

## SKILLS TRAINING IN A COVID WORLD: OSCEs

Faculty adapts to new ways of teaching clinical skills when safety is the No. 1 priority

### PART 1 OF A 3-PART SERIES

When the COVID-19 pandemic began in early 2020, the spring OSCE for the CCLCM year 2 students was cancelled, but by fall, faculty members were prepared to move ahead with this important exercise in a students' self-assessment of their clinical competence, with some modifications.

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The OSCE (pronounced OSS-kee) mimics real-world clinical scenarios, often involving standardized patients, where students can apply their clinical knowledge and skills around physical examination, physical diagnosis and communication. The students receive formative feedback that is immediate, specific and constructive from the preceptors. Held in the Simulation Center in the Health Education Campus, OSCEs offer a unique hands-on approach to learning and refining clinical skills. The various skills training is organized into stations, which small groups of students rotate through over the course of the day.

Traditionally, OSCE stands for objective structured clinical examination, but at CCLCM the acronym stands for objective structured clinical experience because the core of our evaluation process is formative, and we don't want OSCEs to represent a high-stakes examination but, rather, a point in the students' medical educational journey, explains Samina Yunus, MD, Assistant Professor of Family Medicine and OSCE Director. When designing the OSCE for fall, one of the priorities

was to maintain the integrity of formative feedback so that students would walk away with valuable feedback about what they did well and how they might improve.

"The other priority was safety. That was paramount," says Dr. Yunus. "Because of safety concerns, everyone involved completed a questionnaire on COVID symptoms and travel, restricted contact between the standardized patients and the students to six feet or more of distance, and used full PPE [personal protective equipment], contact precautions and sanitizers, consistently and liberally."

Standardized patients were used to assess the students' communication skills because a safe distance could be maintained. To demonstrate their cardiopulmonary and abdominal physical diagnosis skills, which require a hands-on approach, the students used manikins rather than standardized patients.

Each year, the fall OSCE is held for two consecutive days so students can have their choice of days and is coordinated by Judith Morgan, Clinical Skills Coordinator. Dyan Colpo, MEd, directs the Standardized Patient Program. Eight faculty mem-

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bers who serve as preceptors in the longitudinal clinic program also serve as OSCE preceptors on each of the two days. These faculty members are highly experienced in teaching. To avoid any potential conflict of interest during OSCEs, the preceptors are paired with students other than those they precept during longitudinal clinic, the patient care sessions in which both year 1 and 2 students are involved.

[Read “Longitudinal Clinic: A model system for real-world clinical learning.” \*InSight\*, August 2020 issue.](#)

The necessary adaptations to ensure safety created some challenges during the fall OSCE. Because of all the precautions, student progression through the various skills stations was slower than usual, and, in some cases, the manikins proved too bulky to accurately demonstrate certain competencies such as complete cardiopulmonary skills. Still, the students reported that the experience was useful for them to demonstrate their competencies and to receive formative feedback, which they received verbally right away and in writing later.

“I believe everyone felt that the essence of the OSCE was intact,” says Dr. Yunus, who is now working on creating virtual OSCEs, recognizing that a virtual experience works satisfactorily to assess communication and counseling skills but less so to demonstrate physical competencies. To further enhance the feedback, the students will review their written feedback and work on their physical examination and physical diagnosis skills during the longitudinal clinic with their preceptor.

“The unsung heroes here are the preceptors,” says Dr. Yunus. “They lead very busy schedules, yet they devote extra time to the students, spending all day at OSCEs. They’re the same people who will close the loop with their students during the longitudinal clinic. I love their sense of pride in what they do. To me, it brings back the history of medicine and the apprenticeship model, where students were taught the skills to provide good care by working with a senior physician. It’s a good feeling. It’s what has linked and continues to link each generation of healers.”

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### OSCE PRECEPTORS



Jeffrey Brown, DO



Richard Cartabuke, MD



Lisa Cloud, DO



Richard Devans, MD



Matthew Goldman, MD



Gordon Iheme, MD



Ruth Imrie, MD



Xian Jin, MD, PhD



Kevin Leisinger, MD



Laura Lipold, MD



Melanie Malec, MD



Yael Mauer, MD



Lauren Smit, DO



Neha Vyas, MD



Monica Yepes- Rios, MD

**THANK YOU FOR PRACTICING  
SOCIAL DISTANCING**

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# THREE QUESTIONS

**Samina Yunus, MD**  
OSCE Director



Dr. Samina Yunus



**Q: What is your clinical specialty?**

My clinical specialty is family medicine, with an additional certification in adolescent medicine.

**Q: What do you enjoy most about precepting/teaching CCLCM students?**

I love watching the students progress over the years, so I really enjoy the opportunity to be both a longitudinal preceptor for year 1 and 2 students and also a preceptor in their third year. I also believe teaching keeps me current on the advances in medicine and medical education.

**Q: What do you know now that you wish you had known then?**

It truly does not matter where you start. It is where you end that matters.

## FROM THE DEAN'S DESK



J. Harry (Bud) Isaacson, MD

## Hope is around the corner

When 2020 began, who would have guessed that within just a few months a novel virus would turn the world upside down, causing economic turmoil, disruption in the ways we live and work, and, most significantly, loss of life. Within our CCLCM family, we have experienced all these things. We continue to cope with the pandemic together.

From the beginning, our faculty, staff and students jumped at the chance to be part of the solution, from modifying the curriculum to engaging in vital research and helping neighbors get much-needed resources. These efforts have been neatly chronicled on our [COVID response microsite](#), which also includes a current [event timeline](#) that juxtaposes the CCLCM response with major national and local news related to COVID-19. I encourage you to peruse the site if you haven't lately.

Naturally, much of how CCLCM operates looks different because of COVID. For the most part, we're working and learning remotely. When we are together, we're wearing full personal protective equipment and maintaining a safe distance. The second-year students missed their spring OSCEs this year because of COVID, but the fall OSCEs were held, though they, too, looked a little different because of COVID. Read more about the experience in this issue's cover story, "Skills training in a COVID world."

I am profoundly grateful for everyone's contributions during this uncertain and stressful time. I cannot thank our faculty, staff and students enough for remaining resolute in their efforts to look for the opportunities where others saw only roadblocks. Your tireless efforts, enthusiasm and innovative ideas in service of educating our students and caring for those who are struggling and for one another are noticed.

As we head into the winter holidays, please continue to take care of yourself and others, using the methods we know that work to keep us healthy: frequently washing our hands, wearing masks and staying physically distant from one another. Vaccines are in sight. Hope is around the corner.

**Bud Isaacson, MD**

Executive Dean

# Avoid FERPA violations with this short course

If you have access to student (not trainee) records and want to understand your obligations under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), take this short training course, called [FERPA Essentials](#), available in MyLearning.

FERPA protects the privacy of student records. This brief course explains the requirements of FERPA, when it is acceptable to disclose student records, students' rights under FERPA and exceptions to those rights.

The module takes only about 12 minutes to complete.



## FERPA

Family Education  
Rights and Privacy Act

## Search underway for Assistant Dean for Diversity and Inclusion for Students

Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine has launched a search for an Assistant Dean for Diversity and Inclusion for Students at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine and Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine of Case Western Reserve University (CCLCM).

The role reports to the Vice Dean for Medical Education and the Executive Dean for CCLCM. In this new role, the Assistant Dean for Diversity and Inclusion for Students will foster alignment of the many resources across the enterprise toward our goal of creating an all-inclusive, welcoming and supportive working and learning environment for students. This position supports both the Lerner College Program and the CWRU School of Medicine University Program.

Primary responsibilities include providing leadership support for student-facing diversity and inclusion priorities and initiatives; working with CWRU on education and training; advising on policies and practices; collaborating with stakeholders on diversity and anti-racism efforts; and contributing to strategies to create a more vibrant and inclusive learning environment.

This position is open to candidates who hold a medical degree (MD/DO/MBBS) from Cleveland Clinic and all Case-affiliate hospitals, and who have knowledge of the Lerner College Program and the CWRU School of Medicine University Program.

[View the complete job description and requirements.](#)

Interested applicants should submit their CV and letter of interest by Dec. 18 to Tracye Conley-Jackson at [tlc2@case.edu](mailto:tlc2@case.edu).

## Challenge and refine your teaching skills

If you are a healthcare professional with teaching and educational leadership responsibilities, you may be interested in the Cleveland Clinic/Cleveland State University Master of Education (MEd) in Health Professions Education program -- the only one like it in the region. The program is designed to help healthcare professionals who have teaching responsibilities further refine their strengths and to help organizations build and sustain a pipeline of educator talent.

Classes for the two-year program will begin in the fall of 2021 and end in the summer of 2023, for a total of 30 credit hours over six semesters. Classes are held synchronously (virtual, via Zoom) and asynchronously (self-paced, online). Class size is limited to 20, and applications are currently being accepted.

[View the curriculum and course descriptions.](#)

A blend of online asynchronous and synchronous classes are offered weekly. The virtual live classes are held via Zoom on Tuesday evenings. We use a cohort model so that all students participate together in all core courses, which encourages teamwork and collaborative learning.

The highly interactive courses are taught by Cleveland Clinic and Cleveland State University faculty, modeling adult education principles and practices. In the program, you will enhance your skills in:

- Adult learning principles and practices
- Curriculum design and instruction
- Learner assessment
- Program evaluation
- Educational scholarship
- Interpersonal and communication skills

To date, four cohorts of healthcare professionals (52) have taken advantage of the program. Twenty-nine have graduated, and 23 are currently in the program. This uniformly exciting growth experience has contributed to caregiver engagement and talent retention, and graduates have consistently brought their educational expertise back to their home institute.

[Learn more about the program](#) and [apply to be part of the experience](#).

Email [MEHPESupport@ccf.org](mailto:MEHPESupport@ccf.org) if you have any questions or if you wish to schedule a virtual meeting to find out how this program can help you reach your professional goals.



Abhilash Suresh

## Abhilash Suresh selected as finalist for research award

Kudos to Abhilash Suresh ('24) who was selected as a finalist for the 2020 Bumpus Basic Science Award, based on his abstract entitled "The Role of Long Non-Coding RNA in the Evolution of Resistance to Targeted Therapy in ALK Non-Small Cell Lung Carcinoma." Along with the other semi-finalists, Abhilash presented his research to the Basic Science Bumpus Award Selection Committee virtually on Oct. 23.

The Bumpus Award was created to highlight excellence in research by graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in basic and clinical research. It is named after F. Merlin Bumpus, PhD, who served as Chair of the Lerner Research Institute from 1966 to 1985. Abhilash's finalist award came with a cash prize.



Dr. Amy Nowacki

## Dr. Amy Nowacki extends national committee term

Congratulations to Amy S. Nowacki, PhD, Associate Professor of Medicine and Associate Staff Biostatistician in Quantitative Health Sciences, who has been asked to extend her participation as a member of the National Board of Medical Examiners' USMLE Biostatistics & Epidemiology Test Material Development Committee (TMDC). Dr. Nowacki's two-year term ends in 2020, and she will stay on another year, through 2021.

In her role, Dr. Nowacki helps write USMLE (step 1 - 3) test questions related to biostatistics and epidemiology.



Wendy Melissa Coronado



Dr. Baljendra Kapoor

## Student publishes as first author in top journal

Congratulations to Wendy Melissa Coronado ('22), who was first author on a retrospective study entitled "[Predictors of Occurrence and Risk of Hepatic Encephalopathy After TIPS Creation: A 15-Year Experience.](#)" published in *CardioVascular and Interventional Radiology*.

Her co-authors include Connie Ju, MD, UCLA Medical Center (CWRU '19); Jennifer Bullen, biostatistician with Cleveland Clinic Quantitative Health Sciences; and her research mentor, Baljendra S. Kapoor, MD, Professor of Radiology.

"Wendy did phenomenal work in conducting this retrospective study and having it published in CVIR, one of the top two journals in interventional radiology," says Dr. Kapoor.

# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

## Perry Dinardo



Perry Dinardo ('21) did not always know that she wanted to become a doctor. As a matter of fact, in seventh grade, one of her teachers suggested she pursue medicine after she successfully completed an anatomy module. Perry recalls politely responding, "Thanks, but I'm going to be an astronaut." Today, Perry is completing her last year of medical school and is eager to apply to residency and pursue a career in primary care pediatrics.

"I had a lot of points along the way where I considered other career paths besides medicine," she shares. In addition to her early goal of going to Mars, she thought about becoming a novelist, elementary school teacher or a social worker, but, she says, "Each time I thought about a new direction, I always decided medicine was the right path for me."

Perry, a native of Winchester, Mass., started her journey in medicine as an undergraduate at Duke University in N.C., where she majored in psychology and volunteered in the Duke Hospital Emergency Department. During her time at Duke, she also completed two minors, one in chemistry and another in theater studies. "Theater gave me the opportunity to use my brain in a different way and also allowed me to meet new people," she says.

After Perry officially decided on becoming a doctor, she knew she wanted to pursue pediatrics because of her love for children. From an early age, she involved herself in child-related roles, including babysitter, camp counselor and swim instructor. Each role reconfirmed her professional path and goal of having a positive impact on children's lives.

"I absolutely love working with children. I light up whenever I'm around them," she says.

At CCLCM, Perry has continued to immerse herself in volunteer and research opportunities related to children. For her research thesis, she worked with Ellen Rome, MD, Professor of Pediatrics, on a clinical research study investigating treatment outcomes in children and adolescents with avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID). During her research year, she also volunteered at The Intergenerational School in Shaker Heights, where she helped children practice their reading skills.

"Getting kids excited about reading makes me so happy because reading has been so important in my own life," she says. "It was a thrill to see kids getting excited about books and storytelling."

While at CCLCM, Perry also tackled a master's degree in bioethics and medical humanities, graduating in May 2020. "Combining the two degrees was one of the best decisions I've made during medical school. It has allowed me to see medical cases in a different light," she says.

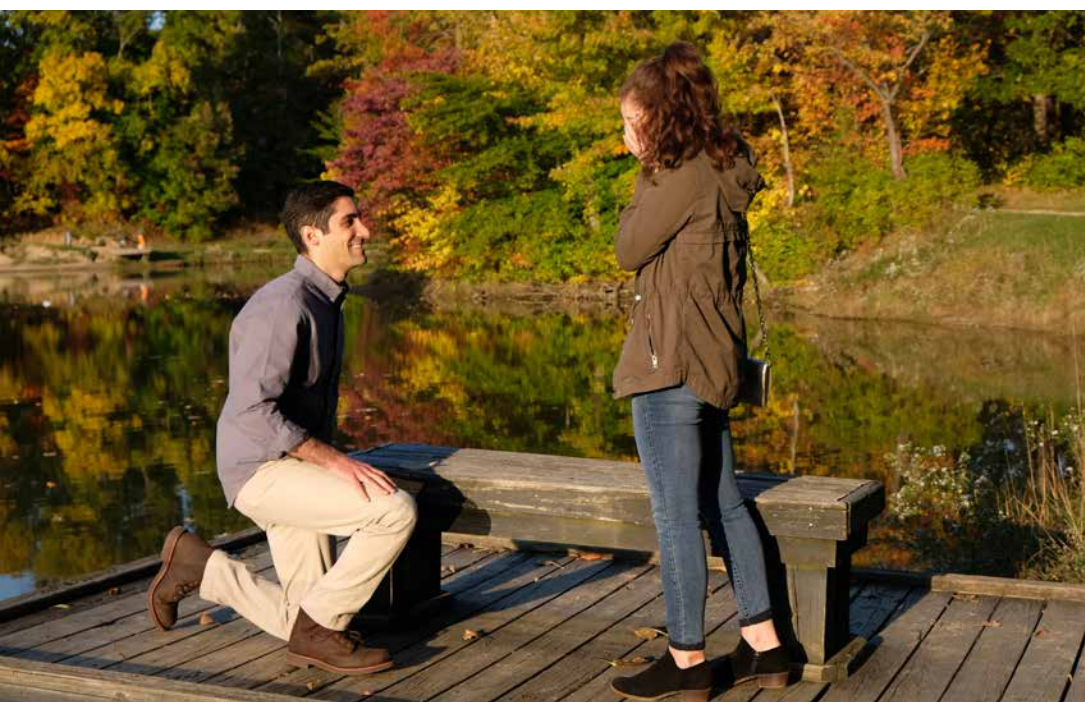
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## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT Perry Dinardo *continued*

Perry is mindful to carve out time for various social events. Her favorite annual event at CCLCM is Story Slam because it allows her to combine her background in theater with her joy for reading and storytelling. She has also participated in Doc Opera all five years, and it was even her idea to name last year's show "Wizard of Gauze"!

In her spare time, Perry enjoys practicing circus arts. As a kid, she attended a circus arts camp in Vermont and instantly fell in love with the craft. Now she likes to connect with some form of circus arts in every new city she visits. Her favorite circus arts activity is flying trapeze; however, she hasn't had the chance to practice much recently because there aren't any flying trapeze rigs in Ohio.

Perry also continues to enjoy reading and creative writing, and is always thinking of new ways to share stories with her peers. She also loves spending time with her fiancé, Bobby Unger ('20)!



## A CCLCM engagement

**Congratulations to Perry Dinardo ('21) and Bobby Unger, MD ('20), who got engaged in October.**

The couple began dating when they were undergraduate students together at Duke University, and although Dr. Unger is from Ohio and Perry is from Massachusetts, they discovered at their Duke graduation that their New Jersey grandparents already knew one another!

Dr. Unger is currently doing a preliminary year of internal medicine at MetroHealth in Cleveland and will start his radiology residency in 2021.

"Getting engaged was the best news of 2020 for me!" says Perry. The entire CCLCM family shares the couple's joy, happy to end this year on a high note.



**Dr. Hannah Wang**

## Dr. Hannah Wang named Chair-Elect of ASCP Resident Council

Hannah Wang, MD ('17), was first introduced to the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) by Karl Theil, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor of Pathology and one of her mentors. In fact, he nominated her for the ASCP medical student award in 2017.

Dr. Theil recently shared that Dr. Wang, now a fourth-year pathology resident at Stanford Medicine, is a rising star in the ASCP, serving as the Chair-Elect of the organization's Resident Council.

"I am so grateful he is still taking an interest in my career," says Dr. Wang.

[Read about Dr. Wang's involvement in ASCP as well as her advice to residents.](#)



**Dr. Karl Theil**

### Advancing Our Mission

The Education Institute welcomes donations to advance its mission of educating those who serve. Individuals, families, foundations and corporations that believe in the value of education are making a difference in the future of patient care with their generosity. To learn how you can help, please contact Theresa Holthaus at 216.444.1839 or at [holthat@ccf.org](mailto:holthat@ccf.org).

### Alumni: Share Your News

We'd like to hear about what you've been doing since graduation. If you have news to share (maybe you're involved in an interesting research project or you recently returned from a global health mission), please email Laura Greenwald at [greenwl@ccf.org](mailto:greenwl@ccf.org).

# InSight

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