



The Fundamental Role of the Arts and Humanities in Medical Education



October 2021 FRAHME Newsletter

This monthly newsletter is designed to keep you up to date on news from the [AAMC's Fundamental Role of Arts and Humanities in Medical Education \(FRAHME\) initiative](#). If you know others who are interested in learning more about integrating the arts and humanities into medical education, please forward this email to them. To subscribe, they can [sign up here](#).

AAMC Solicits Proposals to Showcase Students' Creative Insights on the Art of Diagnosis

The AAMC and the Society to Improve Diagnosis in Medicine (SIDM), thanks to sponsorship from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, are offering AAMC member institutions the opportunity to [apply for a \\$5,000 award to host an event](#) that would display or present creative works (from the literary, visual or performing arts) of undergraduate medical students related to their experiences with diagnosis, diagnostic error, or learning the diagnostic process.

Learn about FRAHME at the NOAH Conference

On Thursday, October 20 at 4:40 pm ET, Elizabeth Gauferberg, MD, MPH, will present "The Art of Wellbeing: The Association of American Medical Colleges FRAHME (Fundamental Role of the Arts and Humanities in Medical Education) Initiative." This session is part of the 2021 conference of the National Organization for Arts in Health (NOAH) which takes place from Oct 19-21 ([see schedule and registration information](#)). Dr. Gauferberg will speak about our partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts to provide arts and humanities opportunities designed to improve the wellbeing of health care workers.

We will also offer an opportunity to learn more about FRAHME and participate in an arts and humanities experience during a [November 9th session at the upcoming AAMC Learn Serve Lead conference](#).

Featured FRAHME Grantee: Kamna Balhara, MD, MA



Each month this newsletter will feature one of our [eight FRAHME grantees](#). This month we spoke with Kamna Balhara, MD, MA, of Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

Dr. Balhara's grant is entitled **"Simulation to Assess Impact of a Health Equity-Focused Health Humanities Track in GME."** Her team has created a unique opportunity for residents and fellows from any specialty in their institution to participate in a longitudinal and flexible year-long health humanities track that focuses on health equity. They hope to demonstrate, via

simulated patient encounters, that participation in this track enhances specific skills and attributes related to health equity, such as navigating bias or demonstrating cultural humility.

What does this work mean to you?

I feel very strongly that the humanities have intrinsic value in health care and are an indispensable component of medical education. I especially value how humanities-based approaches provide educators and learners alike with opportunities to see and respect diverse perspectives, challenge our own assumptions or biases, and create collaborative communities with all stakeholders in health, including patients, caregivers, and members of the health care team.

Name one work of art or literature that has moved you deeply in terms of its connection to medicine or doctoring.

[Robert Colescott's deliberately provocative painting, "Emergency Room"](#) is a scathing indictment of how we address systemic issues on an "emergency basis", and it also captures the historical, societal, and environmental contributors to health inequities. It's uncomfortable to look at, yet it challenges us to do just that - not just to look, but to truly see the injustices in our health care system.

Activity Ideas for the Practice-based Learning and Improvement Competency

The FRAHME Getting Started Guide offers activity ideas for educators seeking to incorporate the arts and humanities into their teaching. The guide features several examples of how the arts and humanities can help teach about [practice-based learning and improvement](#). Activity ideas include:

- Asking learners to write 55 word stories to provide opportunity for reflection
- Mask-making as a way to explore professional identity
- Watching the film "Why Doctors Write" to understand the connection between self-expression and well-being and inviting discussion on the themes

Have you used the FRAHME Getting Started Guide?

Have you used the Getting Started Guide to find ideas for medical education activities that use arts and humanities approaches? We'd love to hear about your experience! Email us at frahme@aamc.org.

Embracing Vulnerability and Finding Light in the Uncertain

Two essays printed in the Teaching and Learning Moments section of the September 2021 issue of *Academic Medicine* are available in both print and audio versions.

"Holding his hand, we had been alone in a room fighting a virus with no cure. Though he lay prone and I stood standing, we were equals in our fear in facing overwhelming unknowns. Neither of us knew what would happen over the next few hours or days."

- From "Embracing Vulnerability" by resident Eric Kutscher, MD

[Print version](#) | [Audio version](#)

"Our patients and their families are living that one-in-a-thousand life. Even if focusing on rarity helps us cope with the unpredictability of our own pregnancies and of the world in pandemic, rarity cannot protect us from the truth that the terrible is possible."

- From "Finding Light in the Uncertain" by fellows Katharine Press Callahan, MD, and Elizabeth Goodman Salazar, MD

[Print version](#) | [Audio version](#)

Conduct a StoryCorps interview to add to our collection!

In honor of National Arts and Humanities Month, the AAMC wants to know how you have used the arts and humanities in your personal and professional lives in relation to the uncertainty of the last two years.

Use [StoryCorps Connect](#) to record an interview as part of our partnership with StoryCorps to highlight health care professionals' experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic, racism, and persistent inequities in America. Sign in to our [AAMC StoryCorps page](#), read the [instructions and suggested interview questions](#), and your interview will be archived at the Library of Congress!

Featured Poem

[For Once](#)

For Once, I take a
Moment for our nature.
To see stories unspoken
Behind smiling eyes.
To finally forget
The lip's wasted language
and other luxuries.
For once I find myself
In meditation
Observing human harmony
Within the realm of discord.
For once
I take a moment for myself
To take in the natural world.

- John Newman (Medical
Student)
October 27, 2020



This poem is part of a collection of [hundreds of contributions](#) to our story sharing project, which offered a way for physicians, residents, and medical students to reflect on the uncertainty surrounding the twin pandemics of COVID-19 and racial injustice.

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