

The Undergraduate Medical Academy

Jan-Feb 2021
Newsletter

Volume 2 | Issue 4 | Sahar Fattani

Announcement

Happy New Year and Welcome Back! I hope all of us have relaxed and enjoyed our breaks. This spring semester, let's start strong. If you are using Zoom university, don't forget to connect with your professor and peers and stay engaged in your courses. Continue to work on your postgrad plans, internship applications, MCAT/GRE preparation, and classes. Wishing everyone a great year full of successes and opportunities. Be safe and mask up!

“Doing the best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment” - Oprah Winfrey

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Encouraging Words

Word of the Month

VOCAB PRACTICE

La-men-ta-ble

Adjective

Origin from late middle English, appears in Old French and Latin in similar forms (lamentabilis and lamentari)

- DEF: 1. (of an event, action, or attitude) full of regret
2. (of circumstances or conditions) deplorably bad or unsatisfactory

Bi-fur-cate

Verb, Origin: 17th century medieval Latin

DEF: Divide or make into two parts/sections

The PVAMU Undergraduate Medical Academy presents:

back-to school

BOOK DRIVE

To Benefit Local Elementary Students

To donate, place any new or gently used children's books in the donation box outside the UMA to be distributed to families of Cypresswood Elementary School (AISD)

All donations are greatly appreciated and will be collected Jan. 25-Feb. 25

1 book = 2 hours or \$5 = 1 book

Please keep books appropriate for grades 1-5

Donation box location: New Science building in front of the UMA

Remote donations: Cashapp, \$MakeADifferenceToday

Questions? Contact:

Ineicia Carter (832)253-6880

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Dr. Dennis E. Daniels

Bikes & Trikes

Pictures are from the Texas Undergraduate Medical Academy Annual Bikes and Trikes Donation 2020 event. Each year, this event is sponsored solely by the students of the Texas Undergraduate Medical Academy. The campaign is to benefit children in the Prairie View and Waller County area.



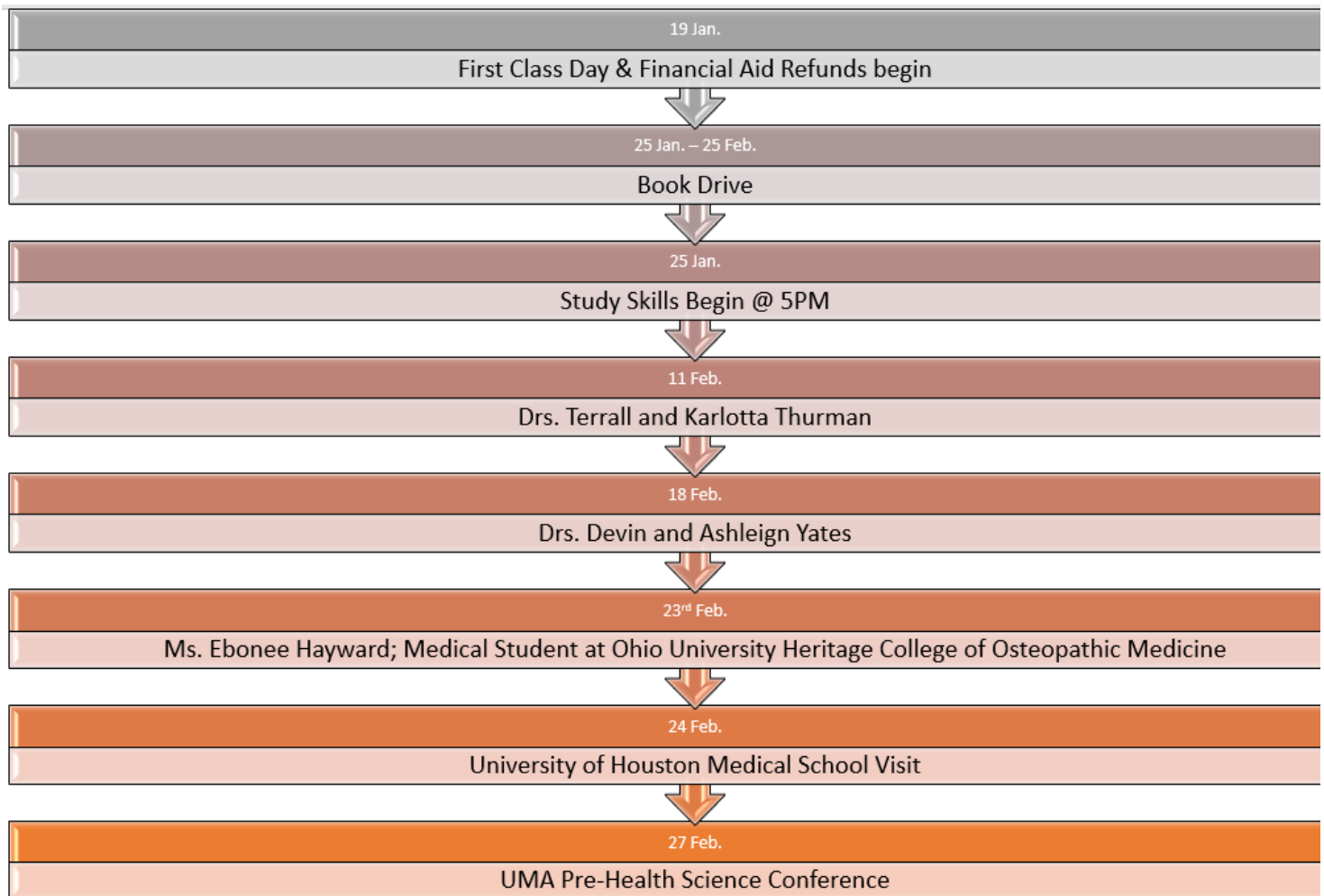
Pictured L-R: Sherylle Fuller, Judge Elaine Jackson, Charity White, Dr. Dennis E. Daniels



Happy Birthday!



Upcoming Events



Student Spotlight

Adaeze Eze
Biology
Senior

Along with being an Undergraduate Medical Academy student, I am an Honors Program student. I love researching, volunteering to help the homeless, and running. I have been a research assistant for the last 3 years, studying cancer biology and tissue engineering. I am currently conducting tissue engineering as a research assistant with Dr. Naznin Sultana in the Undergraduate Medical Academy lab. This year in March, my first self-authored research paper is scheduled to be published in the Journal of Science and Exploratory Studies. The advice I would offer others is to always remember that you were created for so much more than you could imagine today; follow your distinct journey to the path of your calling.



Miles DuBose
Biology
Chemistry
Senior

Though my experience at Prairie View has been forever changed due to the pandemic, my involvement with the UMA has remained constant. These semesters during the pandemic have taught me to focus on my goals no matter what obstacles may come my way. If you continue to show the UMA that you are involved, then they will continue to be involved in your life. Their involvement in my academic career has been the main factor motivating me to advance my academic career. My postgraduate plans include attending pharmacy school to become a neuropharmacologist and working on the corporate side of pharmacy, rather than the clinical or retail area.



Alumni Corner

Dr. Brionna Davis-Reyes graduated with honors from Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU) in 2013 with a B.S. in biology, and a minor in chemistry. While a student at PVAMU, she was active in several organizations and programs, such as the Honors Program, Minority Association of Premedical Students (MAP S), Beta Beta Beta Biological Honor Society, and others. She is an Undergraduate Medical Academy (UMA) alumna, and received invaluable advice, mentorship, and resources from the faculty and staff during her time as a member. The UMA supported Dr. Davis-Reyes' interests in research, and she spent every summer at research internships across the nation. This ultimately led to her decision to join the Post-Baccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP) in 2013 at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, TX. PREP allowed her to focus on research for a year and assess whether she had a future career in biomedical research. Dr. Davis-Reyes soon discovered that she was passionate about addiction sciences and applied to join the Human Pathophysiology and Translational Medicine program in 2014. She was admitted and worked under Dr. Noelle C. Anastasio studying the neurobiology of impulsivity, or behavior without sufficient foresight, in rats.

Her unique project focused on the glutamate system, impulsivity, and addiction; she showcased her work at several national and international conferences—she also successfully submitted 11 abstracts during her graduate career. Dr. Davis-Reyes has six publications in print, including two in which she was the primary lead scientist: one in *Biochemical Pharmacology* (2019), and one in *Behavioral Pharmacology* (special issue: Translation Research in Behavioral Pharmacology; 2020). She is also an contributing author on a book chapter in *Primer on Substance Use Disorders*, entitled, “Impulsivity and Drug-Seeking Behavior in Substance Misuse: A Preclinical Perspective.” She has won several travel awards, including the Primm-Singleton Minority Travel Award from College on Problems of Drug Dependence (CPDD), the Center for Addiction Research (CAR) Endowment Travel Award, the University of Alabama Neuroscience Roadmap Scholar NEURAL Travel Award, Society for Neuroscience Professional Development Award, National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Diversity Scholars Award, and Neuroscience Scholars Program Enrichment Funds Travel Award. She has also won several awards for her research, including the National Student Research Forum Frances Adoue Lynch Research Award for Best Poster Presentation, second place for best oral presentation at the NEURAL conference, the CAR Best Research Image Award and “Streppa Shining Star Award.” Dr. Davis-Reyes has also shown an interest in communicating her translational research to the lay public, a critical and underutilized skill in the field, and was a finalist in the “T1-T4 in 3” contest where she presented her research to a predominantly lay audience in three minutes or less. While a student, Dr. Davis-Reyes remained active on campus and was a treasurer for the Society for Translational Research, an active member of the Society for Neuroscience Galveston Chapter, and a graduate student representative of the UTMB Diversity Council. She was also a graduate student instructor and successfully taught Critical Reading of Scientific Literature for two years to PREP students. Dr. Davis-Reyes completed her degree in March of 2020, and she is now a postdoctoral fellow at Yale University under Dr. Marc N. Potenza, studying impulsivity and substance use disorders using clinical neuroimaging tools.



Dr. Davis-Reyes is passionate about diversity work and has been an advocate for equity in STEM for many years. At Yale University, she cofounded the Yale School of Medicine Black Postdoctoral Association (YBPA) to foster an inclusive community amongst black postdoctoral fellows/associates. The organization is involved in community outreach, highlighting phenomenal black scientists, and providing opportunities for career development. Most recently, Dr. Davis-Reyes has been recognized as a rising star in the Top 1000 Inspiring Black Scientists in America by *Cell Mentor* in collaboration with a Community of Scholars. This publication highlighted black scholars in research in order to emphasize the impact of representation in the sciences. When asked on her thoughts about her career and impact, she responded, “I am incredibly fortunate to be where I am today, and I attribute much of this success to the black mentors who influenced me throughout my career: Dr. Daniels from the UMA, the late Dr. Wilson from the PVAMU Honors program, Drs. Brown, Block, and really the whole Biology department. All these people helped ‘raise’ me in a sense. I am now in a position to help mentor others, and just generally show the world that black women, black people do really, *really* great science, and should absolutely, without a shadow of a doubt, be involved in STEM fields. We belong here, we make it better, we are important. The world tries to shut us down, but we can’t be stopped.”



Encouraging Words

“

Though no one
can go back and make
a brand-new start,
anyone can start
from now and make a
brand-new ending.”

CARL BARD

2021

woman's day

