

Student-led project puts a fresh face on community collaboration

Last fall, a group of CWRU University and College programs students began planning “FRESH Fairfax,” a collaborative project focused on health screenings and nutrition, with residents of Cleveland’s Fairfax community.

Then COVID-19 hit.

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Student-led project puts a fresh face on community collaboration *continued*

After being postponed because of safety precautions, FRESH (Food Resources for Empowerment and Security in Healthy Living) Fairfax will move forward this fall as an initiative within the required interprofessional education (IPE) curriculum, addressing community-identified health disparities.

“Cleveland Clinic is located in the Fairfax community, but for a neighborhood so close to healthcare resources, there is a lot of healthcare disparity. There are higher rates of co-morbid conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure among the residents,” says Scott Anjewierden ('21). “Cleveland Clinic is creating initiatives to give back to the community it is a part of.”

FRESH Fairfax involves Cleveland Clinic, Case Western Reserve University health professions (medical, [including CCLCM], physician assistant, nursing, social work and public health) students and Fairfax community residents. The project, led by Prabalini Rajendram, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine and Director of Interprofessional Education, and Alan L. Hull, MD, PhD, Professor Emeritus of Medicine, is funded by a \$28,849 Cleveland Clinic Caregiver Catalyst Grant, which funds projects that show the most promise for making an impact within one year.

“I think the keys are not going in, but working with residents to identify what the need is – having more sensitivity at the very beginning,” Dr. Hull says. “Social work talks about the need for understanding ideas and beliefs and the culture the people in this community have, and how those will affect their choices and how we approach them. In that way, it’s unique.”

A steering committee comprising Cleveland Clinic faculty and staff, CWRU graduate school student representatives, CCLCM student representatives and Fairfax Renaissance Development Corporation staff met for several months in 2019 to lay the groundwork for the project, the overall goal of which is to address health disparities in the Fairfax neighborhood. The committee also met several times with Fairfax community residents.

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L to R: CWRU physician assistant graduates Morgan Green ('20) and Mark Rodney ('19), and CCLCM medical student Lauren Larkin ('21) were among many committee members and Fairfax residents who together painted a community mural in 2019.

Student-led project puts a fresh face on community collaboration *continued*

“It’s a different dynamic when you get to meet someone on their turf instead of them coming to your hospital or clinic,” Scott says. “It’s interesting the things they are willing to share when you are just there to listen to them. They just want you to know what their life is like. You learn from them and the challenges they face.”

Lauren Larkin ('21) says residents initially were hesitant to buy into the project because of some distrust between the community and the health institutions. “Different people were coming in and saying they were going to do something, and for a couple of months they did, but then they would disappear,” she says. “It was interesting to overcome that barrier and gain trust with the community and emphasize this is not something we’re planning on doing short term. We want it to be long term, and we want to continue to pass it down to different student cohorts.”

Using a strengths-based approach, the students will lead a project with Fairfax residents to gather baseline health data. The residents will participate in health screenings that measure weight, blood pressure, cholesterol and hemoglobin A1C, with results immediately available. Having rapid results will allow students to sit and talk with the residents about their numbers and educate them about how nutrition, healthy eating and other lifestyle choices can impact those values.

The students will also connect residents with appropriate community resources, such as the Langston Hughes Community Health and Education Center. “We will provide a short-term emphasis on lifestyle choices and connect them to long-term sustainable solutions that already exist,” Scott says.

Scott says the pilot project will also be immensely helpful in giving students a space to experience working across different health disciplines and seeing how team dynamics influence the planning of a project.

“Our future careers are all about IPE,” says Lauren. “When taking care of patients, you have to work with a team. You have to know when to lead and when to ask for help, who to refer patients to. It’s a good experience to get to see what other disciplines do.”

Lauren and Scott were among six students who virtually presented a [poster about FRESH Fairfax](#) at the recent [Nexus Summit 2020](#).



ADAPTING TO A NEW WORLD

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 12TH STATE-OF-THE-COLLEGE ADDRESS

Noting the virtual nature of the 12th state-of-the-college address, Professor of Medicine and Executive Dean Bud Isaacson, MD, opened the meeting and expressed his wish that everyone could be physically together to share refreshments, as the August evening was a warm one.

Dr. Isaacson acknowledged the many contributions of Case Western Reserve University partners; Admissions and Student Affairs team; physician advisors; faculty and administrative support team; and all the CCLCM deans.

Of the CCLCM faculty in particular, he said, “What would we be without our outstanding faculty? The faculty have adjusted and adapted to a changing world in ways that we couldn’t have imagined ... not only the faculty teaching our basic science pre-clerkship courses, which have been converted to a virtual format, but also our clinical faculty who have adapted to managing their own practices through COVID and continuing our mission to educate future physicians. We’re just so thankful.”

Dr. Isaacson noted that the CCLCM administrative support team, led by Marcy Pardee, RRT, MEd, does an outstanding job supporting one another, stepping up to the plate when asked to take on new tasks and doing more with less. “They just continue to amaze me and our entire leadership team in their ability to get things done. So if you were in an auditorium, we’d give you a standing ovation,” he said.

He acknowledged Pamela Davis, MD, PhD, who retired as Dean of the CWRU School of Medicine; Stan Gerson, MD, who was appointed Interim Dean of the CWRU School of Medicine; Lia Logio, MD, who recently joined CWRU as Vice Dean for Medical Education; and Steve Ricanati, MD, Associate Dean of Student Affairs at CWRU School of Medicine, who filled in between the time Patricia Thomas, MD, the former Vice Dean for Medical Education, retired and Dr. Logio joined CWRU.

CCLCM PRIORITIES

Diversity, inclusion and anti-racism top the list of CCLCM priorities for the year. Wellness also is a top priority, particularly for students dealing with an abundance of virtual activity and social isolation. The priorities include:

- Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-racism
- Wellness
- COVID
- Communication
- Faculty Development
- Climate Change
- Professional Identity Formation

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Diversity, inclusion and anti-racism

Monica Yepes-Rios, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine and Director of Diversity and Inclusion, and Jazmine Sutton, MD, Associate Director of Diversity and Inclusion, presented on CCLCM's diversity, inclusion, equity and anti-racism efforts. The CCLCM commitment is to build our community, train the next generation of physician leaders to stand against structural racism and decrease health disparities.

A needs assessment showed that microaggressions represent a significant concern for our students, so Drs. Yepes-Rios and Sutton conducted an allyship session in APM 3 and plan to conduct faculty development sessions. A Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-racism Steering Committee was formed in June, and in response to a student proposal, a letter was sent to students apologizing that some of their concerns weren't addressed sooner. Since then, various action groups — Admissions, Research, Curriculum, Learning Climate, Faculty Development, Mentoring, Community Engagement/Activism and Scholarly Work — have been formed, each having developed specific action items to address.

Although much has been done, there's much more to do. If you are passionate about this topic, the team enthusiastically welcomes your participation.



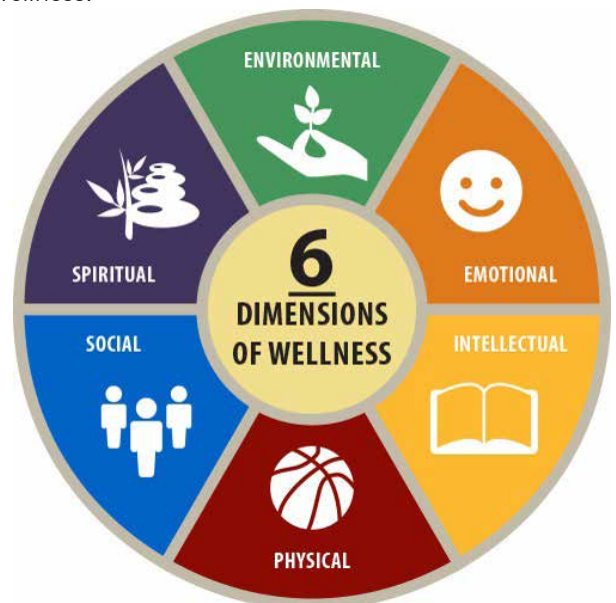
Wellness

Cory Chevalier, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine and Director of Wellness for CCLCM, gave an overview of the role of CCLCM Wellness, including the ways in which wellness is being integrated into the curriculum, as well as the many resources available to students to encourage wellness.

"What we want to do is help support students' personal wellness, give tools and resources to help with that and provide education to find new ways to thrive," he said.

A student-driven program, CCLCM Wellness comprises a Wellness/Self-Care Curriculum Committee and a Social Wellness Committee, which is playing an especially important role during the pandemic. To combat social isolation, safe activities, such as physically distant group painting and distance outdoor activities, are being planned.

Anjali Kala, LISW, a behavioral health outpatient therapist, is available to students to support their emotional well-being, and Dr. Chevalier reminded students that he is also always available for any help, support and discussion.



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Timeline of CCLCM response

COVID

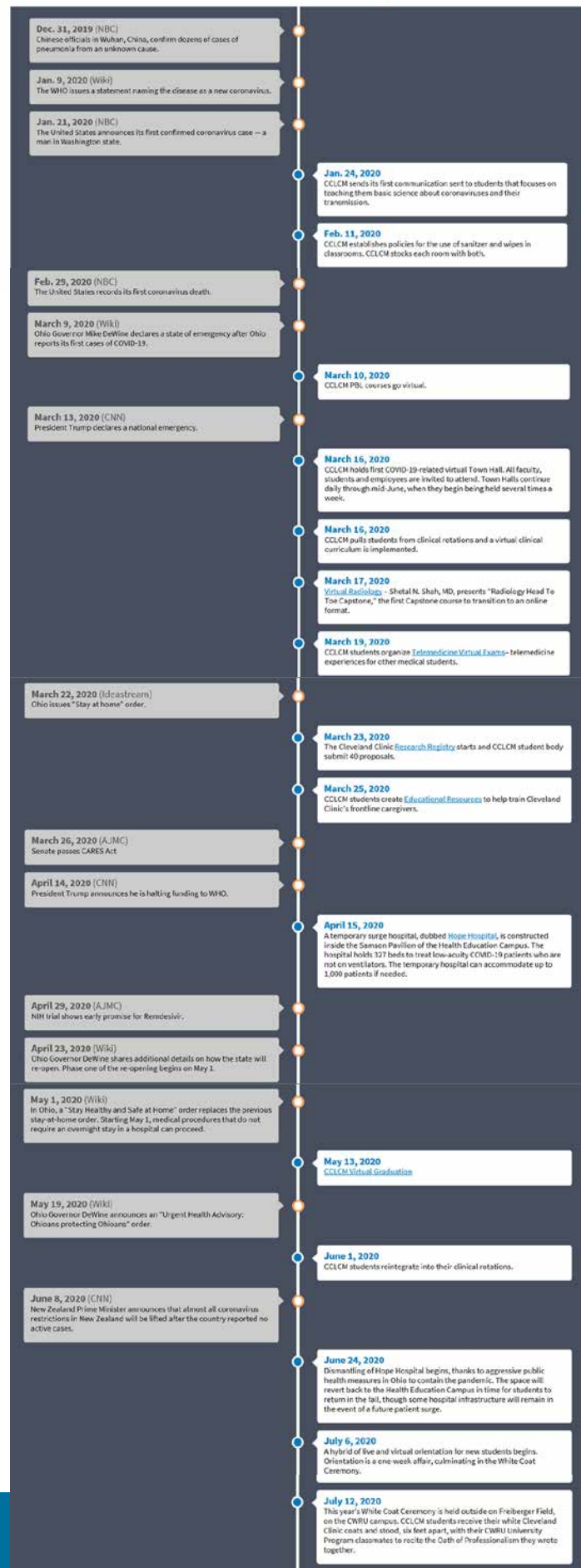
Thanks to the efforts of Neil Mehta, MBBS, MS, Professor of Medicine and Associate Dean for Curricular Affairs, Debra Shirley and Laura Greenwald, CCLCM launched a new microsite that chronicles how CCLCM students and faculty rose to the challenge during the COVID-19 pandemic and that includes a timeline of world events juxtaposed with CCLCM events.

"It's just remarkable to look back and think about our core clerkships and how we were able to maintain the educational integrity of these rotations despite COVID," Dr. Isaacson said.

[Explore the site.](#)

Dr. Isaacson shared photos of the Health Education Campus after it was converted to Hope Hospital and then after the emergency surge hospital was dismantled. The HEC courtyard now houses minimal furniture to ensure physical distancing. A plexiglass shield has been installed at the admissions desk, although admissions are being conducted virtually this year, and classrooms have plexiglass shields around the podiums and one chair per table to ensure physical distancing.

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Communication

A great deal of emphasis is placed on communication and transparency at CCLCM. On the student side, Dr. Isaacson and Christine Warren, MD ('09), Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine and Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs, meet individually with students during years 1, 3 and 5 to hear about their experience and how CCLCM could be better. Based on input from students, the CCLCM team is considering a monthly student newsletter to help communicate news, such as changes in curriculum.

Students as well as faculty and staff are invited to the virtual CCLCM Town Halls, which are held several times a week and focus mainly on COVID-19, with participation from faculty members with expertise in the virus. CCLCM also publishes a monthly newsletter, called [InSight](#), the link for which is sent electronically to students, faculty, staff, parents and donors.

"If there's ever a time that you feel your voice isn't being heard, please reach out to me directly and I'll be happy to meet with you," said Dr. Isaacson.

Faculty development

CCLCM is offering basic and advanced Zoom training for seminar leaders, and planning is underway for core skills training for faculty who are teaching students on core rotations.

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Climate change

“Climate change is really looming as a threat for civilization, and we started to explore this through the lens of what our students need to succeed in the future with a changing climate and all of the health implications,” said Dr. Isaacson.

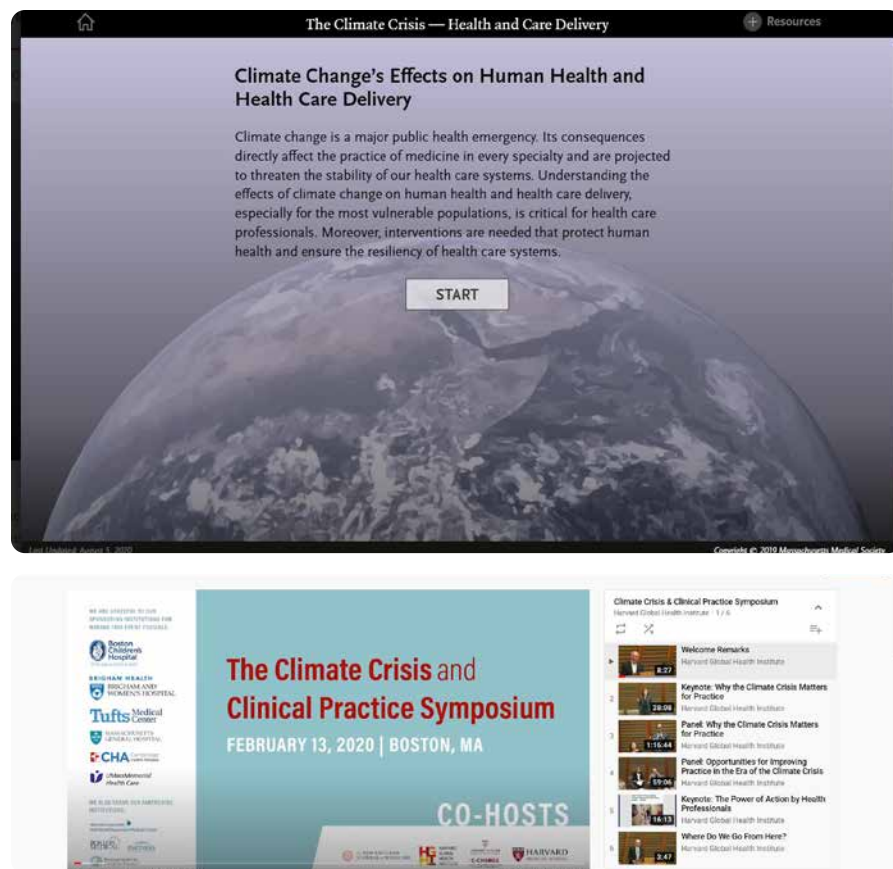
Ilyssa Gordon, MD, PhD, Associate Professor of Pathology, is leading a climate change working group involving faculty and students that aims to integrate climate change education into the curriculum. In January, Marvin Natowicz, MD, PhD, Professor of Pathology, organized the first of a series of seminars on “Achieving the Possible: Projects to Repair the Planet,” which dealt with food waste, food recovery and food insecurity.

On a local level, CCLCM is eager to connect with those in the Cleveland community doing positive work around climate change. On a national level, we are fortunate to be closely connected with CCLCM graduate Renee Salas, MD, MPH, MS ('09), Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine at Harvard Medical School, who is on the leading edge of climate crisis research and practice. Dr. Salas was the lead author of this Interactive Perspective, published by the *New England Journal of Medicine*, called [The Climate Crisis — Health and Care Delivery](#).

In February, Dr. Natowicz and a group of CCLCM students attended the inaugural Climate Crisis and Clinical Practice Symposium in Boston, organized by Dr. Salas and her team. We have since formed a partnership with that group and plan to hold a similar symposium in Cleveland when the time is right.

“I really think there’s an opportunity for CCLCM and CWRU to be a leader in the area of climate health and how we train our students,” said Dr. Isaacson.

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Professional identity formation

Dr. Mehta conceptualized the exploration of how students form their professional identity as physicians and how, through the curriculum, we might deliberately help shepherd students on this journey. This initiative is yet another area in which CCLCM can become thought leaders.

CLASS OF 2025

Dr. Warren briefly described the Class of 2025, offering several highlights:

- The class of 2025 was chosen from 1,849 applicants.
- The class of 2025 comprises 19 females and 13 males, which is consistent with the national trend of more women than men enrolling in medical school.
- This year, six of our new students identify as belonging to an under-represented-in-medicine group.
- Most of our new students have a permanent address in Midwest and eastern states.

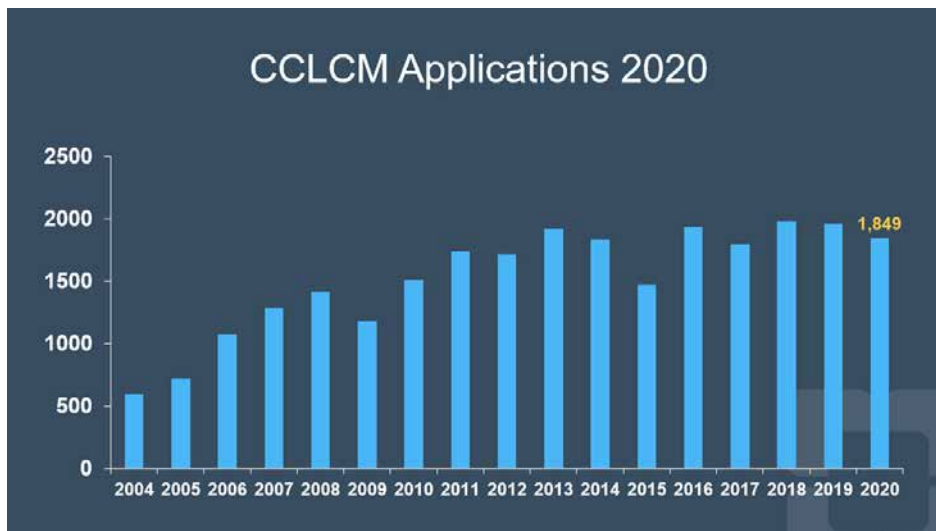
Learn more about our incoming students in this article: [“Welcome Class of 2025!”](#)

“I look forward to sharing in their journeys in the years to come,” Dr. Warren said.

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Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine Class of 2025





OFFICE OF FACULTY AFFAIRS

Gene Barnett, MD, MBA, Professor of Neurological Surgery and Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, presented an overview of the important work undertaken by the Office of Faculty Affairs, describing the office's many responsibilities including appointments and promotions; reporting; governance; and faculty/career development.

Dr. Barnett praised the Faculty Affairs team: Dineen Lancaster, Program Manager, and Elizabeth Patterson, Administrative Program Coordinator. He also gave a shout out to Rob Fairchild, PhD, Professor of Molecular Medicine, and Cynthia Kubu, PhD, Professor of Medicine, who play special roles on the faculty side, as well as the members of the CAP and JCAP committees who give selflessly of their time.

Dr. Isaacson closed the address by encouraging everyone — students and faculty — to participate on CCLCM committees, adding that “We are stronger when we are more diverse.”

NOW ONLINE:

Operating room orientation and safety videos

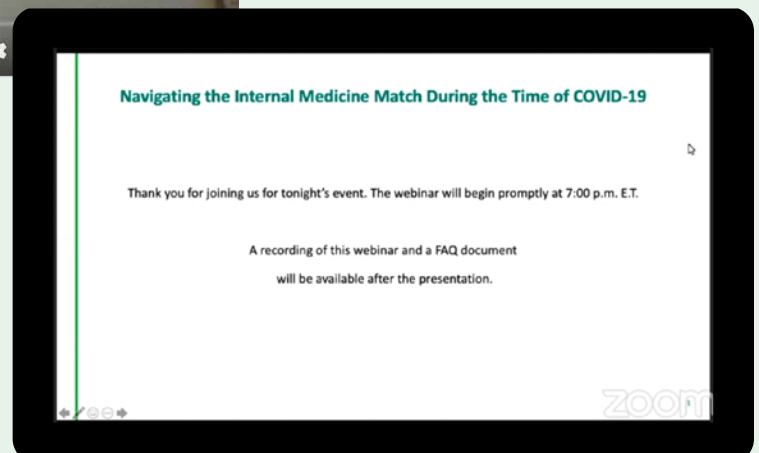
Students who are planning to join a surgical team in the operating room can access a three-part virtual OR orientation series beforehand. In addition, students can view a number of safety videos on topics that include eye protection, needle passing, OR etiquette, hand wash, gown/gloving, and contamination.

[View the resources.](#)

Need help preparing for the residency Match?

The American College of Physicians (ACP) offers [resources and advice](#) for medical students preparing for residency, such as what you should be thinking about during your third and fourth years of medical school, how to prepare for residency interviews, what you need to know about the Match, and more.

If you're interested specifically in applying to internal medicine residency programs, get advice from a panel of experts, including Abby Spencer, MD, MS, Professor of Medicine and Director of the Cleveland Clinic IM Residency Program, in this recent [webinar](#), presented by the ACP Council of Student Members and the Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine.



CCLCM students: Commend our educators with a Teaching Recognition Award

Educating future caregivers has been part of Cleveland Clinic's mission since 1921. You can help recognize our educators for their skill in, and enthusiasm for, teaching by sending them a Teaching Recognition Award and other awards, available through Caregiver Celebrations. All Cleveland Clinic educator awardees receive an e-certificate.

Criteria for the award

Recipients must meet one of the following criteria to receive a Teaching Recognition Award:

- Demonstrates passion for teaching
- Actively engages learners
- Provides constructive feedback
- Presents content effectively
- Creates safe learning environment
- Mentors/coaches learners
- Adapts teaching to level of learners

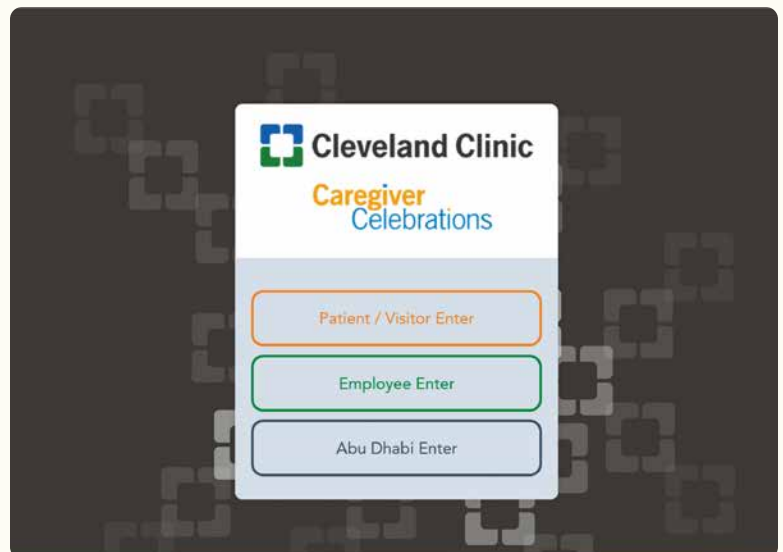
All Cleveland Clinic caregivers and CCLCM students can send and receive not only Teaching Recognition Awards, but also any recognition, such as Appreciation awards and birthday/anniversary eCards, that are available via Caregiver Celebrations.

How to submit the award

The award can be submitted via the [Caregiver Celebrations website](#):

1. Choose "Recognize" from the top tool bar
2. Enter the name of the educator(s) you wish to recognize
3. Choose "Teaching Recognition Award," select the behavior you wish to recognize and write your message
4. Select how you would like to deliver your award: email or print

If you're the recipient of a Teaching Recognition Award, be sure to add it to your CV. You've earned it!



Questions? Please email Gina Gati in HR Operations at gatig@ccf.org or 216.319.5592.

Bethany Bruno elected to national association

Congratulations to Bethany Bruno ('21) on being elected as Student Director to the Board of Directors of the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities. Bethany begins her one-year term on the board at the conclusion of the virtual Annual Members' Meeting in November.

"This accomplishment speaks to Bethany's continued amazing work and will allow her to influence the professional field of bioethics," says Paul J. Ford, PhD, Associate Professor of Medicine and Director of the Neuroethics Program.



Bethany Bruno

Maeve Pascoe wins lecture series award

Congratulations to Maeve Pascoe ('24) who won an award for her artwork that she submitted to the Empathy and Valuing Every Person Lecture Series: Three Phases of COVID-19 experiences. Maeve said she dedicated her artwork, entitled "The Fear," to her grandmother, who passed away in April, and to all of the caregivers working tirelessly on the front lines, fighting for a better future.



Maeve Pascoe

Maeve presented her artwork as part of the first virtual session on Sept. 14.

"The Art category is new this year, which makes Maeve Pascoe the first recipient of the award," says Paul J. Ford, PhD, Associate Professor of Medicine and Director of the Neuroethics Program. "We are very excited that for two years running, one of the awards has been earned by a CCLCM student."

Hosted by the Center for Bioethics, the event is the third annual held in honor of Anthony Thomas Jr., MD. Each award comes with a cash prize, and [submissions are still being accepted for the November session.](#)



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.

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.

InSight

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