Weill Cornell Community Service Program

Report

2007 - 2008

WEILL CORNELL MEDICAL COLLEGE

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

Carlyle H. Miller, MD
Associate Dean, Student Affairs & Equal Opportunity Programs

Sahira J. Torres
Coordinator, Weill Cornell Community Service Program
# Table of Contents

Table of Contents.................................................................................................................. 1  
Advisory Board Members ........................................................................................................ 2  
Community Service Volunteers ............................................................................................... 3  
Community Service Advisory Board ....................................................................................... 5  
Introduction ............................................................................................................................. 7  
Participation .............................................................................................................................. 8  
Recruitment .............................................................................................................................. 8  
Project Summaries ................................................................................................................... 10  
  Child and Adolescent Outreach & Education Projects .......................................................... 10  
  Homeless Shelter Project ....................................................................................................... 17  
  One-Day Events .................................................................................................................... 18  
  Other Voluntary Projects & Interest Groups ....................................................................... 19  
  Student Organizations .......................................................................................................... 25  
  New & Upcoming Project ...................................................................................................... 28  
  Non-active Organizations and Projects in 2007-2008 ....................................................... 29  
Recognitions and Awards ........................................................................................................ 33  
Acknowledgments .................................................................................................................. 34  
Donors to the Community Service Program ......................................................................... 34  
Cooperating Organizations ...................................................................................................... 35
Weill Cornell Community Service Program
Advisory Board Members
2007 – 2008

Dr. Madelon Finkel
Professor of Clinical Public Health
Chairperson, Community Service Program Advisory Board

Ms. Sahira Torres
Coordinator, Weill Cornell Community Service Program

Marcus Reidenberg, MD
Professor of Pharmacology, Medicine, and Public Health

Carlyle Miller, MD
Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Equal Opportunity Programs

Linda Gerber, MD
Professor of Public Health and Medicine

Ms. Kristine Alpi
Associate Library Director
Lecturer in Public Health

Ms. Constance Peterson
Patient Representative, Emergency Department

Carla Boutin-Foster, MD
Assistant Professor of Medicine

Lewis Drusin, MD
Professor of Clinical Public Health
Professor of Clinical Medicine

Oliver Fein, MD
Professor of Medicine and Public Health
Associate Dean (Affiliations)

Reverend Curtis Hart
Director, Pastoral Care Education

Carolyn Steinberg, MD
Assistant Professor of Medicine

Rebecca Seigel, MD
Family Medicine Department

Ms. Elizabeth Wilson-Anstey
Assistant Dean for Student Affairs
Community Service Volunteers

Laura Abbott, Sarah Freeman, Marie Martholdi
Brandi Adams, Daniel Friedman, Joni Mazza
Hanna Alemayehu, Kristin Gilbert, Matthew McCarthy
Bryon Alex, Brian Gladnick, Erin McClelan
Kathryn Arbour, Krzysztof Glomski, Oghenechucko Metitiri
Maranatha Ayodele, Ricardo Gomez, Josh Meyers
William Baione, Eric Goodman, Erica Miller
Hediyeh Baradaran, Jonathan Gordin, Scott Montgomery
Marie Bartholdi, William Gordon, Peter Morgenstern
Ashita Batavia, Andrew Graustein, Lynn Mubita
Daniel Belkin, Brandon Greene, Sreejit Nair
Marissa Boeck, Daniel Greninger, Yizza Narvaez
Chanda Bradshaw, Anastasia Grivoyannis, Jessica Noack Cohan
Judith Briant, Michael Hahn, Siobhan O'Herron
Ethan Brown, Leah Hamburg, Heath Player
Charlie Buffie, Kendra Harris, Monica Prieto
Elena Bukanova, Nicholas Hauser, Christina Rabinak
Kory Byrns, Nancy Heavilin, Tara Rachakonda
Rebecca Carlin, Benjamin Herbstman, Nicole Ramsey
Caroline Castillo, Katherine Heyman, Saima Rashid
Jerry Chao, Matthew Horning, Brian Rebolledo
Connie Chen, Raymond Hsu, Jennifer Reifsnyder
Xueying Chen, Anna Huang, Rafael Rodriguez
Janice Cheng, Daisy Huang, Sydney Rose
Jeremy Chester, Crystal Hung, Andrzej Szewczyk
Wesley Clark, Kenneth Hung, Vahid Taheri
Peter Coombs, Anna Jackson, Annette Tan
Danis Copenhaver, Natalia Jimenez, Brian Reifsnider
Audrey Crummey, Kimberly Jong, A. Garvey Rene
Rachel David, Adam Kaufman, Joseph Ricci
Michael Day, Maria Keating, Jennifer Rodriguez
David Dayan-Rosenman, Erin King, Sydney Rose
Kathleen Dean, Isaac Klein, Anthony Rosen
Mallory Delehanty, Michael Klufas, Jonathan Ross
Leslie Delfiner, Nii Koney, Michelanne Rothrock
Sandra Demars, Scott Kramer, Shoba Sadasivaiah
Naman Desai, Andrew Lee, Sara Sani
Paul-Michel Dossous, Kristen Lee, Cynthia Santos
Eliot Dow, Norman Lee, Monica Saumoy
Amy Downing, Ximena Levander, Kymora Scotland
Dawnnica Eastman, Sarah Lewis, Stephen Seedial
Alexandra Epstein, Xun Lian, Zina Semenovskaya
Jason Extein, Randall Lindquist, Andre Shaffer
Mina Farkhondeh, Michael Loeven, Benjamin Shin
Aalya Fatoo, Dan Ly, Caitlin Shaffer
Raquel Ferrer, Maxwell Ma, Dennis Spencer
Claire Fraser, Kirti Magudia, Catherine Shaffer

3
Aerin Spitz
Bryant Staples
Satre Stuelke
Anna Taylor-Shih
Esther Teo
Ashby Thomas
April Timberlake
Clara Tow
Zachary Turnbull
Ben-Paul Umunna
Jenica Upshaw
Benigno Varela
Jody Waldron
Richard Wang
Shawniqua Williams
Jason Willis
Jessica Wang
Casey Wong
Catherine Wong
Louise Wong
Ryan Wong
Peng Wu
Yifan Xu
Jessica Yee
Yoshihiro Yonekawa
The Weill Cornell Community Service Program (WCCSP) Advisory Board (“Board”) is comprised of members of the New York Presbyterian Hospital (NYPH)–Weill Cornell Medical College (WCMC) Community who are committed to the practice of community service as an integral part of medical students’ education. Throughout the year, the Board members make themselves available to support students’ service efforts. The WCCSP holds two Advisory Board meetings annually where approximately twenty medical students, faculty, and staff members meet to discuss community service at Weill Cornell.

For the 2007-2008 academic year, the Board discussed how the Weill Cornell Community Clinic is currently operational and has solved the billing issues that had previously caused the Clinic to shut its doors. As it garnered incredible interest among the first- and second-year medical students, expansion of the Clinic’s reach to better meet the needs of those who would benefit from it was also discussed. The Camp Phoenix program is focusing on obtaining additional funding and sponsorship (including endowments) for its Saturday and weekend events. Dr. Carlyle H. Miller, Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Equal Opportunity Programs, invited the program coordinators to meet with him to discuss how the fundraisers can be best accomplished. The Funny Bones program discussed how their student-clowns perform on a weekly basis at the NYPH and its expansion into Geriatrics. The Big Apple Circus has agreed to help advise and train the student-clowns, thus reversing its previous decision on the matter. Big Buddies had a slow start and Pregnancy Partners was being built back up in the beginning of the academic year. It was noted that one of the first-year medical students was a graduate of Health Professions Recruitment and Exposure Program (HPREP) and it was suggested that it would be interesting to see where other HPREP graduates ended up in their educational endeavors.

Other topics discussed were to hold a fundraiser where all of the Community Service programs could benefit, have students attend the Rogers lunchtime lecture session, and have more faculty serve as a mentor or as a resource of information and ideas for the medical students.
Under the direction of Dr. Miller, the designation of M.D. with Honors in Service is printed on the diploma of students who have demonstrated an exceptional dedication to community service and submitted a scholarly paper judged worthy of being awarded the distinction. The first recipients were in the class of 2005 and a list of the 2008 recipients is presented below.

**Congratulations to the 2008 M.D. with Honors in Service Recipients**

Connie Chen  
Andrew Graustein  
Anna Jackson  
Marissa Raymond, MPH  
Jenica Upshaw
“We need to reclaim what we have for too long ignored and neglected: the opportunity for active and meaningful engagement in our own communities...” –Bill Shore

INTRODUCTION

Since its inception in 1989, the Weill Cornell Community Service Program (WCCSP) has been a resource for many of the medical students to become active and stay involved in servicing their community. The hard work and commitment of our medical students does not end at graduation. Many of the newly appointed MDs continue to donate their time and services to the greater community of New York City and beyond. It is very common for alumni to continue contributing to our service programs in many ways. This type of involvement is a longstanding tradition here at the Weill Cornell Medical College (WCMC).

The WCCSP initiatives continue to expand and new projects emerge as students tap into their creativity to find new and innovative ways to teach and serve New York City. They work in partnership with their peers, the New York Presbyterian Hospital (NYPH), and local city agencies to address many of the pressing medical and social concerns of today’s world, among which are: teen pregnancy, homelessness, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, illiteracy, mentorship for our youth, healthcare for uninsured adults, and the pervasive lack of basic health information.

Students also learn and grow from their volunteer experiences. When exposed to the needs of their community, they are more likely to become compassionate and aware physicians sensitized to the special needs of the underserved. They increase their ability to communicate with others, witness the real-life effects of disease, integrate application with their theoretical studies, and gain a greater appreciation of how cross-cultural differences impact their delivery of service. They gain much by generously giving of themselves.

The WCCSP facilitates the operation of volunteer projects by channeling the talents, energy, and creativity of the medical student community into existing agency programs and Weill Cornell-developed programs. It also provides administrative support to the volunteer projects in which students participate.
PARTICIPATION

The Office of Community Service aims to provide support to our medical students and the wide range of service opportunities in which they’re involved in and make their volunteer experiences as rich and meaningful as possible. An old Chinese proverb states: “Teach me, and I will forget. Show me, and I will remember. Involve me, and I will understand.” This is the profound feeling that we have for our medical students and their dedication to community service. Being involved during their medical school careers will only build on their strength and knowledge, and in turn make them superior physicians.

For the 2007-2008 academic year, about 180 students dedicated their time and energy to at least one community service initiative. A majority of the participants were first- and second-year medical students, but a dedicated group of third- and fourth-year medical and M.D./Ph.D. students also took time out of their intense clinical rotations and research studies, respectively, to assist in various initiatives. Weill Cornell Medical College faculty, staff members, and alumni have also taken the time to give lectures, train and supervise medical students, and support student service efforts in many other capacities.

RECRUITMENT

The Community Service Representatives (CSRs) play a pivotal role in gauging their classmates’ interests in volunteering and the endeavors they wish to support. The CSRs have organized food, clothing and toy drives at different times throughout the year. Each spring, first year students either volunteer or are elected to coordinate the major community service projects for the following year. These project coordinators, along with the Coordinator for the Office of Community Service, Community Service Chairs of various student organizations, and CSRs, are responsible for the recruitment of participants throughout the year.

Recruitment of the incoming class begins at the Community Service Fair, held annually in September. The Fair gives the new class of medical, physician assistant, and graduate students their first comprehensive introduction to the Office of Community Service and the
entire student organizations represented on campus. Representatives of the many student-run volunteer projects are available to explain each project and to collect names of interested students. The Fair for the next academic year is scheduled on September 17, 2008.
Project Summaries

Child and Adolescent Outreach & Education Projects

AIDS Teaching Program (ATP)
Richard Tucker, ’11 Kristen Gilbert, ’11

The AIDS Teaching Program consists of a group of volunteers dedicated to educating high school students about sexually transmitted diseases. The curriculum incorporates the most recent facts about the AIDS epidemic and information about hepatitis. They increased the number of teaching sites and adopted new strategies for conducting classroom workshops. Tutors engage high school students in role-playing games, discussion groups, and film-screenings.

Past events and initiatives included the following: collaborating with the Neighborhood Shelter for Homeless People; distributing information at the Healthy People Fair; organizing a team of Weill Cornell medical students to raise funds for the Gay Men’s Health Crisis organization; participating in the Annual AIDS Walk; speaking at a session for the Health Recruitment and Exposure Program (HPREP); holding a panel discussion with AIDS patients as part of AIDS week for the High School students; and arranging to have a psychiatrist, Dr. Joseph Murray, speak about psychiatric issues of patients with AIDS.

Big Buddies
2007-2008 Coordinators: Mallory Delanty, ’09 Sarah Freeman, ’09
Kristin Gilbert, ’09

The primary purpose of this program is for volunteers to be caring friends and consistent role models for younger children. Modeled after the Big Brothers and Big Sisters program, this organization seeks to pair students with children from the Pediatric Outpatient Clinic in the Helmsley Tower at the NYPH and/or their siblings. Eight-year-olds to late teenagers are recruited about twice a year and paired with the volunteers with similar interests and in same-sex pairs. Each pair meets individually once a month for activities within the New York City area, which ranges from museum trips to sporting events. Through these interactions, the Big Buddy will provide individual attention to the child, assist with boosting self-esteem, and serving as a positive role model. The Big Buddies will become acquainted with children of
different backgrounds and lifestyles, some very different from their own, and introduces these future physicians to their role as child advocates. The mentorship is set up for one year, but it could be extended to encompass the volunteers’ time at Weill Cornell. The program hosts an annual gathering to introduce new buddy pairs and celebrate old ones.

Over this past academic year, the Big Buddies program had five little buddies. Some of the events held this year have been a trip to Central Park, the Museum of Natural History, and attending a school play of one of the little buddies. Thanks to the dedication of the volunteers, the Big Buddies program is working hard to recruit more little buddies and upgrade the mentorship program. Future plans include a Halloween and holiday parties with groups of buddy pairs and individual trips with the little buddies.

Camp Phoenix
There has been collaboration on many fronts to make Camp Phoenix vision a reality. The mission was to create fun activities for pediatric burn survivors in a camp environment in order to facilitate the healing of emotional scars, which often persist well after the child has left the confines of the hospital. The activities are designed to build self-confidence, emphasize teamwork, initiate friendships, and to have fun. It is important to give each child the opportunity to normalize their outlook on life without any physical or social limitations. Positive interactions between children with similar experiences can help replace a child’s feelings of isolation and resentment with encouragement, understanding, and comfort.

During this past year, Camp Phoenix sponsored four one-day events held in November, February, March, and May, and one weekend-long trip in June. The Saturday events begin in mid-morning with volunteers leading icebreaker games. The activities they take part in range from pick-up basketball games and painting to more elaborate projects such as making ice cream and balloon animals and campers are rotated through the various activities. While the campers are enjoying the various activities, parents are encouraged to stay and interact with other parents and participate in workshops offered by the staff at the New York Presbyterian Hospital and other community organizations or certified individuals. On November 17th, the event was held in P.S. 13 (106th Street between Park and Madison Avenues). On February 9th and May 17th, the events were held in Olin Hall at Weill Cornell. On March 21st, the campers attended the Teen New York Knicks game.
This past year’s overnight weekend event took place on the weekend of June 13\textsuperscript{th}-15\textsuperscript{th}, 2008 at Camp Kinder Ring in Hopewell Junction, New York with about 50 campers and 24 volunteers. Campers had a great time creating dragon heads out of cardboard boxes in honor of the 2008 Summer Olympics taking place in China, playing basketball, canoeing, and the rope course challenges. Throughout the weekend, cheers are utilized to motivate campers and build team spirit, eventually culminating in the Camp Phoenix Messy Olympics. Future plans include teen movie night, Teen Knicks game, rock wall climbing, and ice-skating.

**Cornell Kids**

*2007-2008 Coordinators:*  
Brian Rebolledo, ’10  
A. Garvey Rene, ’10

Cornell Kids is an interactive science learning and mentoring project in which the members of the Student National Medical Association (see Student Organizations) teach a group of 30-45 sixth to seventh grade students from the East Harlem School in Manhattan about the basic functioning of the body. Teaching sessions are held once a month on Friday afternoons, from January through May. The initial session introduces the students to their tutors/mentors and to the medical center.

For a couple of hours, the Cornell Kids come to the Medical College and are taught basic physiology, pathology, and anatomy of the various organ systems. They participate in various labs (cardiovascular, asthma, lung, kidney, heart, histology workshops, computer program experiences) and hear about the needs and value of medical research. After each topic, the Kids are given a quiz to assess their knowledge. As the Cornell Kids take an active interest in learning about health problems that affect their families, the labs are chosen based on their relevance in the community. At the end of the program, each participant is awarded with a certificate of achievement. Every year the new group of students arrive excited and eager to learn because of the fun and innovative teaching methods designed by the medical students.

This past year, the program aimed to continue to provide the middle school students from underserved areas with an early exposure to the basic sciences of medicine and knowledge that can be applied to everyday living. The program also helped stimulate the students into pursuing a career related to medicine and biomedical sciences and provide them with examples of physicians and scientists they could relate to.
Go For Health
Go For Health endeavors to educate young students about nutrition, exercise, and health by taking advantage of existing programs at WCMC. It also reaches out to students in a variety of settings including working with nearby schools. It utilizes a curriculum that stresses the importance of health while being interactive. This past year, volunteers acted as “buddies” for overweight teenagers who were involved in an exercise/nutrition program in Health for Life by attending meetings with them and providing encouragement via phone calls. During HPREP, a workshop was held on healthy eating habits, exercise, and preventable diseases related to minority populations. The group plans to work with elementary schools in the upcoming school year.

High School Health Profession Recruitment/Exposure Program (HPREP)
High School Health Profession Recruitment/Exposure Program was created by the Student National Medical Association (see Student Organizations) to address the issue of the declining enrollment rates of underrepresented groups in medical school. It is a ten-week program during Friday afternoons beginning in January. Minority high school students will hear from minority physicians speak on a wide range of medical issues and work in small groups with medical students on gross pathology of the heart, blood pressure techniques, and disease processes in organs. In addition, students participate in practical workshops discussing the college application process, how to write a research paper, applying for financial aid, and writing a personal statement. At the end of the program, each student participant is required to submit a six-to-eight page paper on a pre-approved subject. The student with the best paper is awarded a $500 book scholarship for college. The 2008 book scholarship recipient attends the High School for Medical Science in Bronx, New York. Each participant who completes the program receives a letter of recommendation and a certificate of completion.

The program assigns a medical student to be a small group leader (SGL) to four or more participants. The leaders work with their mentees to offer guidance as they write their research papers, essays for college, and the college application itself. Small group leaders run the group workshops and work with students to realize their academic and career goals.
Many program participants continue to seek advice from their group leaders after the program has ended. In 2008, there were 121 applicants and 90 students successfully completed the program.

Over the years, students have worked to improve the program and to expand its reach to more high school students. In 2007, HPREP was held during the summer for an intensive five weeks (three days a week) to continue the mission of the program, motivate students, participate in group work, attend lectures in Public Health and Career in Medicine, and be counseled by medical students.

**Kids in Cancer Support Program (KICS)**

*2007-2008 Coordinators: Jessica Wang, ’10 Benigno Varela, ’10*

The KICS is a student-run program designed to provide children and adolescents in the hematology-oncology service an opportunity to form a close, consistent relationship with someone outside of their treatment team. The pediatric oncology team interviews medical students and personally matches them with patients interested in having a buddy. Once a patient is matched, the student will make the initial contact with the patient during a clinic visit. The student will primarily give the patient company during their clinic visits and inpatient stays by, but not limited to, hanging out, chatting, playing games, and watching movies. The family and patient can determine the student’s level of involvement. In addition, the KICS program also organizes occasional parties during clinic hours for all patients to enjoy.

During the 2007-2008 academic year, the list of patients was expanded to include those being treated for Thalassemia. As a result, each participating medical student was matched with a patient. Each “buddy” pair were introduced to one another during the annual matching party that included refreshments and games (including a piñata). Kids in Cancer Support is in the process of coordinating the distribution of toys from a toy-making company that has expressed an interest in donating them to the Thalassemia and cancer patients.
Pediatric Interest Group (PedIG)
                      Alexandra Epstein, ’11 Sarah Freeman, ’11

Pediatric Interest Group is an organization that focuses on recognizing both the medical and psychosocial needs of children. First- and second-year medical students help staff the playroom at the New York Presbyterian Hosp by involving and assisting children with various games and activities. Working with the Burn Unit, medical students read to the pediatric inpatients that are unable to leave their rooms. Volunteers also celebrate Halloween and Valentine’s Day with the patients by organizing and hosting the parties. PedIG also invites guest lecturers from various pediatric organizations to speak on relevant subjects to enhance the education of medical students. Medical specialties and/or social and public health issues involving children are topics usually discussed. This past year, PedIG sponsored panels on primary care and Pediatric Residency, Loughlin Event, Reach Out and Read, Dunkel Event, the Halloween Party, and the Cardiology discussion with Rubin Cooper, MD.

Weill Cornell Community Clinic (WCCC)
(also known as Cornell free Health Clinic)

2007-2008 Steering Committee
Clinic Co-Directors: Shobha Sadasivaiah and Rebecca Carlin
Secretary: Julie Lian
Finance: Monica Saumoy
Referrals: Erin McClellan and Clara Tow
Physician Recruitment: Monica Prieto
Fundraising: Daniel Belkin
Student Scheduler: Sara Sani
Patient Scheduler: Jonathan Ross
Statistics and Quality Assurance Chair: William Gordon
Webmasters: Satre Stuelke and Jason Willis
Patient Finance and Billing: Sandra Demars
Facilitated Enroller Coordinator: Nicole Ramsey

The Weill Cornell Community Clinic (WCCC) is a student-run clinic on the Upper East Side that offers primary medical care to uninsured patients at little or no cost. Its mission is to provide high-quality, accessible healthcare to uninsured adults through consultation, treatment, preventative care, and referral services. Services include but are not limited to: consultation with a physician and medical team, certain laboratory tests, discount prescription drugs and enrollment in Pharmacy Assistance Programs, assistance with
enrolling in Medicare or Medicaid, social work consultation, and preventive health education. The aim of the clinic is to extend healthcare access to underprivileged populations of New York City, while encouraging the spirit of volunteerism and philanthropy among medical students and physicians.

The clinic is open every Monday from 5pm–8pm and is located at 505 East 70th Street and is staffed by numerous student volunteers and a volunteer attending physician each week. Students coordinate every aspect of the clinic administration including patient care under the supervision of an attending physician, patient and physician recruitment, clinic finances, grant writing, fundraising, referrals to specialty services not provided by WCCC, pharmacy services, clinic assessments/quality assurance, and maintenance of the clinic’s website (http://clinic.cornellmed.org/).

On May 21, 2008, WCCC held a benefit concert, Concert for a Healthy City, to benefit all of the student-run free clinics in New York City. Other activities held by WCCC were offering sessions focusing on an issue (i.e. Women’s health) throughout the year and have a regional meeting with other directors of student-run free clinics in New York City to discuss clinic management in August 2008.
Homeless Shelter Project

Grand Central Neighborhood Clinic
(also known as Primary Care and Preventive Medicine for the Grand Central Neighborhood)

2007-2008 Coordinators: Brandon Greene, '11 Nicholas Hauser, '11
                          Michael Loeven, '11 Leslie Delfiner, '11
                          Eric Goodman, '11

The Grand Central Neighborhood Shelter is part of the Grand Central Neighborhood Social Services Corp (GSNSSC) and primarily serves transient men. Weill Cornell students visits the shelter one night a week to take vital signs and medical histories, dress wounds, dispense healthcare products, address the medical concerns of the clients, educate them on preventive care, such as hygiene, safe sex, and maintenance of current treatments. A Cornell Flu and Pneumovax Camp have been instituted at the shelter. Future plans include conducting a health fair and the shelter to cover topics ranging from nutrition to diabetes and high blood pressure. Also, monthly interest group meetings with guest speakers will be held to discuss topics relevant to medicine and healthcare for the homeless.
One-Day Events

Clothing Drive
2007-2008 Coordinators: Olin Hall Residents
Every year the first year Community Service Representative works with other various community service groups, student organizations, and dormitory residents to collect clothing over the winter holiday season to donate to the Salvation Army. A small clothing drive began in the summer of 2006 and continued onto the 2007-2008 academic year.

Regional Pre-Medical Conference
2007-2008 Coordinators: SEOM, BLHO, and SNMA Coordinators
Members of the SEOM, BLHO, and SNMA sponsor the Annual Regional Pre-Medical Conference at the medical college. The conference targets underrepresented minority high school and undergraduate college students interested in the health and medical professions. Parents are also welcome. The goals of the conference are to educate the students about health care issues affecting the Black and Latino communities and facilitate exposure to those interested in the vast opportunities for careers in medicine. The full day event includes various workshops and seminars for the students, their parents, teachers, and administrators. This annual event attracts several hundred registrants and participants. In 2007, 387 people registered for the conference and on December 1st, 129 high school, college, post-baccalaureate students, guidance counselors, and parents attended and participated in the day’s activities.

The 2008 Annual Regional Pre-Medical Conference will be taking place on Saturday, December 13th.
Other Voluntary Projects & Interest Groups

**Alive Hospice**
*2007-2008 Coordinators: Dan Ly, ’10*

Alive Hospice is an organization that facilitates the volunteering of Weill Cornell medical students at the Beth Israel Medical Center. Joining Alive Hospice will require a two-hour commitment every other week, which allows students a longitudinal volunteering experience. The Hospice itself is an eighteen-person inpatient care center, so volunteers will receive consistent patient interaction. Other options include home care, in which a volunteer works one-on-one with a patient at his or her home, and nursing home visits at DeWitt Nursing Home. The hope is that benefits will be reciprocal, so that patients receive care and attention they would normally not get, while volunteers face issues of death and dying before they reach their clinical rounds and eventually their residency. Volunteer tasks include assistance with bathing and feeding, changing bedding, and talking to patients and family members, and in general offering emotional support to patients and their visitors. Ten more medical students were recruited this past academic year to volunteer with Alive Hospice, and they have thoroughly enjoyed this experience.

**AneuRhythms A Capella**
*(Previously known as Arrhythmics)*
*2007-2008 Coordinators: Jennifer Rodriguez, ’10 Leah Hamburg, ’10*

The AneuRhythms A Capella ensemble is available to any student in need of an outlet for musical expression. They meet weekly to rehearse in Olin Hall’s Alumni Lounge and in addition to running the “Coffee House” and Open Mic Nights, they also perform at school functions, deliver singing telegrams on Valentine’s Day, and sing for patients in the hospital. This past year, the AneuRhythms held their infamous Coffee House/ Open Mic Night, which was open to the entire student body as well as to faculty and staff of the medical college. While AneuRhythms hosted the entire night, the group also performed a few of their own musical pieces. They also performed during the Revisit Weekend and at the Anatomy Memorial Service. Future plans include continuing to host the Coffee House and to sing on various wards of the NYPH.
Cornell Ophthalmology Interest Group (COIG)
(formerly known as the Unite For Sight)
Cornell Ophthalmology Interest Group is a community service group run by students where they administer vision screenings at local soup kitchens, senior centers and health fairs, where they take patient histories and perform basic eye exams, and organize ophthalmoscopy-training sessions. This past year, COIG also organized community vision and glaucoma screenings, held lectures by Ophthalmology attendings, suture workshops, a fourth year panel, and shadowing opportunities in a clinic and operating room. Future plans include expanding their community-based activities.

Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG)
(formerly known as the Family Practice Interest Group)
2007-2008 Coordinators: Anna Huang, ’10 Sarah Lewis, ’10
Family Medicine Interest Group provides a forum for learning and discussion for students interested in Family Medicine. In coordination with the Family Medicine Department coordinators, FMIG organizes lunch and dinner seminars. These quarterly grand rounds lecture series were established to bring leaders in the field of family medicine to the Weill Cornell campus to promote the academic merits of family practice. Some of these seminars endeavor to raise awareness of Family Medicine career options, particularly at Weill Cornell, while others are on topics related to primary care, such as domestic violence and eating disorders. Over the past years, FMIG has had great success with their Grand Rounds Lecture Series and have been privileged to attract esteemed lecturers from various family medicine programs in New York, New Jersey, and Philadelphia.

This past year, FMIG and the department hosted panels on primary care and family medicine (with and without students on the panel). They also hosted lectures on adolescent/GLBT Outreach, international medicine, and family medicine. One particular event held was a screening on the documentary “Abu Ghraib Prison Experience of Family Medicine Doctor”.

20
Funny Bones (Clowning Club)
Funny Bones is a clowning club that visits different departments of the hospital every other week as clowns and with special emphasis on bed-ridden patients or patients without much family members around. Their style of clowning is meant to engage and empower each person they meet. They are not performers, but rather create an atmosphere within each room where they can all (volunteers and patients) feel comfortable and get silly together. Giving power to the patient about their care is paramount; hospitals today all too often leave a patient feeling completely powerless. The thought behind this program is that laughter has extraordinary health benefits to patients and can also help prevent burnout in health professionals.

During the 2007-2008 academic year, a series of clown training sessions were held to prepare the new student volunteers to enter the wards and improv nights for the entire student body was also held. Also, the group went to visit the future site of Patch Adam’s Gesundheit! Institute (a free hospital). They have started this year’s clowning in Pediatrics, but plan to expand to Geriatrics and other departments that will have the group. Future plans include hosting dinner lectures about the benefits of humor in the hospital, more improv nights (perhaps at the Coffee Houses), and coordinate events with other Funny Bones chapters.

Geriatrics Interest Group (GIG)
Geriatric Interest Group aims to stimulate interest in geriatrics and coordinate community service projects related to the elderly. The organization has a threefold vision: lecture series, community service initiatives, and clinical exposure program. Activities in the past have included panel discussions, visits to the Center for the Aging, and discussions on relevant topics such as elder care, elder abuse and hospice care. In collaboration with the American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR), GIG helps to recruit medical students for the Medical Student Training in Aging Research (MSTAR) Program where students meet every 6-8 weeks to discuss topics related to aging. Geriatrics Interest Group is known for their programming and every year manage to top its previous year. This past academic year, the group held a screening of “The Personals” and a discussion with a 94-year-old sex therapist afterwards, organized a panel from the Palliative Care Consult Service (PCCS) and provides
the opportunity for students to rotate with the PCCS, and a session to learn about scholarship opportunities in conducting age-related research.

**Internal Medicine Interest Group (IMIG)**  

Internal Medicine Interest Group is focused on supporting students interested in going into the Internal Medicine profession through active communication, volunteer opportunities, and mentoring between internal medicine faculty and WCMC students. To this end, IMIG holds a talk in the fall on the various specialties and practice options stemming from Internal Medicine and a discussion in the spring on how to match into the field. It also sponsors discussions relating to current issues in Internal Medicine that are of special interest. In addition, IMIG provides mentoring programs and shadowing opportunities for students. This past year, IMIG held discussions on the various specialties and practice options, how to match in internal medicine, and current issues in the field of Internal Medicine. It also provided mentoring and shadowing opportunities to medical students.

**International Medicine Interest Group**  
*2007-2008 Coordinators: Cynthia Santos, ’10 Adam Kaufman, ’10*

The International Medicine Interest Group seeks to promote the awareness of global health issues in medicine and opportunities. It is committed to fostering awareness of the issues surrounding global medicine and public health. In the past, it has organized trips to attend conferences at medical schools in the New York City region as well as others throughout the country. It periodically arranges guest speakers to discuss their careers, personal motivations, and research contributions to global medicine.

During this past academic year, this group hosted a documentary and lecture screening of *Salud* (about the Cuban healthcare system). It also hosted the Emergency Medicine and International Public Health lectures by Dr. Rachel Moresky. In the future, the group hopes to collaborate with other student groups at Weill Cornell and from other New York City medical schools in order to broaden their education and awareness of global health issues, as well as to host additional lectures by Dr. Moresky and to organize clothing and book drives.
**Patient Advocacy Group (PAG)**  
*2007-2008 Coordinators: Cynthia Santos, ’10  Adam Kaufman, ’10*

Patients Advocacy Group seeks to alleviate the healthcare needs of under-privileged patients, patients from immigrant populations, and those in need of complex care by working alongside hospital administrators to aid in their coordination of care. After having had various discussions with hospital administrators at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC) over preliminary data that was collected regarding the admissions process and the average wait time for treatment, coordination of care was defined as the primary goal. As a result, the Advisory Board for the Coordination of Care was created to improve patient advocacy in the head and neck service, and to implement these improvements throughout the hospital system. The Board consists of physicians, nurses, social workers, and patients of the MSKCC system and it meets periodically to discuss methods to improve the admissions process and to expedite treatment.

Patients Advocacy Group was only active during the first half of this past academic year. However, MSKCC may incorporate patient navigators, which may be fulfilled by a medical student. Also, PAG aims to incorporate medical students into the Advisory Board at MSKCC as well.

**Pregnancy Partners Program**  
*2007-2008 Coordinators: Reproductive Health Initiative Coordinators*

Fifteen medical students from the first and second year classes act as labor coaches, bedside assistants, mentors, and advocates for single pregnant teens in the foster care system who do not have support (i.e., family, boyfriend, etc.) at Inwood House (located on 82nd Street between 1st and 2nd Avenues). The medical student attends all prenatal care visits with his/her partner, acts as the teen’s liaison with her doctors, answers questions, and provides emotional support. The roster allows for a student to be on call every night of the week. If called, the volunteer is expected to be there for the teen from 6 pm to midnight.
Reproductive Health Initiative (RHI)/ Medical Students for Choice
Joni Mazza, ’10 David Dayan-Rosenman, ’10

Reproductive Health Initiative is a student-led organization dedicated to increasing medical students’ education and awareness regarding current issues in reproductive health through shadowing opportunities in the Labor and Delivery Units and at Planned Parenthood, hands-on workshops, and educational lectures. As future practitioners, they are committed to ensuring that they and their peers are prepared to provide patients with the full range of reproductive health care choices. In addition, RHI adopted the Pregnancy Partners project as part of its community service component.

During the 2007-2008 academic year, RHI hosted numerous events (in addition to those described earlier) including the Primary Care Panel Representation for OB/GYN, workshops and lectures on Ethical Issues in IVF (In Vitro Fertilization), Comfort with Gestational Age, and Current Contraceptive Methods (co-sponsored with ATP). The RHI held the Annual Regional Medical Students for Choice Conference at Weill Cornell in October 2007.
Most student organizations at Weill Cornell have a community service component in addition to their social activities.

**American Medical Student Association (AMSA)**

*2007-2008 Coordinators: Nicole Ramsey, ‘11*

American Medical Student Association is the largest independent national student-run organization of approximately 30,000 students in training at over 100 medical schools. The nineteen issues-oriented task forces, ranging from women's health to international medicine, are the cornerstone and focus of actual programming of the organization. It sponsors a number of community service activities throughout the year including administering immunizations, and working with the Lenox Hill PPD/Immunization Clinics. During the 2007-2008 academic year, AMSA held such events as Internal Medicine Week; Ayurvedic Medicine Workshop; discussions on global health, healthcare/presidential candidate, and universal healthcare (including a film screening); Scrub Swap; President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) Protest; and Netter’s Promotion. Future events include the Ayurvedic Workshop, Annual Scrub Swap, and Family Medicine Week.

**Boricua-Latino Health Organization (BLHO)**

*2007-2008 Coordinators: Raquel Ferrer, ‘10*

Boricua-Latino Health Organization is devoted to community service and improving the health of the Latino community. Some of the short-term goals of the organization include: increasing recruitment and admission of Latinos into the health professions; educating BLHO members in areas of concern to Latino communities, which may not be included in the traditional medical curriculum; and involving the community for the purpose of strengthening working relationships as a means of mutual education. Its efforts to promote the recruitment of Latinos into the medical field and to support those already in the field are varied. In conjunction with the Students for Equal Opportunities in Medicine and Student National Medical Association, members of BLHO assist in organizing the Annual Regional Pre-medical Conference and the Students Revisit Weekend. Students also give tours, help with presentations, and discuss projects for the Minority Visiting Professor Program. In the future, BLHO would like to enhance the Medical Spanish Program, creating working relationships with local clinics to have them host medical students, and educate and promote
awareness of health related issues affecting the Latino community. The Medical Spanish Program will grant students the opportunity to practice their medical Spanish in a realistic setting and to provide service to a traditionally underserved community.

Along with the aforementioned events, this past academic year BLHO sponsored Spanish Charla night, where guests enjoyed food, music, and a chance to practice Spanish. It also hosted a Spanish medical interview event in order to give students a chance to practice their medical interview skills in Spanish and using a translator during a medical interview. It also co-sponsored Cornell Kids with the the SNMA.

**Cornell LGBT People in Medicine/ Q!**
[formerly Cornell Gay & Lesbian Association of Medical Students (GLAMS)]
[formerly the Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Organization (LGBTO)]

2007-2008 Coordinators:  Anna Huang, ’10  Anna Taylor-Shih, ’10

Over the past several years there has been significant change in this group, particularly with the name of the organization. Formerly known as LGBTO and then Cornell GLAMS, this group is now known as the Cornell LGBT People in Medicine/Q! and is devoted to exploring LGBT issues in medicine. This includes creating and fostering an open and accepting environment for LGBT students at WCMC, as well as holding events that provide forums for discussion of sexual orientation and identity in the medical context. The group organizes social events (i.e. movie nights, lectures, and physician panels) and has also worked with the WCMC administration both to increase LGBT visibility, and to incorporate lectures on LGBT health issues in the curriculum. It is open to everyone, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, and encourages all interested students to be involved in its events.

During the 2007-2008 academic year, the Cornell LGBT People in Medicine/Q! held a discussion with an adolescent LGBTQ physician, a transgender health workshop, and distributed LGBTQ-friendly medical lapel pins.

**Minority Association of Pre-Health Students (MAPS)**

2007-2008 Coordinator:  Giselle Torres, ‘10

The MAPS organization is nationally implemented by SNMA. Through the MAPS protocol, SNMA members act as mentors to undergraduates during their four years of college in efforts to increase the medical school matriculation rates of underrepresented minorities. Over the
past two years, the Cornell chapter of MAPS has been working with the Hunter College chapter by co-sponsoring events and attending national conferences. Both chapters also collaborate and attend yearly events such as SNMA’s free Community Health Fair, the regional SNMA Walk-A-Thon, and Weill Cornell’s Regional Pre-Medical Conference.

**Students for Equal Opportunity in Medicine (SEOM)**

*2007-2008 Coordinators: Brian Rebolledo, ’10 and Elaine Oliveira, ’11*

Students for Equal Opportunity in Medicine is the umbrella organization for historically underrepresented minority student groups at Weill Cornell. It currently recognizes local chapters of SNMA and BLHO. The organization primarily functions to support minority students at WCMC and coordinates the Annual Regional Pre-medical Conference along with BLHO and SNMA.

**Student National Medical Association (SNMA)**

*2007-2008 Coordinators: Joanna Ayoung, ’10 and Elena Bukanova, ’10*

The members of SNMA, the nation’s oldest and largest organization focused on the needs and concerns of medical students of color, are particularly active in community service. Many of the service initiatives are designed to: increase awareness of the medical profession in the minority community; encourage minority student interest in pursuing careers in medicine; provide social contacts with medical students; and provide exposure to science research. These outreach initiatives were discussed in the following community service projects: Cornell Kids; HPREP; MAPS; Annual Regional Pre-Medical; and the Community Health Fair.

This past year, SNMA also coordinated the MCAT Book Drive, Minority Revisit Mixer, MAPS Mentor/Mentee Mixer, and the MAPS Conference. Future events include a health fair, a practice Step I exam for second-year students, and a medical textbook drive for students in Guyana.
Weill Cornell Youth Scholars Program (WCYSP)

2007-2008 Coordinators: Curtis O’Neal, ’10  Cynthia Santos, ’10  Miguel Pineda, ’08

The WCYSP is a three-and-a-half week summer enrichment program for high school students originating from low-income backgrounds who have an interest in science and medicine. The WCYSP embodies the idea that early intervention is critical to shaping a student’s future, and therefore seeks to endow students with the skills and experience necessary to fulfill their vast potential. In early 2006, the program was developed by Dr. R. Ernest Sosa (WCMC, ’78), Bernard Ashby, M.D. (WCMC, ’07) and Jullet Han and in the summer of 2007 it was implemented. The program is established under the Department of Urology and has gained recognition and participation from other departments of WCMC and NYPH.

By giving these students the opportunity to explore the diversity of medical fields and the resources at the WCMC, the program kindles their motivation to push themselves academically and become valuable members of the medical community. The curriculum educates and inspires participants for personal and professional success by addressing the obstacles that prevent many inner-city students from performing well at the college level, including a lack of coherent professional vision and poor study habits. The program also covers fundamental and diverse topics in the field of medicine. Each week deals with a particular theme in medicine tailored to be immediately relevant to the students’ lives.

The daily Problem Based Learning (PBL) sessions allow the participants to have a taste of the medical school curriculum, while improving their reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. The PBL topics serve as the overarching theme for supplemental courses, such as anatomy and physiology, embryology, congenital defects, and the etiology of diseases and disorders. Visits to the human anatomy laboratory help bridge conceptual knowledge with hands-on learning. The students also complete and present a group research project, which serves to improve their research and public speaking skills. The curriculum also includes discussions in medical ethics, workshops on writing and interviewing skills, and seminars on college and medical school admissions information. These courses are designed to provide students with not only an in-depth knowledge of basic sciences, but also the tools and strategies they need to succeed in their educational careers.