



The Fundamental Role of the Arts and Humanities in Medical Education



March 2022 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 Virtual Forum on the Art of Diagnosis

The AAMC will host a virtual forum on April 6 from 3-4:15 p.m. ET to explore how medical students are using the arts and humanities to convey their experiences with diagnosis. The AAMC, the Society to Improve Diagnosis in Medicine, and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation [awarded \\$5,000 to four medical schools](#) to host events where undergraduate medical students could present creative works related to their experiences with diagnosis, diagnostic error, or learning the diagnostic process. During this virtual forum, representatives from Florida International University Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University, Morehouse School of Medicine, and University of Toledo College of Medicine will discuss their events and share lessons learned about using the arts and humanities to understand students' educational and professional development.

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Featured FRAHME Grantee: Georgetown University School of Medicine

Each month, we feature one of our [eight FRAHME grantees](#). This month we spoke with Lakshmi Krishnan, MD, PhD, Daniel Marchalik, MD, MA, and Nicoletta Pireddu, PhD, MA, of Georgetown University School of Medicine.

Through their grant, "Evaluating an Integrated Cross-Campus Medical Humanities Initiative," the team is using both quantitative and qualitative analysis to evaluate the outcomes of a medical humanities initiative that has been integrated into undergraduate, nursing, and medical student classrooms.

What does this work mean to your team?

One of the core components of Georgetown's educational mission is that health practitioners cannot treat the whole patient without recognizing and valuing their humanity

in its many facets. Our work recenters health and healing in a broader social, cultural, and historical context and leverages the tools of the humanities and social sciences to achieve deeper understanding and implementation of health equity.

Furthermore, a unique strength of the initiative is its collaborative breadth: it engages faculty, students, and clinical trainees across the medical center and arts and sciences campus, which opens up so many opportunities for creative, transdisciplinary teaching, research, and collaboration.

What works of art or literature have moved you deeply in terms of their connection to medicine or doctoring?

Dr. Pireddu: Van Gogh's painting *Starry Night*, with its whirling spirals of light against the backdrop of the dark sky was inspired by the view from the painter's window at his asylum in southern France and evokes his precarious mental balance. It is one of hundreds of masterpieces that Van Gogh created between epileptic spells and hospitalizations, thanks to the insights and compassion of a physician. Dr. Felix Rey not only provided the correct diagnosis for Van Gogh's illness but also deeply understood his physical, mental, and emotional malaise, encouraging him to cultivate his vital passion for painting. Both art and comprehensive, integrative medical care contributed to the making of this post-impressionist genius.



Dr. Krishnan: [Mario Bellatin's *Salon de Belleza \(Beauty Salon\)*](#) is a slim, haunting parable about people living on the margins of society and dying of a mysterious plague. But it's really about how we care for and are responsible for each other — and how we treat the

human body in motion — in illness, in poverty, in vulnerability.

Dr. Marchalik: [Anthony Marra's *A Constellation of Vital Phenomena*](#) is a beautiful novel set in Chechnya during the Second Chechen War. One of the novel's protagonists is a young Russian doctor who staffs a dilapidated hospital even as the situation on the ground becomes increasingly more hopeless. What I find most compelling about the novel is not her apparent heroism—she is certainly not a conventional hero—but the complexity of decisions that lead people to the roles they play in the world, including in the world of medicine.

Discuss, Discover, and Disseminate the Arts and Humanities in Medical Education



If you'd like to connect with others interested in the integration of arts and humanities in medical education, [The FRAHME Getting Started Guide](#) offers a compilation of online discussion forums specific to this topic. The Guide also contains a list of journals and websites where you can find or share creative work, reflections, or case studies related to the arts and humanities in medical education.

How Faculty Members' Reflective Narratives Impact Residents' Professional Identity Formation

A recent *Academic Medicine* article, [When Faculty Tell Tales: How Faculty Members' Reflective Narratives Impact Residents' Professional Identity Formation](#), demonstrates the effectiveness of an online forum where faculty share personal reflective narratives. The letters in the repository touched on a broad range of issues related to professionalism, including altruism, humanism, excellence, and accountability. Residents reported that when these narratives were written by authors who were recognized as role models, their words triggered reflection, inspired them to cope with challenges, and influenced the culture of the workplace.

Featured Poem

[The Strangeness Inside](#)

It's interesting applying to residency
while noticing what's residing in me.

I never knew conflicting feelings
could co-exist like this—
insecurity, pride, anxiety, accomplishment
all equally alive,
swimming alongside these words:

.....“I got exactly what I wanted.”

— Will I be able to answer this way (honestly)

.....when others ask about my match?

— Where will I be?

— How do I choose to order my rank list?

— What difference will it make?

— Do I even have a say?

— What happened to simply wanting to be happy

.....and okay?

— What do I want, exactly?

After hearing about a medical student's experience with the match process, listener poet Jenny Hegland of The Good Listening Project composed this poem. It is one 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.

Featured Artwork



"Looking into the Future of Medicine" by Jacqueline Pflaum-Carlson, MD, Henry Ford Health System

Artist's Statement:

Academic medicine has long prided itself on training great physicians. In the past, we relied on the traditional practice of bedside teaching with hands-on learning using evidence-based medicine to coach new learners through proven practices and techniques to heal the ill. In 2020, all these prior teachings were called into question as we were thrust into a pandemic with no footprint and no strong evidence-based management approach. As a field, we adapted, often many times, and we stepped up to provide the highest quality of clinical care in an environment that none of us could ever have been prepared for. Despite these challenges, we grew. We learned how to provide virtual care and we learned new ways to empathize with patients and their families. We learned to look inward and to rely on each other for support and for survival. This painting represents the future for physicians. A future with unlimited possibilities.

This email was sent by: **%%Member_Busname%%**

%%Member_Addr%% %%Member_City%%, %%Member_State%%, %%Member_PostalCode%%,
%%Member_Country%%

[Unsubscribe from FRAHME email communications.](#)

[Update Profile](#)

© %%xtyear%% AAMC | [Privacy Policy](#)