

INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

(Section 46a-68-93)

September 2020

This section was found to be in compliance in the previous filing, and there were no proposals/recommendations.

UConn Health acknowledges that the development and implementation of programs not covered elsewhere in Sections 46a-68-75 through 46a-68-114, inclusive, is an important part of the road to affirmative action. Accordingly, UConn Health's executive and senior management staff view these regulations as a minimum framework in which to further develop innovative comprehensive programs and to create opportunities for potential and existing staff that may not otherwise be available. Such innovations work to ensure the full and fair participation of protected class persons in all areas of the employment process.

Examples of innovative programs are as follows:

- Summer employment programs;
- Youth programs;
- Apprenticeships;
- Work-study programs;
- Job sharing arrangements;
- Internships;
- Day care programs;
- Creation of new positions;
- Outreach for high school and college students;
- Reassignments
- Positive, results-oriented program designed to achieve affirmative action.

UConn Health implores proactive measures in its recruitment endeavors by establishing networks to source underrepresented groups into the health and medical field for its different departments. The Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine makes it a top priority to ensure recruitment and retention of students from diverse groups in American health care professions.

The Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs also actively engages underrepresented medical and dental students and supports those who are enrolled throughout the academic year. Creating a pipeline of programs has been successful in helping participants realize their dreams of becoming health care providers. This department-focused outreach is instrumental in aiding the development of the future health career workforce in the United States.

UConn Health Center has developed and implemented the following initiatives to further its commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action:

Utilization of noncompetitive programs

Opportunities were created that resulted in full and fair participation of all protected group members using promotions through re-classifications. Human Resources has a formalized policy for reclassifications of filled positions which sets forth a procedure to determine if an employee is performing duties outside of their current classification. Noncompetitive advancement is available in the medical technologist, physical therapy, social worker positions. In the area of nursing, the Health Unit Clerk (Office Assistants) positions are under filled at the Clerk Typist level and the incumbents are reclassified after meeting the training and experience requirements. There are two (2) nursing clinical ladder programs, one for inpatient and one for outpatient nurses. Both programs have established criteria for promotion and employees can be promoted by applying for and meeting the standards. New graduate nurses are brought in at a CN1 Level and promoted to the journeyman CN2 Level after completion of the probationary period and orientation.

Day Care Program

Creative Child Care Center is located on the lower campus of the UConn Health Center and it is primarily for UConn Health employees. It provides programs for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and kindergarten-aged children. The program enlists qualified, degreed teachers with low student to teacher ratios. The Center uses students from Early Childhood Education programs to assist in maintaining ratios as well as providing an educational experience for the students. This facility remained at full capacity throughout the plan year allowing employees to benefit from a program that allows them full and fair participation in UConn Health employment opportunities.

Internships/Externships

The Clinical Engineering department provided a clinical internship program for graduate students in the Masters of Biomedical Engineering program. The internships afforded participants the opportunity to work in a health care environment. The internships are for a period of one (1) year.

The University Medical Group (UMG) has contracts with the following educational facilities to provide both internships and externships for students in the fields of nursing, medical assisting, and other related areas:

Stone Academy	Sawyer Business School
Stony Brook University School of Nursing	University of Hartford

Quinnipiac University Branford Hall - Southington and Windsor	University of Connecticut Department of Communication Sciences
Lincoln Technical School	Porter and Chester Institute - Rocky Hill, Enfield, Watertown Campuses
Institute of Healing Arts and Sciences	Fox School of Business
Saint Joseph College - Psychology Department/Advanced Practitioner Registered Nurse Program	Northwestern Connecticut Community College
Goodwin College	Gateway College
Yale School of Nursing	Manchester Community College
Tunxis Community College	

UMG is continuing to develop contracts with other facilities to expand on this program.

UConn Health’s School of Medicine’s **Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs** has spent nearly two decades of outreach efforts partnering with the generous support of the **Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative (Aetna HPPI)**. This relationship has been truly incredible and transformative for the youth of Connecticut and the future of medicine. These programs have been critical in getting more young people from across the state, of all ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, interested in medicine and science and to go on to enter the health professions. It has served as a continuous pipeline for middle school, high school, and college students of diverse backgrounds to realize their dream of becoming future doctors, dentists and health professionals.

Of the nearly 900 youth from the state’s elementary, high school and colleges participating in the programs since 1996, more than 500 have successfully gone on to enter medical, dental school, or other health profession schools. For the medical school’s Class of 2019, 66% of the African American graduating students participated in one or more of the programs. Also, as a result of the program’s efforts, this year U.S. News & World Report recognized UConn School of Medicine as one of the 10 medical schools nationwide with the most African American students. UConn has been leading the way forward with significant efforts and successful strides that allow for very good recognition for the UConn School of Medicine.

UConn Health’s School of Dental Medicine also enjoys strong partnership in the many opportunities offered through its **Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs** and the **Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative (Aetna HPPI) Pipeline**. These pipeline programs enable UConn Health to enrich its applicant pool and empower underrepresented minorities to pursue dental schooling. UConn Health’s Health Career Opportunity Programs serve as a model for professional schools to emulate. There are few dental schools that directly

participate with similar pipeline programs. For the dental profession to represent the patients they treat; UConn Health is committed to inspire students to unlock their potential and pursue a career in the health care field. The Health Career Opportunity Programs and the Aetna HPPI Pipeline programs are very successful in meeting this challenge. These programs are made possible by the participation of faculty, staff, and mentors who serve as the backbone of the initiative. The focus is to present the possibility of a career in dentistry to underrepresented students. The belief that the level of dedication and intellectual curiosity at such a young age is not only admirable, but a surefire way to pave a road to success.

The Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine are actively committed to the recruitment, retention and graduation of diverse medical and dental students who can provide culturally competent health care. The Biomedical Science Graduate Program is committed to supporting graduate students from diverse backgrounds who will discover the medical cures of tomorrow. The program supports currently enrolled medical, dental and graduate students of diverse backgrounds and has expanded its programs for middle school, high school and college students to realize their dreams of becoming health professionals. Participants in the programs have successfully completed their undergraduate degrees and have actualized their goals of entering medical, dental or graduate school. It is for this reason that the programs and activities sponsored through the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs are recognized as a national model.

To date, UConn Health had accomplished its goals and continue to develop new programs and fine-tune existing ones. The program had 160 middle school, high school and college students participating in the 2019 summer programs and approximately 440 students participating in the afterschool, partner high school, Aetna HPPI Saturday Academy and college programs. This year, graduating seniors participating in the high school Aetna HPPI Doctors Academy were accepted into college. During the reporting period, the department's presence at regional and national conferences have been instrumental in recruiting talented students to UConn Health. Additionally, participation at the Association of American Medical Colleges' Northeast Group on Student Affairs Spring Meeting has also allowed other professionals in academic medicine to learn more about the Aetna HPPI pipeline.

The Health Career Opportunity Programs scholars in the School of Medicine (SOM) and School of Dental Medicine (SODM) graduating class of 2019 statistics include: SOM, 16% of the graduating class are Health Career Opportunity Programs scholars, while 18% of the graduating class in the SODM are Health Career Opportunity Programs scholars. 62% of the underrepresented students currently enrolled in the SOM are Aetna HPPI pipeline students, and 47% of the underrepresented students currently enrolled in the SODM are Aetna HPPI pipeline students.

Non-Paid Student Educational Experiences

This program allows departments to host/precept students that may be interested in pursuing a career in the health professions and would like to provide him/her with an observational or internship experience. The goal of this program is to consistently pursue excellence and

innovation in the education of health professionals; the discovery, dissemination and utilization of new knowledge; the provision of patient care; and the promotion of wellness.

Summer Employment Programs

UConn Health hires summer students to work in areas such as the library, pharmacy, volunteer service, clinics, nursing units, research, administration, etc. The Department of Orthopedics has a program that is designed for students in undergraduate programs that provide knowledge of molecular and cell biology to work with biomaterials and tissue engineering. The program is for an eight (8) week period and designed to provide experience in biomaterials and tissue engineering and gives priority consideration to underrepresented minorities.

Aetna Health Professionals Partnership

UConn Health Center partners with the Aetna Health Professionals Partnership Initiative (Aetna HPPI Pipeline) to co-sponsor innovative programs and initiatives for Summer Employment Programs, Youth Programs, Work-Study Programs, Outreach for high school and college students, and several positive, results-oriented programs designed to achieve affirmative action. These partnership initiatives included the following during the annual reporting period:

Great Explorations Doctors Academy (for Middle School Students)

This science enrichment program engages 6th to 8th grade students in hands-on science activities and college exploration. This year a networking commitment was established with the Connecticut Science Center to allow students a more comprehensive and focused experience beyond the regular exhibits at the center.

This program provides educational enrichment in science, math, reading and college preparation activities during the academic school year at the following schools: Bellizzi, Kennelly, Naylor, Sport and Medical Sciences Academy, West Middle School, Jumoke Academy, Metropolitan Learning Center, Two Rivers Magnet Middle School, and the Academy of Science and Innovation.

The program offers a six-week, Monday through Friday, Summer Academic Enrichment Program for rising 8th grade participants. Students receive instruction in language arts, math, science, college awareness classes and engage in educational programs to raise awareness in the health professions. Students are provided breakfast and lunch. If the student is a Hartford resident, transportation is provided as well. A total of 94 students who participated in the Great Explorations Program in 2019.

The program consists of a 30-week, Saturday Academy during the academic school year where 8th grade students can continue to strengthen their academic skills and college preparation. Parent/Guardian Orientation Workshops are held for all students participating in the 6-week summer and 30-week Saturday Academy Program. It is geared towards students who meet certain socio-economic guidelines (low income and/or first generation to attend college) and demonstrate a strong motivation and potential to enroll in a four-year college program. Parental

Seminar Series are held for parents/guardians of all students participating in the program. A total of 17 students participated in the 30-week 2019 academic year component of the program. During the summer of 2019 a total of 20 students participated in the program. Additionally, the Great Explorations students visited the Trinity College campus, the Connecticut Science Center, and Mystic Aquarium during the summer of 2019.

Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Program (for High School Students)

This is an annual conference which brings together high school and college students to explore health care issues and prepare for health careers. It is geared for students who have expressed an interest in a career in the health professions and is beneficial in helping mentees gain insight into successful preparation for an application to professional schools. This program is student run and aimed at meeting the long-term objective of increasing underrepresented student representation in health professions programs. The program provides an opportunity for college and high school students to seek advice from mentors enrolled in professional health profession programs. A network is established which includes the middle school through professional school educational community. It is designed so that medical, dental, graduate, nursing and allied health students serve as mentors to college and high school students. And is sponsored by the local chapters of the Student National Medical Association, the Student National Dental Association and the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs.

High School Mini Medical/Dental School Program

The program is for 11th and 12th grade students, who are in state residents. Priority consideration is given to pipeline participants. The students who are interested in pursuing careers in medicine, dental medicine and the biological sciences. Applicants are selected by their school guidance counselors or science teachers.

The program consists of a series of eight weekly lectures and demonstrations presented by faculty members of the UConn Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine in two-hour lecture sessions. The topics include information on molecular biology, pharmacology, cardiology, oncology and dental medicine.

High School Student Research Apprentice Program

Twelve students had the opportunity to be a part of a research team and learn laboratory techniques in the 2019 High School Student Research Apprentice Program. As part of the 2019 program, five students commuted daily to Central Connecticut State University and seven students commuted daily to the UConn Health campus for their research projects. At the end of the summer, the students gave oral and poster presentations of their re-search results during a special research symposium.

This program is for 11th and 12th grade students interested in medicine, dental medicine or biomedical research. Priority consideration is given to pipeline participants. It is a six-week

summer program which provides students with a research experience in one of the basic science or clinical laboratories. It is held at UConn Health or Central Connecticut State University.

Requirements include students to be able to commute daily to UConn Health or Central Connecticut State University. The program supplies students with an earned stipend.

Jumpstart Doctors Academy

Is designed for 9th and 10th grade students interested in medicine, dental medicine or biomedical research. Priority acceptance into the program is given to former Great Explorations participants and students enrolled in Hartford Public Schools.

It includes daily classes in language arts, math, science careers and college awareness preparation, integrating PSAT strategies and support across the curriculum. Enrichment experiences both in and outside of the classroom are also included in the six-week, Monday-Friday, Summer Academic Enrichment Program.

There is an optional 30-week, Saturday Academy during the academic school year where students can continue to enhance their academic skills, college preparation, and exposure to careers in the health professions. The program provides assessments and evaluations throughout a student's affiliation with Jumpstart and includes pre, mid, and post testing; student and parent surveys; mid and final progress reports; etc.

Classes are held at UConn Health and transportation is provided to Hartford residents. Students earn stipends while introducing young adults who meet certain socio-economic guidelines (low income and/or first generation to attend college) to the medical field. Participants are encouraged to demonstrate a strong motivation and potential to enroll in a four-year college program. There are Parent/Guardian Orientation Workshops for all students participating in the program.

Junior Doctors Academy

This program is developed for 11th grade students interested in medicine, dental medicine or biomedical research. Priority acceptance into the program is allotted to former Great Explorations and Jumpstart Academy participants and students enrolled in Hartford Public Schools.

The curriculum involves a review of Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Chemistry, Language Arts and proven test-taking strategies to increase SAT and ACT scores. The course offers both a six-week, Monday-Friday, Summer Academic Enrichment Program and a 30-week, Saturday Academy during the academic school year where students can continue to enhance their academic skills, college preparation, and exposure to careers in the health professions.

Students are provided assessments and evaluations throughout a student's affiliation with Junior Doctors Academy and includes pre-, mid-, and post-testing; student and parent surveys; mid and final progress reports; etc. Classes are held at UConn Health. Transportation is provided to Hartford residents. There is an opportunity to earn a stipend.

It is geared towards students who meet certain socio-economic guidelines (low income and/or first generation to attend college) and demonstrate a strong motivation and potential to enroll in a four year college program and enables students to participate in the High School Mini Medical/Dental School Program during the following academic year. Eighty-one high school students participated in the Academy during the 2019 academic year and 56 high school students participated in these programs during the 2019 summer. The students took enrichment trips to the Hartford Stage, the Connecticut Science Center, and the UConn Storrs campus during the 2019 academic year. They also visited the Connecticut State Capitol and Mystic Aquarium during the summer of 2019.

Senior Doctors Academy

The Senior Doctors Academy is for 12th grade students interested in medicine, dental medicine or biomedical research. Priority acceptance into the program is given to former Great Explorations, Jumpstart, and Junior Doctors Academies participants and students enrolled in Hartford Public Schools.

The syllabus includes a review of pre-calculus, calculus, biology, physics, anatomy and physiology, and writing. This is offered in either a 6 week or 30-week course offering during the academic school year where students can continue to enhance their academic skills, college preparation, and exposure to careers in the health professions. Classes are held at UConn Health and transportation is provided to Hartford residents. Students can earn stipends and encourages students who are low income and/or first generation to attend college the ability to demonstrate a strong motivation and potential to enroll in a four-year college program. Participants can then be eligible to participate in the Pre-college Enrichment Program during the summer of their graduating senior year.

Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Program

An annual conference which brings together high school and college students to explore health care issues and prepare for health careers. Developed for students who have expressed an interest in a career in the health professions. It is beneficial in helping mentees gain insight into successful preparation for an application to professional schools.

The course is student run and is designed at meeting the long-term objective of increasing underrepresented student representation in health professions programs. It provides an opportunity for college and high school students to seek advice from mentors enrolled in professional health profession programs. A network is established which includes the middle school through professional school educational community. The goal is to expose students to the medical, dental, graduate, nursing and allied health careers and offer students in the graduate arena to serve as mentors and models to college and high school students. The program is sponsored by the local chapters of the Student National Medical Association, the Student National Dental Association and the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs.

This pre-college enrichment program is a residential enrichment program primarily for incoming students at UConn and other four-year institutions. Designed to provide solid development of scientific, mathematical, communications, problem solving, and test-taking skills, it is intended to enhance the preparedness of college freshmen. It allows the students to experience life on a college campus at UConn Storrs or Central Connecticut State University prior to their matriculation to college in the fall. Students participate in the academic track (completion of academic courses) in collaboration with the UConn School of Engineering BRIDGE Program at Storrs or at Central Connecticut State University. This past summer of 2019, a total of 132 Pre-College Enrichment Program participants along with six BRIDGE Program participants also engaged in numerous enrichment activities at UConn Health including tours of basic science labs in the Department of Biomedical Engineering and the Clinical Skills Lab. The Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs, the UConn Chapters of the Student National Medical Association, the Latino Medical Student Association, the Student National Dental Association/Hispanic Student Dental Association, and the John and Valerie Rowe Health Professions Scholars Program Fund sponsored this year's conference.

Health Disparities Clinical Summer Research Fellowship Program

This initiative is for rising college sophomores, juniors, seniors or recent graduates. Priority consideration will be given to pipeline participants in the seven-week program. Students are provided with a clinical research and enrichment experience and an introduction to health disparities, cross cultural issues, principles of clinical medicine and skills for public health research and interventions. There is also an invaluable overview of approaches to cultural definitions, public health issues and discussion of specific techniques for working with diverse populations in community settings. Housing, meals, and a stipend are provided. In the summer of 2019, nine students participated in the program. The program is designed to provide the following: clinical research and enrichment experiences; an introduction to health disparities across cultures; principles of clinical medicine; public health issues, research and interventions; an overview of cultural definitions; and discussions of specific techniques for working with diverse populations in community settings. All the participants completed a clinical research project and presented a poster with their results at the end of the program

Medical/Dental Preparatory Program (MCAT or DAT Prep Course; or Basic Medical Science Course)

The preparatory science course is for college sophomores, juniors, seniors or recent graduates. Medical/Dental Preparatory Program students are selected from various universities throughout the United States to work on academic skills to prepare for medical school or dental school admission. Priority consideration is given to pipeline participants to this six-week summer program consisting of two tracks. Track One MCAT/DAT Preparation Program is for students who will be taking the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) or Dental Admission Test (DAT). The program focuses on MCAT test preparation or DAT test preparation, application essay workshop, mock interviews, professional development workshops, and some exposure to clinical medicine or dental medicine.

Track Two Basic Medical Science Program is for all other students not on Track One. This track focuses on a course emphasizing essential principles of cell and molecular biology correlated to team-based learning activities including laboratories and case studies. The course has two purposes (a) to facilitate the entry of these students into medical and dental schools by improving their performance on admissions tests and through professional development activities and (b) to increase the retention of successful matriculants to professional schools through early exposure to professional education. This program provides housing, meals and a stipend. A total of 44 college students and recent college graduates participated in academic classes, seminars, workshops, test-taking strategies, and other enrichment activities at the UConn Health campus during the six-week summer 2019 program.

Summer Research Fellowship Program

This program has been developed for college sophomores, juniors, seniors or recent graduates. Priority consideration is given to pipeline participants in this nine-week program. Emphasis is on a laboratory research enrichment experience and some exposure to clinical medicine or dental medicine. This program attracts students who are interested in a career in medicine, dental medicine or biomedical research and for applicants who have completed some college coursework in biology and chemistry (preferably through organic chemistry). Students must commit to approximately 32 hours per week of work on a research project and 8 hours per week to required clinical experiential. Housing, meals, and a stipend are provided.

The selected students identify a faculty sponsor, who develops and makes available suitable project descriptions. The students contact his/her faculty sponsor in April or May and develops a research protocol. Minority Access to Research Careers (MARC) students are encouraged to apply. In the summer of 2019, a total of eight students participated in the program. At the end of the summer, the students gave a poster presentation of their research results during a special research symposium.

Teens as Teacher

The UConn School of Medicine's Delivery of Clinical Care (DoCC) curriculum is the clinical training component for medical students. The course helps students prepare for the clinical aspects of medicine by training them in history taking, physical examination, utilization of community resources and community collaboration for improved patient care. Part of the course involves training on adolescent health. Medical students learn about the importance and specialized aspects of the adolescent history and practice their skills with real teens recruited from Sport and Medical Sciences Academy, who act as patient instructors. The medical students then receive feedback on their performance from the adolescent patient instructors. Twelve students from Sport and Medical Sciences Academy participated in the 2019 program. Under the leadership of Dr. Stacey Brown, director of Community Based Education, associate professor of Community Medicine and Healthcare, UConn Health, the participating adolescents were given health education workshops and training prior to their participation in the course.

High School Mini Medical/Dental School Seminar Series

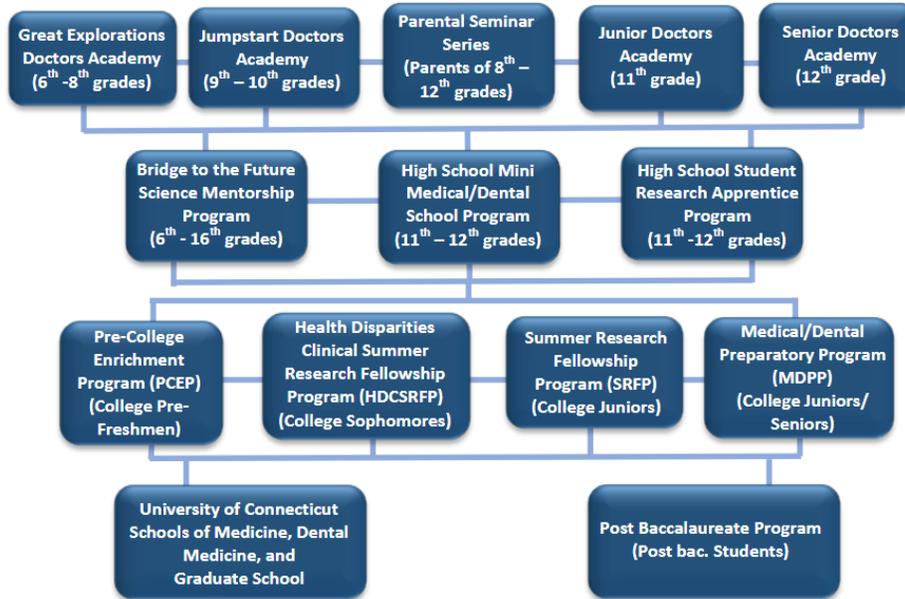
The High School Mini Medical/Dental School Seminar Series offers eight weekly lectures and demonstrations presented by faculty members of the UConn Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine. The 2019 seminar series included topics such as molecular biology, gastroenterology, dermatology, cardiology, oncology, and dental medicine. Sixty-seven Connecticut high school juniors and seniors participated in the 2019 program. Participants are selected by their school guidance counselors or science teachers. All students have shown a strong interest in pursuing careers in medicine, dental medicine, or the biological sciences. Sessions are also broadcast live to high schools throughout the state of Connecticut.

Parental Seminar Series

The Parental Seminar Series is an opportunity for students and parents to learn more about the college admissions process and important health issues affecting their community. Parents are asked to submit a survey on the topics they are most interested in learning about and the series of lectures are then tailored to their needs. Each academic year, UConn Health's Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs invites college admissions personnel, physicians, dentists, and other health professionals to speak to the parents and students on college admissions and various health topics such as hypertension, asthma, stress management, diabetes, obesity, and nutrition. The scheduled seminars occur approximately twice per semester on a weekday evening from 6 to 7 p.m. at UConn Health in Farmington.

The organizational structure of the Aetna Health Professionals Partnership Initiative Pipeline (Aetna HPPI Pipeline) is listed as follows with examples of diversity and cultural results-oriented programs that UConn Health sponsored during the reporting period to support an achieve affirmative action awareness and participation:

Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative Pipeline



Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Conference Keynote Speaker



Marcus Moss, D.M.D.

Marcus Moss, D.M.D., grew up in Kansas City, Missouri. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in biology from Oakwood University in 2008. Prior to matriculating to dental school, Dr. Moss participated in the Medical/Dental Preparatory Program Basic Medical Sciences Track the summer of 2008. He received

his Doctorate of Dental Medicine from UConn School of Dental Medicine in 2012. Dr. Moss completed his dental residency at the University of Alabama School of Dentistry with a specialty in pediatric dentistry in 2014. He is a partner at Alabama Pediatric Dental Associates and Orthodontics. Dr. Moss is married to his wife Idelka and they have a one-year old son Lucas. He enjoys playing basketball, landscaping, and traveling with his family.



Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative Summer 2019 Program Closing Ceremony - Dental Alumnus Speaker

Tremane Bartley, D.M.D. is a native of Jamaica. He graduated from the University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine in 2009. During his tenure at the School of Dental Medicine, Dr. Bartley served as President of the UConn Chapter of the Student National Dental Association/Hispanic Student Dental Association. As a third-year dental student, he was selected to perform



Tremane Bartley, D.M.D.

free dental work and teach dental education at an orphanage in South Africa. After graduating, Dr. Bartley practiced as a general dentist for several years where his interests in esthetics and working with children lead him to pursue the specialty of Orthodontics. Subsequently, he went on to complete a 36-month residency at Bronx Lebanon Hos-

pital Center in Orthodontics, where he honed his clinical skills. During his residency, Dr. Bartley learned multiple modalities and orthodontic treatment philosophies, which guide his practice. He was named chief resident for the Department of Orthodontics due to his exceptional leadership skills. His professional affiliations are with the American Association of Orthodontists, American Dental Association, and One Hundred Black Men, Inc. These days, Dr. Bartley continues to learn and expand his knowledge on orthodontic treatment. He regularly takes continuing education courses and attends various meetings to keep abreast of recent advances and technology in the field. Outside of work, Dr. Bartley enjoys spending time with his wife and two daughters. He also enjoys soccer, reading, and traveling.

UConn in Top 10 Medical Schools with the Most African American Students

U.S. News & World Report has recognized UConn School of Medicine as one of the 10 medical schools nationwide with the most African American students.

Why is this news so important? While many medical schools struggle to create a diverse student body, UConn School of Medicine has been leading the way forward for nearly two decades with significant efforts and successful strides to improve the representation of underrepresented groups in medicine including African Americans.

“The lack of African Americans and other underrepresented minorities choosing to enter the fields of medicine and research is a critical and longstanding national issue,” says Dr. Bruce T. Liang, dean of UConn’s medical school. “Our ongoing commitment and efforts are showing progress and we look forward to further helping curb this national issue and building a stronger, more diverse pipeline of future healthcare professionals through our medical educational mission and training initiatives.”

For the 2018-2019 school year, UConn medical school’s African American student population was a high 11.8% of its total student body of 425 medical students. This percentage is well above the latest available AAMC data showing the national average of African Americans matriculating into medical school classes is only 7.1% as of 2016, and unfortunately has not risen much since 1980 when it was 6.0%.



UConn School of Medicine’s Dr. Marja Hurley (*center*) with Class of 2019 graduates on May 13, 2019.

in UConn Health’s Health Career Opportunity Programs, more than 500 have successfully gone on to enter medical, dental school, or other health profession schools.

Hurley adds: “For the UConn medical school graduating Class of 2019, 66% of the African American graduating students participated in one or more of our Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative programs. I feel very proud of this year’s graduating medical students and those that have come before them.”

West Middle School Enrichment Visit at UConn Health

On February 22, 2019, the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs hosted 20 seventh and eighth grade students from Hartford's West Middle School for a day of enrichment at UConn Health focused on dental medicine and oral health. The enrichment workshops were facilitated by Dr. Sarita Arteaga, associate dean for students and associate clinical professor of Reconstructive Sciences, UConn School of Dental Medicine and the members of the UConn Chapter of the Student National Dental Association/Hispanic Student Dental Association.

Throughout the day, the middle school students received an overview of dental hygiene and oral health along with a 2019 calendar of healthy tips. They also visited the Grasso Dental Lab and the Moog Simulation Lab for hands-on activities to learn more about dentistry. In honor of Black History Month, the West Middle students also participated in a presentation on prominent African Americans in medicine, dentistry and science sponsored by the UConn Chapter of the Student National Medical Association. The day's activities ended with a panel of current medical and dental students sharing their stories about their educational journeys and career goals. This event was funded by The Hartford.



Student National Dental Association/Hispanic Student Dental Association - UConn Health Chapter Hispanic Heritage Month Event

The UConn Chapter of the Student National Dental Association/Hispanic Student Dental Association (SNDA/HSDA), and the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs continue to celebrate Hispanic heritage and traditions through various activities and programs including an annual event for Hispanic Heritage Month. This event is a way to show appreciation

for the Hispanic culture of the UConn Health community through food, song, dance, and other artistic presentations. Last year's event took place on October 17, 2018, at the UConn Health campus. The event included authentic Hispanic cuisine, raffle prizes, and music and entertainment. Additionally, salsa performances and lessons were a highlight of the evening's activities.

