are received instantaneously.
- In order for our office to submit your letter packet to all applicable application services, you must request it directly through your primary application(s). Please see https://premed.uconn.edu/primary-applications/applicant-ids/ for how to do so.
- Other helpful resources include:
  o AMCAS (MD) Applicant Guide
  o AACOMAS (DO) Help Center
  o AADSAS (Dental) Help Center
- Still deciding on your school list? Check out our Choosing Schools page, as well as our Workshops page.
**Personal Statements:**
- Be sure to check out our [Personal Statement] guide as well as our [Work and Activities] guide.
- Review the UConn Center for Career Development’s [advice on personal statement writing] and [schedule an appointment with a career coach] for one-on-one guidance.
- Utilize the UConn Writing Center’s [information on personal statement writing] and [schedule an appointment with a writing center tutor] for personal help.

**Secondary Applications:**
- We encourage individuals who have already submitted their primary applications to start pre-writing their responses using [this secondary database].
- Secondary applications are school-specific; the questions asked will vary from program to program. They generally intend to gain a deeper understanding of each applicant, as well as a sense of why an applicant is a good “fit” for the school.
- Regardless of when the secondary is received, applicants should aim to complete their secondary applications within two weeks. Some schools use an applicant’s response time as a way to gauge their interest in the program, so secondaries should ideally be completed within a few days for top-choice programs.

**The current statistics for our office include:**
- 251 HPAPs submitted
  - 242 Coaching Sessions scheduled
  - 224 Coaching Sessions held
  - 2 Coaching sessions to be scheduled
- 86 HPLPs submitted
  - 55 Letter Packets in progress
  - 11 Letter Packets in the final check
  - 20 Letter Packets submitted
- Regarding letters of recommendation: Our office only checks the formatting of your letters once we receive a notification that your HPLP is complete (*all* letters are in). All letters must include a formal letterhead, signature, and a “2023” date. Please share this link with your writers.
  - If there are any formatting issues with any of your letters, we will email you letting you know.
  - If there are no formatting issues, we will not email you.
You will know that our administrative review of your letters is complete once you are moved to the “ID Submission” stage on the Quest Portal. At that point, you can enter your application IDs for our team.

**Our office is primarily focused on two main tasks:**
1. Completing the remaining coaching sessions throughout the month of June.
2. Engaging in letter packet creation and submission.

**SECTION #2: ALUMNI (WHO ARE CURRENTLY IN HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL)**

First, if you are about to enter your first year of your program: **CONGRATULATIONS!** Our office is so proud of you and we are happy to have been a part of your journey thus far. **2023 Cycle Applicants,** please be sure to fill out our alumni engagement form (https://premed.uconn.edu/alumni-engagement/).

**Your story is worth telling and can inspire the next generation of Healthcare Huskies who come behind you.** Your achievements serve as a beacon of hope, and your narrative is a valuable tool for those seeking motivation and guidance. You can share your talents with us in a variety of ways:

- **Alumni Spotlights:** Let us spotlight you as we encourage our current undergraduates in their healthcare journey and demonstrate the many different paths to healthcare! This involves sharing a photo of yourself and answering a couple of questions about your journey to where you are today. We can feature your spotlights on our website and/or Instagram with your permission.

- **Workshop & Panels:** We constantly seek alums to host workshops and serve on our virtual panels. This involves sharing a photo and bio of yourself before the event (for advertising purposes) and then serving as a panelist during the event (typically one hour via WebEx).

- **Shadowing Opportunities:** Many students starting their healthcare journey are uncertain about where to begin when it comes to finding shadowing opportunities. We would be thrilled to help them connect with any available opportunity you may have.

- **Interview Pairing Program:** This is an excellent opportunity for recent alums **(ATTN: RISING M1/Cycle 2023 Matriculants!),** especially those currently in medical school, to volunteer to be paired with candidates invited to interview at their school for informal conversations and/or mock interviews.

To become involved with any of these opportunities, please visit https://premed.uconn.edu/alumni-engagement/get-involved/ or email our office (premed_predental@uconn.edu) or our advisor, Emma Belliveau (emma.belliveau@uconn.edu).
Welcome to UConn Nation, Class of 2027! We are so excited to work with you over the next couple of years. Stay tuned for our upcoming workshops and events we'll have this fall-- all updates will be shared here in our newsletters and on our Instagram (@UConn_Premed_Predental), so you won’t miss the announcements.

We understand that you have a lot going on right now with preparations for your dorm and upcoming classes, and we want to reassure you. **Your primary focus should be adjusting to college life, and you can prioritize your pre-med/pre-dental/pre-PA aspirations afterward.** Taking care of your mental and physical well-being is crucial, and everything else will fall into place. Instead of overwhelming yourself with excessive credits or numerous club commitments right from the start, taking a step back and slowing down is essential.

Consider incorporating habits into your schedule that promote self-care. What kind of exercise routine grounds you? Do you prefer journaling or calling someone you love when you're having a bad day? How do you study best (visually, flashcards, teach-back, etc.)? By focusing on becoming a student first and taking some deep breaths, you'll find your footing. Remember, you are capable of handling this new chapter in your life and it’s better to ask for help sooner rather than later (we all need support!).

That all being said:

- Course requirements can be found on our website [here](#); **orientation advisors will be able to help you pick pre-medical courses.** Try not to worry too much about your first semester of courses; there is plenty of wiggle room and not everyone starts off pre-health during their first semester (yet still graduates in 4 years)!
- **You can choose any major you want!** More information can be found on our website [here](#).
- **Your first year is a time to explore the university, make new friends, and find what you're passionate about.**
- **We expect all new students to attend at least one Group Advising Session once the semester begins.** These are a great orientation to campus and to what you need to do at UConn during your time as a pre-health student. Once you attend one, *then* you are welcome to schedule a one-on-one appointment with our office. Don’t worry about marking your calendar just yet; we’ll share plenty of information via our newsletter and Instagram once the semester gets closer!
- We encourage you to explore humanities courses in different interest areas (racial disparities, women's health, global health, etc.) ([CLICK HERE TO VIEW A LIST!](#))
- Although there will be an in-person involvement fair in September (where you will learn about many, many clubs on campus), you can browse our [Clubs & Organization Page](#) to start thinking about what might speak to you. Keep in mind that while some of your involvements will likely be pre-health related (such as KDSAP or Knit for NICU), it is normal and healthy to belong to non-health clubs too. Loved playing sports in high school? Try out for a club or intramural team when you come to campus!
- You’ll hear it over and over again, but that’s only because it’s true… you have access to TONS of on-campus resources including:
- **Academic Achievement Center (AAC):** Looking to improve your academic skills and seek out support to further your success at UConn? This is the place to do it! The AAC offers a fantastic array of resources like coaching, peer mentors, and specific resources dedicated to the success of first-generation students.

- **Allied Health Sciences Advising Center:** Interested in a health career outside of becoming a doctor or a dentist? Make an appointment with an advisor in Allied Health Sciences to help you explore other avenues, such as becoming a physician assistant.

- **Center for Academic Programs (CAP):** Are you a first-year student or first-generation student looking for connection, scholarships, or employment opportunities while at UConn? CAP is here to support you!

- **Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD):** Looking to request academic accommodations or take part in programs to connect with and/or help your peers? The CSD offers a range of amazing resources for students with disabilities and those interested in working with the center.

- **Chemistry Tutors:** For both fall and spring semesters, the Department of Chemistry organizes a list of tutors that becomes available after the 10th day of classes. Students seeking private tutoring can contact chemstudentadmins@uconn.edu to request the list. These are paid tutors; all arrangements are made directly between the student and prospective tutor.

- **Engineering Tutoring Center:** Interested in participating in peer-to-peer tutoring in the engineering disciplines? Be sure to explore what courses you can get help with; you can even look into the peer mentoring program as well!

- **Physics Learning Recourse Center (PLRC):** The PLRC is “the place to go for all things physics.” They’ll assist you with questions on homework assignments and offer different ways to conceptualize/approach concepts taught in your courses.

- **PNB Undergraduate Mentoring Program (PUMP):** PUMP is a peer-mentoring and tutoring program housed within the PNB department that focuses on providing a supportive and inclusive learning environment. Help is provided for foundational classes like PNB 2274/2275 and PNB 3251.

- **Quantitative Learning Center (Q Center):** Need some help with your introductory Biology, Chemistry, Math or Statistics courses? Look no further! The Q Center offers one-on-one peer tutoring, group review sessions, and other learning modes.

- **Writing Center (W Center):** Need some help with a class paper or project, specific writing in Biology or Psychology, or personal statement for your application? The undergraduate and graduate tutors at the W Center work with you one-on-one to help develop your ideas, answer questions, and craft your story.

- Cultural Centers including:
  - African American Cultural Center (AACC)
  - Asian American Cultural Center (AsACC)
  - Native American Cultural Programs
  - Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center (PRLACC)
  - Rainbow Center (LGBTQIA+)

- Mentoring programs like:
- **FAMILEE Mentoring Program:** FAMILEE pairs new first-year students and second-year students with continuing students; this program is designed to support students on the UConn Storrs campus.
- **Women’s Center WiSTEM Mentoring Program:** an initiative to support underclass women pursuing STEM degrees with the mentorship of upperclasswomen peers.
  - To learn more about any of these on-campus resources, please visit [https://premed.uconn.edu/on-campus-resources/](https://premed.uconn.edu/on-campus-resources/).
- Consider signing up for a **First Year Experience (FYE) Course** if you have not already!
  - First-Year Experience (FYE) courses are designed to introduce students to the university experience while emphasizing the acquisition of effective learning skills and awareness of available academic resources for success.
  - Almost all first-year students (around 90%) enroll in one, and these classes are intentionally kept small, with a maximum of 19 students.
  - There are several open UNIV 1820 sections available covering a variety of topics:
    - *UNIV 1820.024* - Umoja: A Community for Racial Healing (Thursdays from 12:30 pm - 1:20 pm)
    - *UNIV 1820.004* - Emotional Intelligence: Unleashing your potential for success in college and beyond (Thursday’s 2:00 pm – 2:50 pm)
    - *UNIV 1820.001* - The Art & Life of Marc Chagall through Puppet Spectacle (Friday’s 1:25 pm – 2:15 pm)
    - For more UNIV 1820 courses, visit: [https://fye.uconn.edu/fall-classes/](https://fye.uconn.edu/fall-classes/)
    - **UNIV 1820 courses are open to both first and second year students, so rising sophomores: be sure to take a look at the course list, too!**

**SECTION #4: ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

**Opportunities outside of UConn**

**GROWTH YEAR: Pathways to Inclusive Health Care Program (PIHC):** BASED IN MASSACHUSETTS, STARTS IN SEPTEMBER 2023

- Modeled after Teach for America, the Pathways to Inclusive Health Care (PIHC) program creates a pipeline of healthcare professionals motivated and equipped to provide quality healthcare to individuals with autism and intellectual/developmental disabilities (IDD) aging into adult services
- The PIHC program is housed at the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center at UMass CHAN Medical School, a pioneer in IDD-related research, training, and service for fifty years.
- Targeting pre-medical, dental, nurse practitioner, and other pre-health professions students, recent college
graduates (called Scholars) participate in a **nine-month-long program** that features the following elements:

- **Summary:**
  - Scholars work as paraprofessionals **7 hours/day + 4 days/week** with individuals with ASD/IDD in practicum sites such as day habilitation and community-based day support programs. Note: pay is $17.50/hour.
  - Scholars **attend weekly seminars** presented by EK Shriver Center faculty, participate in discussions with self-advocates, and visit community-based programs that serve people with IDD and ASD.
  - Didactics and disability equity seminars occur on Fridays.
  - **Scholars receive mentoring on their medical or graduate school application efforts.**
  - Scholars will receive a certificate in Disability Studies from the UMass Chan Medical School upon completing the program.

- Applications for the 2023-2024 academic year (September through June) are currently being accepted.
- You must have a bachelor’s degree by June 2023.
- If you are interested in becoming a healthcare professional who will make a difference in closing the health equity gap for those with ASD/IDD and other disabilities, Pathways to Inclusive Health Care (PIHC) might be the right gap year program for you.
- Application materials can be found at [https://shriver.umassmed.edu/programs/pihc/](https://shriver.umassmed.edu/programs/pihc/)
- For more information, please contact: **Susan Swanson, MA, CCC-SLP; PIHC Program**
- **Coordinator:** susan.swanson@umassmed.edu

**GROWTH YEARS: Yale Center for Asthma and Airway Disease Postgraduate Fellowship - BASED IN NEW HAVEN, CT & TWO (2) YEAR COMMITMENT**

- The Yale Center for Asthma and Airway Disease (YCAAD) in the Pulmonary, Critical Care, and Sleep Medicine section has an open postgraduate fellowship position available. This candidate would work under the supervision of YCAAD’s Director (**Professor Geoffrey L. Chupp, MD**) and co-investigators to play a central role in conducting human research funded by the NIH, public foundations, and industry sponsors. This opportunity is ideal for postgraduate pre-medical school individuals seeking hands-on experience with patients, training in clinical research techniques, and building their academic CV.
- **Salary** is determined by Yale School of Medicine.
- **Responsibilities may include but are not limited to:**
  - Performance of chart review to identify appropriate patient candidates
  - Recruitment, consenting, and orientation of research subjects
  - Collection and handling of clinical specimens, including centrifugation, aliquoting, labeling, and storage
  - Processing, interpreting, and summarizing data using statistical techniques and scientific software
○ Presentations on the status of research activities
○ Interaction with regulatory committees, human subject, and budgetary committees
○ Management of the YCAAD website and development of print media to enhance advertising of asthma and COPD research trials
○ Working with public affairs and CME offices of Yale and Yale New Haven Hospital to develop press releases and produce CME courses

● **Candidate requirements:**
  ○ Minimum two-year commitment required.
  ○ **Physical requirements:** The candidate must move quickly between research sites, reach high spaces, carry samples, and accompany patients to studies.
  ○ **Education:** Applicants should have obtained an undergraduate degree in a relevant discipline within three years of the desired start date.
  ○ **Experience/Skills:** Excellent communication skills and proficiency in word processing and data analysis software are essential. Familiarity with database structure, biomedical research, and basic statistics is preferred.

● Please send your CV to Lindsey.Kronkaitis@yale.edu to apply.

**GROWTH YEAR: Pathways to Inclusive Health Care Program (PIHC): BASED IN MASSACHUSETTS, STARTS IN SEPTEMBER 2023**

● Casa de Esperanza de los Niños strives to break the cycle of child abuse and neglect for at-risk infants, children, and their families by providing comprehensive residential and family support programs that transform people and communities. Casa de Esperanza has provided quality residential, medical, and psychological care for infants and young children in crisis due to abuse, neglect, or the effects of HIV/AIDS without charge since 1982.

● Hands of Hope AmeriCorps members will serve these vulnerable children throughout a 12-month commitment, living in a private, gated community and receiving a $23,800 annual living allowance, paid bi-weekly. Hands of Hope members will work collaboratively with other AmeriCorps Members in the home to ensure that children’s physical, emotional, and mental needs are met.

● This position requires a minimum commitment of 1700 hours during the term, averaging 36 hours per week. Your direct supervisor will work out schedules with you to ensure that you have a healthy work-life balance. You will participate in centralized AmeriCorps training (including initial kick-off training and Life after AmeriCorps training) as well as in national service days (including 9/11 Day of Service, MLK King Day of Service, and National AmeriCorps Week).

● **To view the informational flyer, CLICK HERE.** For more information, please contact Darean Talmadge at 713-529-0639 or dtalmadge@casahope.org.

**2023 NIH Virtual Summer Enrichment Curriculum for Students Outside the NIH** - Great for both current college students and recent graduates

● **All activities and events are FREE.**

● The NIH has put together a summer-long series of activities to help you sharpen your science skills and grow professionally and personally. This summer, their online curriculum will focus on the exciting science at the NIH, career and professional development, and wellness topics for students at any educational level. Check out their website and find events to help you achieve your scientific and career goals: training.nih.gov/nih_virtual_summer_enrichment_program
● The Sexual & Gender Minority Research Office (SGMRO), the Office of AIDS Research (OAR), and Office of Intramural Training and Education (OITE) are co-sponsoring a summer series to educate NIH trainees about SGM health research. The Sexual & Gender Minority Health Research Summer Intensive Series is open to all trainees, including those who are outside of NIH. It will cover topics like science, policy, communication, and community engagement. The sessions feature talks from experts, panel discussions, breakout groups, and journal club discussions. Attending five or more sessions will earn participants a certificate of completion. For more information and registration, visit the SGM Health Research SIS webpage: dpcpsi.nih.gov/sgmro/summer-intensive-series

2023 Biomedical Science Careers Program (BSCP) Newsletter -

● The Biomedical Science Careers Program (BSCP) was founded in 1991 and was incorporated as a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3), organization in 1994. BSCP's principal objectives are to identify, inform, support and provide mentoring for academically outstanding minority students, particularly Black/African-American, Hispanic/LatinX and American Indian/Alaska Native students. These students range from high school to postdoctoral level.

UConn Opportunities

APPLICATIONS DUE BY 7/7: UConn Health Leaders (UCHL)

● If you want to become a UConn Health Leader (UCHL), now is the time to apply!
● The application process for the Fall 2023 program is currently open, and the deadline for submission is Friday, July 7th at 11:59 PM. It's important to note that admissions are rolling, so it's in your best interest to apply sooner rather than later.
● UCHL is a community-based pre-health program that aims to bridge healthcare disparities by addressing the social determinants of health in Connecticut.
● As a UCHL volunteer, you'll have the opportunity to gain valuable clinical experience, engage in community service, and develop professionally. To be eligible for the program, you must have a GPA of at least 3.0 and be a sophomore or higher (recent graduates are welcome to apply!).
● The program will run from 9/11 through 11/17 and there will be a mandatory training day on Saturday, 9/9. If accepted, you'll be expected to commit to a 4-hour weekly shift and attend three professional development meetings (dates to be announced). Good luck with your application!
● For more information:
  ○ Visit health.uconn.edu/health-leaders/
  ○ Check out their Instagram page (@uconnhealthleaders)
NEW COURSE - FOR UPPERCLASSMEN: NUSC 4295 Immunological Mechanisms of Disease

- When? 9:30-10:45 AM on Tuesdays & Thursdays during the Fall 2023 Semester
- Where? In-person, Storrs campus, The Jones Building (JONS) Room 219
- Taught by who? Dr. Clinton Mathias
- Course description:
  - This course will explore the immune system's role in the pathophysiology of various diseases.
  - The course will begin with a historical appreciation of the study of immunity, followed by an introduction to the cells and organs of the immune system and general principles of immunity.
  - Students will then examine in detail various aspects of both innate and adaptive immune responses, including cells and molecules involved, the structure and function of lymphoid organs, the development of lymphocytes, their activation and function, and the contribution of immune cells to health and disease.
  - The latter will include the examination of immunological mechanisms in the pathogenesis of various diseases such as allergies (asthma and food allergy), autoimmune diseases (e.g., rheumatoid arthritis, celiac disease, multiple sclerosis, type 1 diabetes, etc.), cancers, metabolic diseases (obesity, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease).
  - The utilization of immune mechanisms as therapeutic strategies will be explored in the context of host defense and immunotherapy of various illnesses.
  - Finally, the impact of nutrients and host microbiota on immune function will be examined.
- Areas of critical importance to studying medicine and the biomedical sciences will be emphasized throughout the course.

AMERICAN RED CROSS: Summer Blood Drive!

- UConn is the number one collector of blood in the state of Connecticut. With classes no longer in session and students home for the summer, the American Red Cross needs members of the local communities to sign-up to donate blood. Hospitals across New England rely on the blood supply that UConn collects throughout the year, and the demand for blood does not change during the summer months.
- **UConn will host a blood drive on Wednesday, June 28th between 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM in the Alumni Building - Great Hall.** The address for the drive is: Alumni Building - Great Hall, 2384 Alumni Drive, Unit 3053, Storrs Mansfield, CT, 06269
- **UConn will host a blood drive on Wednesday, July 5th between 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM in the Alumni Building - Great Hall.**
- To sign up, please visit: https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=1200