Herbert W. Nickens Awards

Future Leaders of Academic Medicine—
Herbert W. Nickens Faculty Fellowship
and Medical Student Scholarships

Honoring individuals who assist medical schools in achieving their diversity objectives and eliminating health care disparities
Association of American Medical Colleges
Diversity Policy and Programs

Norma Poll-Hunter, PhD
Senior Director, Human Capital Initiatives

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Call for Nominations

2018 Herbert W. Nickens Awards

Accepting Nominations January 2–April 6, 2018

Honoring individuals who assist medical schools in achieving their diversity objectives and eliminating health care disparities
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Special Acknowledgments

The AAMC would like to acknowledge the members of the Herbert W. Nickens Award Selection Committees. Thank you for generously contributing your time and energy to the selection of the recipients among so many deserving candidates. This award would not be possible without your support.

We would also like to acknowledge the continued dedication of Dr. Patrice Desvigne-Nickens. Her unwavering support of the award recipients is a true testament to the importance of equality in health care and Dr. Nickens’ vision of the future of health care in the United States.

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”

— Mahatma Gandhi
About the Herbert W. Nickens Awards

Dr. Herbert W. Nickens’ work has inspired others today just as much as when he was alive. Nurturing and supporting the aspirations of underrepresented minorities (URMs) was a driving factor in his efforts to increase the numbers of URMs in the medical workforce. This program book recognizes individuals for their contributions to underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities in medicine and supports the efforts our medical institutions are making.

Herbert W. Nickens, MD, MA, was the founding vice president of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Division of Community and Minority Programs, what is now the Diversity Policy and Programs unit. Dr. Nickens’ passionate leadership contributed greatly to focusing national attention on the need to support underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities in medicine. His efforts resulted in a multitude of programs and initiatives that advanced the career development of minorities in medicine. Dr. Nickens’ untimely death in March 22, 1999, was a significant loss to academic medicine.

Herbert W. Nickens: Life and Career

Born on December 28, 1947, in Washington, D.C., Herbert W. Nickens attended John Burroughs Elementary School, Taft Junior High School, and St. Johns College High School before matriculating at Harvard College, where he received his AB degree in 1969. He earned his MD as well as a master of arts degree in sociology from the University of Pennsylvania, graduating in 1973 and earning the university’s History of Medicine Prize.

1973 – Dr. Nickens received the Philadelphia Medical Society’s Kenneth Appel Award and the Laughlin National Psychiatric Endowment Fund Award.

1974

1975

1978

1979

1982

1985

1974–1975 – Dr. Nickens interned at Chestnut Hill Hospital in Philadelphia and then completed one year of residency in psychiatry at Yale University.

1975 – Dr. Nickens returned to the University of Pennsylvania as a resident and a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar.

1978 – Dr. Nickens was named assistant professor and director of psychiatry emergency services at the University of Pennsylvania.

1979 – Dr. Nickens accepted an additional position of faculty assistant to the president and the provost at the University of Pennsylvania.


1985 – Minority Students in Medical Education: Facts and Figures was created.

1985 – Dr. Nickens was named director of the Office of Policy, Planning, and Analysis of the National Institute on Aging, a part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), after serving as deputy chief of the Center on Aging of the National Institute of Mental Health at NIH. Dr. Nickens contributed substantively to a landmark federal report, the eight-volume Report of the Secretary’s Task Force on Black and Minority Health: A Summary and a Presentation of Health Data With Regard To Blacks. An in-depth investigation of disparities in key health indicators, the report was released on October 16, 1985, by then U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Margaret Heckler, and is often referred to as the “Heckler Report.”
Before joining the AAMC, Dr. Nickens was the first director of the Office of Minority Health at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. He also served as director of the Office of Policy, Planning, and Analysis of the National Institute on Aging, a part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and was deputy chief of the Center on Aging of the National Institute of Mental Health at NIH.

Dr. Nickens received his AB in 1969 from Harvard College and an MD and MA (in sociology) from the University of Pennsylvania in 1973. He served his residency in psychiatry at Yale University and the University of Pennsylvania. At the University of Pennsylvania, he was also a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar and a member of the faculty of the School of Medicine.

The AAMC established the Herbert W. Nickens Memorial Fund to continue advancing Dr. Nickens' lifelong commitment to supporting the educational, societal, and health care needs of racial and ethnic minorities. The fund supports an annual Nickens award, a faculty fellowship, and five student scholarships.
Agenda

4:30–4:35 pm  **Opening Remarks: Welcome and Introduction**

Norma I. Poll-Hunter, PhD  
Senior Director, Human Capital Portfolio  
Diversity Policy and Programs  
Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)

4:35–4:50 pm  **Keynote Speaker**

Aretha Delight Davis, MD, JD  
Executive Director  
ACP Decisions

4:50–5:00 pm  **Introduction of National Medical Fellowships Awards**

*Presenter*  
Richard Baker, MD  
Vice Dean for Medical Education  
Wayne State University School of Medicine

*Award Recipients*

**Franklin C. McLean Award**  
Simone Chantal Elder  
Weill Cornell Medical College

**William and Charlotte Cadbury Award**  
Robert Trevino, PhD  
Rush Medical College of Rush University Medical Center

5:00–5:45 pm  **Herbert W. Nickens Faculty Fellowship and Medical Student Scholarship Presentations**

*Presenter*  
David Acosta, MD  
Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer  
Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)
Award Recipients

Herbert W. Nickens Faculty Fellowship
Risha R. Irvin, MD, MPH
Assistant Professor, Division of Infectious Diseases
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Herbert W. Nickens Medical Student Scholarships
Yvorn Aswad
Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Nattaly Greene
Oregon Health & Sciences University School of Medicine

Linda Magaña
Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University

Nancy Rodriguez, MPH
University of California, Davis School of Medicine

Denisse Rojas Marquez
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
Herbert W. Nickens Award
Keynote Speaker

Dr. Davis is an attorney, physician, and a cofounder and executive director of the Nous Foundation’s Advance Care Planning (ACP) Decisions. This is a Boston-based nonprofit whose mission is to empower patients and families by using video technology to help them make informed medical decisions. Dr. Davis has set the vision and managed operations, and she has planned strategic growth to provide a seamless experience to customers and partners. Dr. Davis has had a longstanding interest in applying her legal skills to promote more patient-centered care for vulnerable populations within the health care system. Before her medical career, Dr. Davis was a practicing attorney who advocated on behalf of Medicaid recipients and the uninsured and represented individuals and corporations in corporate criminal matters, including serving as counsel for a death penalty litigant. She received her undergraduate degree in history and science from Harvard University, obtained a law degree from the University of Pennsylvania, participated in a postbaccalaureate program to prepare for her career step into medicine, and then earned her medical degree at Harvard Medical School.

Dr. Davis is passionate about working with patients, clinicians, health systems, and insurers to help improve the broken end-of-life care system. At a Philadelphia law firm, she worked on high-end, complex litigation and developed an appreciation of the complexities of our health care system. Dr. Davis’ professional background, along with her personal experiences as caregiver and her desire to improve patient care, led her to pursue a medical degree. In 2008, Dr. Davis was a recipient of the Herbert W. Nickens Medical Student Scholarship Award, the National Association of Medical Minority Educators Award, the Dwight D. Eisenhower Scholarship (2007 and 2008), and the Myer and Etta Dana Scholarship (2008 and 2009). Dr. Davis has numerous published articles about how video decision making helps promote advance care planning. Her biggest accomplishment, however, is being the mother of two strong-willed girls, ages four and seven.
National Medical Fellowships Awards

To recognize and support the outstanding work of the National Medical Fellowships (NMF), the AAMC honors the 2017 Franklin C. McLean and the William and Charlotte Cadbury Award winners. We are pleased to offer a way to highlight these very deserving recipients.

Franklin C. McLean Award

Instituted in 1968 in memory of the NMF founder and presented during the AAMC annual meeting, this award provides a $5,000 scholarship to one senior medical student in recognition of outstanding academic achievement, leadership, and community service.

A fourth-year medical student at Weill Cornell Medical College, Ms. Elder graduated from Rice University, where she completed an honors thesis in biochemistry. A Gates Millennium Scholarship recipient, she was fortunate to study women’s health in India, China, South Africa, and France. Ms. Elder’s research at Texas Children’s Hospital was published in peer-reviewed journals. In medical school, she is codirector of the Weill Cornell Community Women’s Clinic, as well as an active member of Students for Equal Opportunity in Medicine. She volunteers at the school’s free clinic and advocates for patients who lack health insurance. She is a founding member and mentor liaison for the Association of Women Surgeons. Planning to apply for residency in obstetrics/gynecology, Ms. Elder hopes to include with her goals in medicine a role in research dedicated to women’s health.
William and Charlotte Cadbury Award

Established in 1977 in honor of NMF’s former executive director and his wife, this award provides a $5,000 scholarship to one senior medical student in recognition of outstanding academic achievement, leadership, and community service.

Dr. Trevino is a fourth-year medical student at Rush Medical College. He earned a BA in human biology from Stanford University and an MS in adolescent secondary education in biology from Pace University. He completed his PhD in anatomy and cell biology from Rush Graduate College between his third and fourth years of medical school. Through Rush University programs and the national organizations Student National Medical Association (SNMA) and the Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA), Dr. Trevino is deeply involved with pipeline programming and mentorship for minority students in pre-K–12th grade who have interests in health professions and medical school. He has served as the SNMA Pipeline Mentoring Institute fellow, the LMSA vice president of mentorship, and the LMSA vice president of internal affairs. He has also served as mentor and research assistant for multiple tours through the Tour for Diversity in Medicine (T4D). Dr. Trevino has received awards from numerous organizations, including the National Medical Fellowship as a Healthcare Leadership awardee, the National Minority Quality Forum as a 40 Under 40 Minority Leader in Health awardee, and the U.S. Public Health Service Corps for Excellence in Public Health.
Herbert W. Nickens Award

The AAMC established the Herbert W. Nickens Award in 2000 to honor the late Dr. Nickens and his lifelong concerns about the educational, societal, and health care needs of racial and ethnic minorities. The award is given to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to promoting justice in medical education and health equities for people in the United States.

Dr. Nickens believed that a multidisciplinary approach is needed to address inequities in health. Because of this, nominees may come from a wide range of fields, including medicine, dentistry, education, law, nursing, pharmacy, public health, and social and behavioral sciences.

Herbert W. Nickens Lecture Delivered Monday, November 6, 10:30–11:45 am • Why Persistent Resilience and Continued Advocacy on All Fronts Are Necessary for Achieving Social Justice

In his last four decades in academia, Dr. Hill devoted his career to encouraging diversity, inclusion, and equity in the biomedical workforce and beyond.

His efforts made a demonstrable difference at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine (VUSM), where he was recruited from Meharry Medical College to serve as VUSM's first associate dean for diversity in medical education from 2002 until 2011. With the support of Dean Steve Gabbe, MD, he developed and led the implementation of a strategic plan that revised VUSM's admissions process and enhanced faculty recruitment.

"Dr. Hill's contribution in expanding the diversity of the medical students at Vanderbilt has been transformative for both the school and the university. Vanderbilt is a better place because of George's many accomplishments in recruiting, mentoring, and retaining the best and brightest underrepresented minority students," says Jeffrey Balser, MD, dean of the medical school.

An accomplished biochemical microbiologist, Dr. Hill demonstrated an interest in diversifying the biomedical research workforce early in his career. In the decades that have followed, he has mentored dozens of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows and was selected in 1997 as a “Giant in Science” by the Quality Education for Minorities Network.

Dr. Hill's research has furthered understanding of African trypanosomes, parasites prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa that cause sleeping sickness in humans. His discoveries have earned him many accolades: He was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Nairobi, and he received the Seymour Hunter Prize for Research from the Society of Protozoologists. He has been elected an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) fellow, a National Academy of Microbiology fellow, and a member of the National Academy of Medicine.
In 2015, Chancellor Nicholas Zeppos recruited Dr. Hill out of retirement to serve on his leadership team as the first vice chancellor for equity, diversity, and inclusion and chief diversity officer at Vanderbilt University. Dr. Hill retired as vice chancellor in July 2017.

“George Hill is a giant in two fields, molecular biology and fostering diversity. He has a deep understanding both of the opportunities that we have as a top research and teaching university and the challenges we must overcome until every single member of our community is fully and equally included,” says Mr. Zeppos.

Dr. Hill completed his bachelor’s degree at Rutgers University−Camden, his master’s degree at Howard University, and his PhD in biochemistry at New York University. He completed his postdoctoral education at the University of Kentucky and the University of Cambridge in England. Dr. Hill has held faculty positions at Vanderbilt, Colorado State University, and Meharry Medical College. He was instrumental in establishing the Meharry-Vanderbilt Alliance in 1999, which continues to advance interinstitutional collaborations in research, learning, and community engagement.

“Vanderbilt is a better place because of George’s many accomplishments in recruiting, mentoring, and retaining the best and brightest underrepresented minority students. His efforts helped the School of Medicine achieve a student body more representative of the changing face of medicine and our nation. His contributions continue to raise our institutional awareness around the importance of a diverse student body and workforce that is truly representative of our society.”

—Jeffrey Balser, MD
Herbert W. Nickens Faculty Fellowship

The award recognizes an outstanding junior faculty member who has demonstrated leadership in the United States in addressing inequities in medical education and health care; has demonstrated efforts in addressing educational, societal, and health care needs of minorities; and is committed to a career in academic medicine.

As an assistant professor at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases, Dr. Irvin focuses her research and community engagement projects on improving the health of vulnerable populations affected by HIV and/or hepatitis C virus (HCV). Her patients include economically disadvantaged people, members of racial and ethnic minority groups, and people with multisubstance-use disorder. Additionally, she directs Generation Tomorrow, a program that trains students and community members in HIV and HCV education, testing, and counseling and places them in an internship with a community-based organization or Johns Hopkins–affiliated program. The program aims to increase HIV and HCV testing in at-risk populations and engage the next generation of health professionals and community members in work to improve the HIV and/or HCV care continuums. Dr. Irvin also directs Sharing the Cure, a program that trains primary care providers to treat hepatitis C in the home to solve issues around access to care and workforce shortages.

Dr. Irvin obtained her bachelor’s degree in biology from Spelman College, where she was valedictorian and inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. She then obtained her medical degree and master’s in public health from Harvard Medical School and Harvard School of Public Health. During medical school, she interned for the U.S. Senate in the offices of Senators Edward M. Kennedy and Barack Obama. Dr. Irvin completed her residency training in internal medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, in the San Francisco General Primary Care Track. After residency, Dr. Irvin worked as an HIV research scholar at the San Francisco Department of Public Health and focused on projects investigating risk factors for HIV acquisition and interventions to prevent HIV infection. She also served as an HIV Prevention Trials Network Scholar during this time.

Born and raised in Greenville, South Carolina, Dr. Irvin’s passion around social justice in health care comes from her parents. They taught her from a young age that you must always fight the good fight and demand justice for all. Dr. Irvin is married to Nathan Irvin, MD, an emergency physician, and they are raising two wonderful boys, Elijah and Maxwell.

Risha R. Irvin, MD, MPH
Assistant Professor, Division of Infectious Diseases
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
Risha R. (Irby) Irvin is the first recipient of two Herbert W. Nickens Awards. She received a Herbert W. Nickens Medical Student Scholarship Award in 2004.

In a grant written with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Dr. Irvin was funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to train primary care providers through telemedicine. “Dozens of providers have been trained, and hundreds of persons have been cured of HCV infection as a result.”

— David L. Thomas, MD, MPH
Herbert W. Nickens Medical Student Scholarships

These awards consist of five scholarships given to outstanding students entering their third year of medical school who have shown leadership in efforts to eliminate inequities in medical education and health care and demonstrated leadership efforts in addressing educational, societal, and health care needs of minorities in the United States.

Yvorn Aswad
Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Yvorn Aswad, a third-year student in the Drew/UCLA Medical Education Program, is committed to using medicine as an avenue for social and racial justice.

Raised in South Los Angeles, his early exposure to substance abuse and homicide inspired him to draw the connection between them and health and social inequality. He could see how social conditions contribute to morbidity and mortality. Attending King/Drew Magnet High School of Medicine and Science in Watts, LA, he learned that these occurrences were indicative of the disproportionately adverse health outcomes that affect people of color in the United States and the poor. This gave him the drive to focus on areas of social injustices that limited life expectancy.

He matriculated to Stanford University to study health disparities, and in 2011, he graduated with a major in human biology and minor in African and African American studies. Reflecting on his own difficulties with navigating the spaces of privilege as well as the level of academic rigor of college, upon graduation he worked as a fellow in the Stanford Office of the Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education to co-create the Leland Scholars Program. This program was designed for incoming first-year undergraduates from low-income and ethnic minority backgrounds who planned to study science. Using cross-disciplinary research from the Stanford departments of psychology and chemistry and the Graduate School of Education, he helped design a curriculum that addresses both the academic and the psychosocial barriers that inhibit student success in the sciences. He presented this work at the 2013 National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in American Higher Education and a 2013 Association of American Colleges and Universities STEM conference. He continues to educate future generations of science and medicine leaders by serving on the David Geffen School of Medicine Cultural Competency Task Force. He is also the immediate past copresident of the Drew/UCLA chapter of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA).

In addition to providing academic and social support for fellow students, Yvorn has done both academic- and community-based work, focusing on directly ameliorating health disparities. As a research assistant in the Center for Culture, Trauma, and Mental Health Disparities, he studied the connection between how interpersonal and racial traumas can manifest as somatic symptoms. Yvorn is dedicated to seeing how physicians can help demolish the cradle-to-prison pipeline. A member of the University of California Criminal Justice and Health Consortium, he is currently doing research on the health outcomes of youth immediately post-incarceration.

Yvorn is interested in studying trauma, child health, and mental health and in pursuing a career in either pediatrics or child and adolescent psychiatry. He also plans to pursue a master's in public policy to combine his medical knowledge with a more systematic approach to the interplay of social conditions and health.
Nattaly Greene
Oregon Health & Sciences University School of Medicine

Nattaly Greene was born and raised in Colombia until the age of 19, when she moved to the United States. She arrived with two 55-pound bags and a dream of becoming a physician. Her story in America began in Wisconsin, where she worked as a cattle farmer and a waiter while taking English classes. Nattaly attended both Edgewood College, where she received a bachelor of science in nursing, and the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where she completed her premedical requisites. She is now a third-year medical student at the Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU).

Nattaly comes from a line of traditional healers, who shaped her deep passion for caring for others and instilled her with a sense of responsibility for family and those who are less fortunate. She found her purpose as a young child, dedicating her life to the service of others and using medicine as her vehicle to address social justice.

In medical school, she has become a champion of diversifying the medical community and interrupting cycles of poverty by increasing the number of underrepresented minorities in medicine (URM). During Nattaly's first year, while fostering a sense of community on campus, she was selected as the admissions liaison and worked to demand greater acceptance of students who identified as URM. In 2016, OHSU matriculated its most diverse class to date. Additionally, she served as one of the cochairs for the Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA). Under her leadership, LMSA partnered with Virginia Garcia, a local organization focused on providing care to undocumented migrant workers, to establish a volunteer program with the migrant camp mobile outreach program. Moreover, she and her cochair advocated for medical school acceptance and financial support of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students. OHSU now accepts DACA students and is committed to providing financial aid to one accepted applicant. During her time as cochair, LMSA was awarded with OHSU’s Forging the Way Flame Award.

As the mentorship officer of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA), Nattaly established a mentorship program with a group of African refugee students at Roosevelt High School. Moreover, she was part of the class's leadership team for a unique peer-to-peer structural-competency curriculum. This curriculum seeks to create more humble physicians through a better understanding of the structures that affect people’s health. She had the privilege of presenting a poster at the Education Symposium at OHSU and leading a talk at the 2016 AMA National Health Equity Conference at the University of California, Davis. She has been nominated for the Center for Diversity and Inclusion Student Leadership Award and the OHSU Flame Award for Leadership in Student Service.

Nattaly is searching for the field that is best suited to her and meets the needs of the population she wishes to serve. After she graduates, she aims to use her privilege to affect change at a large scale through advocacy, mentorship, and population health.
Linda Magaña  
Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University

Linda is the proud amalgamation of countless divergences and intersections, having been raised in the mushroom capital of the world, traversed the pulsating streets of the Big Apple, and studied in the ancient alleys of Oxford. As the eldest of six children, she grew up in a boisterous family in which her father came to the States in the late 1980s as a migrant farm worker, her grandfather travelled to the mainland to escape the chronic unemployment of Puerto Rico, and her great-uncles can't even agree on whether their ancestors came over from Germany or Ireland. This vibrant upbringing—witnessing the triumphs and struggles of people from all walks of life—led Linda to study the intersection of health, disease, peoples, and institutions, most recently as a third-year medical student at the Sidney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC) of Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia.

Before entering medical school, Linda pursued a bachelor's at Columbia University as a John W. Kluge Scholar, where she examined the development of race science and its relationship to public health policy. Linda then received her master's and doctorate in the history of science, medicine, and technology from the University of Oxford. Her doctoral work was one of six doctoral studentships in the medical humanities supported by the United Kingdom's most prominent biomedical research foundation, the Wellcome Trust. Her research focused on the formation of institutions and policy related to health care in Puerto Rico in the 20th century. Although that research was done much earlier than her current work on head and neck cancer, Linda continues to be motivated by the need to understand how social, political, and economic institutions have influenced the current health status of the United States' underrepresented minorities.

With these unique life experiences, Linda matriculated at SKMC and immediately began bringing issues of diversity and inclusion to the forefront of curricular and administrative reform, working with a group of her peers to found the Jefferson Diversity and Inclusion Student Action Board. Alongside a colleague, she created a credit-bearing course, Race and Medicine in the U.S.: A Primer, that has helped galvanize the development of further curricular and faculty improvements. The associate provost for diversity and inclusion appointed Linda to the medical college's Council on Diversity and Inclusion. Her contributions to the curriculum redesign process at SKMC were also recognized in her appointment as the student chair of the Subcommittee on Health Systems Science.

Through each of these stages of academic and professional education, Linda has firmly asserted that the privilege students and future physicians hold enables them to, most obviously, treat and cure those in front of them but, perhaps more importantly, obligates them to examine the justice and equity of the entire system of the provision of health care. This is her driving mantra as she moves forward in her future career as a surgeon and public health advocate, as an educator and researcher shedding light on the health of the underserved, and as a policy maker on Capitol Hill, perhaps becoming the first Hispanic secretary of health and human services.
Nancy Rodriguez, MPH  
University of California, Davis School of Medicine

Nancy is a third-year medical student at the University of California, Davis School of Medicine. Her commitment to and passion for addressing health inequities and social injustices in underserved Latino communities have provided the fuel for her to pursue a career in medicine and inspire her to become a leader in her community.

Nancy grew up in South Gate, California, and is a first-generation Central-American college graduate and the first in her family to pursue a career in medicine. Growing up, she was her parents’ interpreter at medical visits and witnessed the challenges of accessing high-quality health care and how low-income communities of color were disproportionately affected. These experiences drove her to pursue a career in medicine and inspired her commitment to work toward eliminating health disparities and injustices and barriers to high-quality health care.

After graduating from high school, Nancy attended the University of California, Los Angeles, and majored in psychobiology. While at UCLA, Nancy became a student leader in organizations such as the Chicanos/Latinos for Community Medicine (CCM) and the Latino Student Health Project (LSHP), where she was involved in mentorship and organizing health fairs in underserved communities and quarterly health clinics in Tecate, Mexico, to provide free health services. Her experiences at UCLA and with her parents led her to pursue a master's in public health at Boston University. Witnessing the impact social factors have on health sparked her interest in not only treating the disease, but also in addressing the factors that led to the disease.

Before she attended medical school, Nancy garnered extensive experience working in community organizations and primary care clinics. Joining the Venice Family Clinic (VFC) as the director of the Health Education Department and as the manager of the Integrative Medicine/Specialty Care Program allowed her to develop into the leader she is today.

Nancy has continued her commitment to community engagement, leadership, diversity, and mentorship through her role in the Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA), the Family Medicine Student Interest Group, and other student-led initiatives. She has organized lectures on diversity, health policy, wellness, and medical Spanish on her campus. Nancy is involved in the development of Partners in Transforming Community Health (PITCH), a community engagement curriculum for medical and nursing students at UC Davis designed to encourage future health professionals to become leaders in the communities they serve. She is a past recipient of several awards recognizing her commitment to serving her community, including the American Medical Association Minority Scholars Award and the National Medical Fellowship California Community Service-Learning Program award, and she serves as a student scholar for the California Academy for Family Physicians.

Nancy hopes to become a culturally responsive primary care provider and leader in her community, as well as to be involved in training the next generation of health professionals to address the health care gap that exists in underserved communities.
Denisse Rojas Marquez  
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

Denisse envisions a health care system where no individual is excluded. Growing up as an undocumented immigrant, she and her family had limited health care options, and as a result, they would delay treatment for illnesses and use free or subsidized health care. Through these difficult experiences, Denisse was inspired to become a doctor in underserved communities who advocates for all patients and is a leader in shaping health care policies.

When Denisse and her family left Mexico for the United States, she was 10 months old. As a resident of Fremont, California, her family found new opportunities that enabled Denisse and her two siblings to attend college. Her path, however, had many roadblocks. Because of her immigration status, Denisse was ineligible for financial aid and was often discouraged that school counselors could not offer guidance on her educational goals. Moreover, Denisse was painfully separated from family members who, as a result of immigration policies, left for Canada.

Remaining steadfast in her aspirations, Denisse graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, with majors in sociology and integrative biology in 2012. That same year, Denisse cofounded a national organization called Pre-Health Dreamers (PHD) to provide advising, resources, and advocacy for undocumented youth like herself. In just a few years, PHD has reached over 700 members in 42 states. Through Denisse’s leadership, the organization cosponsored legislation to allow California licensing boards to award professional licenses to undocumented professionals and engaged in institutional advocacy in partnership with other academic groups. Most recently, she coauthored an article in *Academic Medicine* that provides guidance on considering Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients for residency positions. As a result of PHD’s advocacy, in partnership with academic groups, more medical schools are considering undocumented students for admission.

Denisse has also been a spokesperson for the DACA program that was created by then President Obama in 2012. Her story has been featured in *CNN Money* and National Public Radio’s *Latino USA*, and *Forbes* magazine recognized Denisse in its 30 Under 30 most influential entrepreneurs in education. For her achievements as a New American and her potential to contribute to American society, Denisse also received the Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans for up to $90,000 for graduate school support.

Denisse is now a third-year medical student at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. She will devote herself to a life of service through direct care, research, and policy to ensure that high-quality health care is accessible to all underserved communities and higher education is attainable for underrepresented minority students.
Where Are They Now?

Throughout the years, thousands of leaders, faculty, and students have been nominated for the Herbert W. Nickens Awards. The three selection committees dedicate many hours to identifying individuals who exemplify the qualities and professional goals that Dr. Nickens believed in. Over and over, our recipients have proven that the selection committees gets it right!

In this section, we highlight past recipients and the outstanding work they continue to do as their careers develop. Their work continue to embody the spirit of the Herbert W. Nickens Award, and we support their efforts and continue to be proud of their accomplishments.

Carmen A. Peralta, MD, MAS
Associate Professor of Medicine, Division of Nephrology
Cofounder and Executive Director, Kidney Health Research Collaborative
University of California, San Francisco and SF VA Medical Center

In 2009, Dr. Peralta received a K23 Career Development Award from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases to support her research into the genetic, socioeconomic, and other biological contributors to differences by race/ethnicity in outcomes of people with kidney disease in the United States. While she was a junior faculty member on this award, she was honored with the Herbert W. Nickens Faculty Fellowship for her outstanding leadership in addressing inequities in medical education and health care and the educational, societal, and health care needs of minorities and for her commitment to a career in academic medicine. Today, she leads an established research group, which has made important contributions to improve the lives of people with kidney disease.

The Colombian-born nephrologist’s passion for understanding the cause of racial/ethnic disparities in kidney disease outcomes began during her residency. Dr. Peralta and her colleagues have found that individuals of low-income and racial and ethnic minority groups are at particularly higher risk for complications of kidney disease and are frequently excluded from studies. Dr. Peralta has expanded her interests to include frail elders, also a vulnerable population that is frequently excluded from studies. An important limitation to improving outcomes for people with kidney disease is that the disease typically has no symptoms, so most people are unaware that they have it. However, by doing work to apply novel markers of kidney function, Dr. Peralta has established that racial/ethnic differences in the rate of kidney-function decline appear very early on, before chronic kidney disease (CKD) is actually established, which opens the door to prevention of kidney disease. CKD is associated with higher cardiovascular risk, progression to end-stage renal disease, and premature death. Dr. Peralta believes that early detection of kidney disease can reduce these complications. In the new frontier in nephrology research, Dr. Peralta’s work continues to guide decisions about screening and early detection of kidney diseases. She currently serves as a principal investigator for two randomized pragmatic trials to test the preliminary effectiveness and feasibility of implementing protocols for screening and early detection of kidney disease in the electronic health record systems in primary
care clinics. Through early intervention, Dr. Peralta and her team hope to slow down disease progression and prevent complications by having algorithms that allow for proactive identification of patients with kidney disease using data from the electronic health record. The overarching goal of her work in kidney diseases and hypertension is to understand how to use epidemiology, population science, and health services methodology to provide the best individualized care for each person.

Dr. Peralta received her undergraduate degree from Rice University and went on to medical school at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. She was an internal medicine resident at Harvard Medical School’s Brigham and Women’s Hospital. She completed advanced training in epidemiology, biostatistics, and a subspecialty in nephrology at UCSF. Currently, she is an associate professor at UCSF and the cofounder and executive director of the Kidney Health Research Collaborative (KHRC). The KHRC is an innovation hub dedicated to accelerating making kidney disease preventable and reversible. Dr. Peralta’s conviction that multidisciplinary expertise and collaboration is the most effective way to understand and solve inequities in health inspired her to create the KHRC. In 2012, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation recognized her as one of the most promising Young Leaders in the United States working to improve health and health care for all. Funding for Dr. Peralta’s work comes from the National Institutes of Health, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and an American Heart Association Established Investigator Award.
Opeolu Adeoye, MD, MS, FACEP, FAHA
Associate Professor
Codirector, UC Stroke Team
Department of Emergency Medicine
University of Cincinnati College of Medicine

It’s remarkable to think back to what led to this award, Dr. Adeoye says. He was recently involved in a diversity panel at the World Intracranial Hemorrhage Conference in Baltimore, Maryland (May 2017), and it essentially forced him to look back at some of the work he’s been doing and how it may (or not) relate to fostering diversity in medical care, education, and research.

From Pittsburgh, he matched in the Emergency Medicine Residency Program at the University of Cincinnati (UC). After residency, he stayed on for an NIH T32-funded fellowship training in stroke, neurocritical care, and research. He then joined the faculty at UC. He splits his time between the emergency department, the neuro-intensive care unit, and the multihospital stroke network in the Greater Cincinnati region, where he takes acute-stroke call. Of these, working in the ICU is probably closest to the work he was doing at the time of the award.

The two main things Dr. Adeoye was doing then was mentoring high school students interested in science and math and helping develop a palliative care and hospice teaching program for medical students. He continues to be motivated by adolescents and young adults who have so much ahead of them that would lead to remarkable success yet are innately capable of derailing that potential with one or many seemingly small acts. He thinks his work in the neuro-ICU and helping families navigate difficult end-of-life issues or decisions about expected disability most closely align with his palliative care interest as a medical student.

In addition to clinical care, Dr. Adeoye spends a fair amount of time on research and professional education. He has volunteered for the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association (AHA/ASA) for a decade and helped write national practice guidelines that represent the gold standard in educating physicians in the clinical care of stroke. He has also served as a faculty mentor for the Medical Volunteers of the University of Cincinnati (MedVoUC) and helped organize medical relief efforts at Hospital Bernard Mevs in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, for three years following the devastating earthquake of 2010. He gives many volunteer lectures to local physician, nursing, emergency medical services, and community groups each year. He also conducts acute clinical trials in stroke and other neurological emergencies and has been fortunate to receive research funding from the NIH and industry to advance this work.
Previous Herbert W. Nickens Award Recipients

2016
Somnath Saha, MD, MPH
Professor of Medicine
Oregon Health & Science University and
Portland Veterans Affairs Medical Center

2015
Ana E. Núñez, MD
Professor of Medicine
Drexel University College of Medicine

2014
Lisa Cooper, MD, MPH, FACP
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

2013
Aaron Shirley, MD
Jackson Medical Mall Foundation

2012
David Hayes-Bautista, PhD
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

2011
Elijah Saunders, MD, FACC, FACP, FAHA, FASH
University of Maryland School of Medicine

2010
Alvin F. Poussaint, MD
Harvard Medical School

2009
Jeanne C. Sinkford, DDS, PhD
American Dental Education Association

2008
Vivian W. Pinn, MD
National Institutes of Health

2007
M. Roy Wilson, MD, MS
University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center

2006
Spero M. Manson, PhD
University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center

2005
Joan Y. Reede, MD, MPH, MS
Harvard Medical School

2004
Michael V. Drake, MD
University of California Systemwide

2003
Anna Cherrie Epps, PhD
Meharry Medical College

2002
David Satcher, MD, PhD
Morehouse School of Medicine

2001
Lee C. Bollinger, JD
University of Michigan

2000
Donald E. Wilson, MD
University of Maryland School of Medicine
Previous Herbert W. Nickens Faculty Fellowship Recipients

2016
Stanley Frencher, MD, MPH
Department of Urology
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

2015
Jed Gonzalo, MD, MSc
Assistant Professor of Medicine
Assistant Professor of Public Health Sciences
Assistant Dean for Health Systems Education
Penn State College of Medicine

2014
Roberta Capp, MD, MHS
University of Colorado School of Medicine

2013
Philip A. Chan, MD
The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University

2012
Olapeju M. Simoyan, MD, MPH, BDS
The Commonwealth Medical College

2011
Tumaini Coker, MD, MBA
University of California, Los Angeles
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

2010
Carmen Peralta, MD
University of California, San Francisco

2009
Elizabeth Miller, MD, PhD
University of California, Davis School of Medicine

2008
Marcella Nunez-Smith, MD, MHS
Yale School of Medicine

2007
Thomas D. Sequist, MD, MPH
Harvard Medical School

2006
Alfredo Quiñones-Hinojosa, MD
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

2005
Ugo A. Ezenkwele, MD, MPH
New York University School of Medicine

2004
Katherine J. Mathews, MD, MPH
Washington University School of Medicine

2003
Monica J. Mitchell, PhD
University of Cincinnati College of Medicine

2002
Janice C. Blanchard, MD, MPH
George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences

2001
Vanessa B. Sheppard, PhD
Eastern Virginia Medical School

2000
Charles E. Moore, MD
Emory University School of Medicine
Previous Herbert W. Nickens Medical Student Scholarship Recipients

2016
Kirsten Concha-Moore
The University of Arizona
College of Medicine

Herbert W. Nickens Awards

Edgar Corona
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Santiago Diaz
The University of Chicago
Pritzker School of Medicine

Kamaal A. Jones
Loyola University Chicago
Stritch School of Medicine

Giselle Lynch
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

2015
Jessica Buck
Weill Cornell Medical College

Maximilian Joseph Vincent
Cruz Cooper Medical School of Rowan University

Lucy Ogbu-Nwobodo
University of California, Davis School of Medicine

Jaire Saunders
University of California, Riverside School of Medicine

Mary Tate
Harvard Medical School

2014
Frank Garrett Conyers
Harvard Medicine School

Ami E. Kumordzie
Stanford University
School of Medicine

Alexa M. Mieses
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

Adam J. Milam, PhD
Wayne State University School of Medicine

Maria Tobar
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

2013
Robert Bonacci
Perelman School of Medicine of the University of Pennsylvania

Keith Glover
Stanford University School of Medicine

Shermeeka Hogans-Mathews
The Florida State University College of Medicine

2012
Ndang Azang-Njaah
The University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine

Tyler Mains
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Ray Mendez
Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine

2011
Monique Chambers
University of California, Davis School of Medicine

Toussaint Mears-Clarke
The University of Chicago Division of the Biological Sciences and the Pritzker School of Medicine

Teresa K.L. Schiff
University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine

2010
Noemi LeFranc
The Florida State University College of Medicine

Shazia Mehmood
University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey–Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

2009
Marizabel Orellana
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA
Herbert W. Nickens Awards

Jaime W. Peterson
University of California,
San Diego School of Medicine

Kara Toles
University of California,
Davis School of Medicine

2009
Olatokunbo M. Famakinwa
Yale School of Medicine

Yohko Murakami
Stanford University
School of Medicine

Lisa M. Ochoa-Frongia
Mount Sinai School of Medicine

Blayne Amir Sayed
Northwestern University
Feinberg School of Medicine

Lloyd A. Webster
University of Medicine and
Dentistry of New Jersey—
New Jersey Medical School

2008
Aretha Delight Davis
Harvard Medical School

Nereida Esparza
The University of Chicago
Pritzker School of Medicine

Tamika E. Smith
Northwestern University
Feinberg School of Medicine

Jorge A. Uribe
University of Pennsylvania
School of Medicine

Bryant Cameron Webb
Wake Forest University
School of Medicine

2007
Christian A. Corbitt
University of Texas Health
Science Center at San Antonio

Cherie C. Cross
University of California,
Los Angeles
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Maria-Esteli Garcia
Johns Hopkins University
School of Medicine

Marlana M. Li
Loyola University Chicago
Stritch School of Medicine

Danielle Ku’ulei Potter
Creighton University
School of Medicine

2006
Nehkonti Adams
Eastern Virginia Medical School

Dora C. Castaneda
Stanford University
School of Medicine

Luis I. Garcia
New York University
School of Medicine

AeuMuro G. Lake
University of Kentucky
College of Medicine

Katherine L. Neuhausen
Emory University
School of Medicine

2005
Erik S. Cabral
Stanford University
School of Medicine

Christopher T. Erb
University of Illinois
College of Medicine
at Urbana-Champaign

Harlan B. Harvey
University of North Carolina at
Chapel Hill School of Medicine

Osita I. Onugha
University of California,
Los Angeles
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Sloane L. York
Eastern Virginia Medical School

2004
Nicolas L. Cuttriss
George Washington University
School of Medicine and Health
Sciences

Joy Hsu
University of California,
San Francisco School of Medicine

2003
Angela Chia-Mei Huang
Brody School of Medicine
at East Carolina University

Risha R. Irby
Harvard Medical School

Richard M. Vidal
University of Pennsylvania
School of Medicine

2002
Cedric Dark
New York University
School of Medicine

Francine E. Garrett
Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University

David Montgomery, PhD
Northwestern University
Feinberg School of Medicine

Johnnie J. Orozco
University of Washington
School of Medicine

Nicholas J. Smith
University of Alabama
School of Medicine

Association of American Medical Colleges
### 2002
- Aimalohi A. Ahonkhai  
  Johns Hopkins University  
  School of Medicine
- Lukejohn W. Day  
  Stanford University  
  School of Medicine
- Tarayn A. Grizzard  
  Harvard Medical School
- Alejandro I. Rincón  
  University of California, San Francisco  
  School of Medicine
- David T. Robles  
  University of Colorado  
  School of Medicine  
  University of Southern California Keck  
  School of Medicine

### 2001
- Alberto Mendivil  
  University of Utah  
  School of Medicine
- Constance M. Mobley  
  Vanderbilt University  
  School of Medicine
- Chukwuka C. Okafor  
  Boston University  
  School of Medicine
- Sheneika M. Walker  
  University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
  School of Medicine
- Melanie M. Watkins  
  Stanford University  
  School of Medicine

### 2000
- Opeolu M. Adeoye  
  University of Pittsburg  
  School of Medicine
- Diana I. Bojorquez  
  Yale School of Medicine
- Jim F. Hammel  
  Harvard Medical School
- Yolanda Hancock  
  University of California, Los Angeles Medical School
- Sonia Lomeli  
  University of California, San Francisco  
  School of Medicine
Dr. Herbert W. Nickens graduated from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine May 21, 1973.
Want to make a difference? Make a contribution!

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