



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

# HERBERT W. NICKENS AWARDS

Honoring individuals who assist medical schools in achieving their  
diversity objectives and advancing health equity

**25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
COMMEMORATING THE LEGACY OF HERBERT W. NICKENS, MD

LEARN SERVE LEAD 2024: THE AAMC ANNUAL MEETING



# **AAMC** **EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION**

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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 from among so many deserving candidates. This award would not be possible without your support.

We would also like to acknowledge the continued dedication of Patrice Desvigne-Nickens, MD and family. Their 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.

“

I am only one, but I am one.  
I cannot do everything, but  
I can do something. And I  
will not let what I cannot do  
interfere with what I can do.

**Edward Everett Hale**

”

“

Those who are happiest  
are those who do the most  
for others.

**Booker T. Washington**

”

## ABOUT THE HERBERT W. NICKENS AWARDS

The work of Herbert W. Nickens, MD, MA, inspires 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 to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Dr. Nickens was the founding vice president of the AAMC Division of Community and Minority Programs, 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 on March 22, 1999, was a significant loss to academic medicine.

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

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

**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.

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

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

**1982** – Dr. Herbert W. Nickens married Patrice Desvigne on June 26.



**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 it is often referred to as the "Heckler Report."

## Herbert W. Nickens: Life and Career

Born on Dec. 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 in sociology from the University of Pennsylvania, graduating in 1973 and earning the university's History of Medicine Prize.

**1986** – Dr. Nickens was named by Otis Bowen, MD, then U.S. secretary of health and human services, to be the first director of the Office of Minority Health, the first federal agency dedicated exclusively to improving health and health care outcomes for racial and ethnic minority communities.

**1990** – Start of the Minority Faculty Career Development Seminar

**1992** – Start of the Health Services Research Institute

**1995** – Simulated Minority Admissions Exercise (SMAE)/ Expanded Minority Admissions exercise (EMAE) became Holistic Admissions.

**1999** – Dr. Herbert W. Nickens passed away unexpectedly in March at the age of 51.

**1989** – The AAMC formed the Division of Minority Health, Education and Prevention and hired Herbert W. Nickens, MD as vice president.

**1991** – Under the leadership of then AAMC President Dr. Robert G. Petersdorf, MD, the AAMC launched Project 3000 by 2000, which was led by Dr. Herbert W. Nickens.



**1995** – The Division of Minority Health, Education and Prevention changed its name to Division of Community and Minority Programs (DCMP).

**1996** – Creation of Health Professional for Diversity (HPD) Coalition

# UNITING FOR EQUITY: LEADERSHIP REFLECTIONS ON 25 YEARS OF THE HERBERT W. NICKENS AWARDS

For 25 years, the AAMC has endeavored to keep Dr. Herbert W. Nickens' legacy alive and thriving through the awards program. Recipients of the awards live and work passionately to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in medicine and in the health professions. Their successes fulfill their goals and aspirations, but also bring strength in numbers and the knowledge that comes with diverse backgrounds, opinions, and experiences to all of medicine.

Dr. Nickens left an indelible mark on the medical community through his unwavering dedication to DEI. His visionary leadership and tireless advocacy continue to resonate today, shaping initiatives that foster a more inclusive academic medicine and health care landscape. Under Dr. Nickens' leadership, the AAMC launched several programs that still exist today – the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Summer Health Professions Education Program, the Early Career Minority

Faculty Leadership Development Program, and

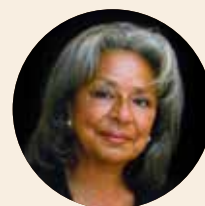
the earliest iterations of policies and practices recognized today as holistic admissions.

These programs are still relevant due to the strong foundation on which they were conceptualized and built and out of necessity for change. Dr. Marc Nivet shared, "Dr. Nickens' approach of equating fairness, pathway program development from an early age, with a rigorous approach to excellence was and remains the standard for how this work must be done."



Many of the current narratives and policy actions undermining DEI are not new. Dr. Nickens' legacy serves as a guiding light, reminding us of the transformative power of compassion and equity in medicine. Over the past quarter-century, these awards have not only acknowledged outstanding achievements, but have also inspired generations of health care professionals to strive towards these noble and achievable ideals.

Dr. Vivian Pinn noted, "For many who have dedicated their lives and careers to advancing equity and diversity, it can be difficult to face the continuing or new barriers and challenges, often alone, and often making one feel isolated or unappreciated. So, it is important, as well as right, to recognize those warriors who give so much of their efforts and personal time in the pursuit of using their leadership positions to advance equity, inclusion, and diversity."



“

Lived experience is a powerful influence on human behavior. Walk in the other man's shoes to acquire empathy that allows you to be inclusive and to problem solve more effectively.

Patrice Desvigne-Nickens

”



Student leaders who are often at the forefront of these efforts understand the urgency. Nickens medical student scholarship recipients, like Denisse Rojas Marquez, co-founder of Pre-Health Dreamers, do not wait for change. They become the change agents. In the face of our current challenges to DEI, Dr. Reed Tuckson offered this advice to students: “Constantly remind yourself of why you have chosen to pursue a career in health ... stay connected to the passion that leads you down this road. Then, as your ancestors have done before, translate that passion into disciplined study and relentless self-driven exploration of your curiosity about science, its processes, and its ever-evolving tools.”



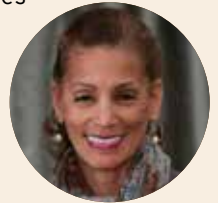
Dr. Lukejohn Day, Nickens medical student awardee in 2002 and now system chief medical officer at University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine, emphasized, “Recognizing leaders who are dedicated to advancing DEI is essential because it highlights their crucial role in creating inclusive environments. These leaders act as role models, showcasing the positive effects of a strong commitment to DEI on both organizations and communities. Their efforts dismantle systemic barriers, encourage diverse perspectives, and open doors for underrepresented groups.”



Dr. John B. Molidor added that, “All great endeavors need leaders. These leaders, in turn, need to see and navigate blind spots and biases. The most effective leaders draw upon the richness that diversity provides, whether it is diversity of thought, decision-making, [or] people.”



Each instance of recognition represents a significant step forward in our collective journey. It emphasizes the importance of persistence and resilience in effecting lasting change. Navigating the anti-DEI landscape requires leaders to stay the course, embodying the principles championed by Dr. Nickens to create a more just and equitable future for all in health care. We are encouraged by the words of Patrice W. Desvigne-Nickens, MD, who said, “The pursuit of health equity is extraordinarily challenging but ultimately will be successful because of the righteousness of this course.”



So how can we inspire the next generation of leaders? How do we keep driving forward? “We need the best physicians and surgeons who care about improving health for all. You can’t change the direction of the boat until you are in the boat and then become captain. So, get in the boat, then steer it in the direction we need,” stated Ana Núñez, MD.



To sustain momentum in the face of growing opposition, leaders must anchor their efforts in unwavering courage and strategic action. As we commemorate this anniversary milestone, let us reaffirm our commitment to advancing Dr. Nickens' vision. We still have more work ahead. Let us continue to address system-level challenges that counter DEI in medical education and health care delivery. Build up the next generation of leaders who understand what is at stake and move the agenda to advance health equity for all. By doing so, we honor not only the recipients of these esteemed awards, but also the enduring spirit of Dr. Herbert W. Nickens.

Let’s keep driving forward – together!

Prepared by Herbert W. Nickens Awards team: David Acosta, MD; Angela Moses; Norma Poll-Hunter, PhD; and Alysia L. Rieves.

## HERBERT W. NICKENS AWARD KEYNOTE SPEAKER

### **Marcella Nunez-Smith, MD, MHS**

Associate Dean for Health Equity Research

C.N.H. Long Professor of Internal Medicine, Public Health,  
and Management

Director of the Equity Research and Innovation Center

Yale School of Medicine



Dr. Nunez-Smith is inaugural associate dean for health equity research; C.N.H. Long professor of internal medicine, public health, and management; founding director of the Equity Research and Innovation Center (ERIC); director of the Center for Research Engagement (CRE); associate cancer center director for community outreach and engagement at Yale Cancer Center; chief health equity officer at Smilow Cancer Hospital; deputy director for health equity research and workforce development at the Yale Center for Clinical Investigation; core faculty in the National Clinician Scholars Program; research faculty in the Global Health Leadership Initiative; director of the Pozen-Commonwealth Fund Fellowship in Health Equity Leadership; and co-director of the Doris Duke Clinical Research Fellowship. Dr. Nunez-Smith's research focuses on promoting health and health care equity for structurally marginalized populations with an emphasis on centering community engagement, supporting health care workforce diversity and development, developing patient reported measurements of health care quality, and identifying regional strategies to reduce the global burden of noncommunicable diseases. Dr. Nunez-Smith has extensive expertise in examining the effects of social and structural drivers of health, systemic influences contributing to health disparities, health equity improvement, and community-academic partnered scholarship.

In addition to primary data collection, management, and analysis, ERIC researchers have institutional expertise in qualitative and mixed methods, population health, and medical informatics. Dr. Nunez-Smith is the principal investigator on many National Institutes of Health (NIH)- and foundation-funded research projects, including an NIH-funded project to develop a tool to assess patient reported experiences of discrimination in health care. She has investigated the promotion and retention of diversity in academic medical school faculty and has published numerous articles on the experiences of minority students and faculty. Funded by NIH's National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), she established the Eastern Caribbean Health Outcomes Research Network

(ECHORN), a research collaborative across four eastern Caribbean islands, supporting several chronic disease research projects and enhancing health outcomes research and leadership capacity in the region; the flagship ECHORN cohort study recruited and is following a community-dwelling adult cohort (n=3000) to examine novel chronic disease risk and protective factors. She received funding from NIH's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute to build upon this work by recruiting children into an expanded intergenerational ECHORN cohort, inclusive of a biorepository.

She is also principal investigator on one of five NIH/NIMHD-funded Transdisciplinary Collaborative Centers on Health Disparities focused on precision medicine, which leverages the ECHORN infrastructure to conduct collaborative research on hypertension and diabetes. Most recently, as the COVID-19 pandemic has brought national attention to the health and health care disparities of marginalized populations, she received NIH funding to leverage ECHORN to improve the COVID-19 testing cascade in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Furthermore, she was called upon to chair the governor of Connecticut's "ReOpen CT" Advisory Group Community Committee and was subsequently named co-chair of the Biden-Harris Transition COVID-19 Advisory Board. In 2021, she served as senior advisor to the White House COVID-19 Response and chair of the Presidential COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force at the Department of Health and Human Services.

Dr. Nunez-Smith has mentored dozens of trainees since completing fellowship and has received numerous awards for teaching and mentoring. An elected member of the National Academy of Medicine, Dr. Nunez-Smith is board certified in internal medicine, having completed residency training at Harvard University's Brigham and Women's Hospital and fellowship at the Yale Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholars Program, where she also received a master of health science. Originally from the U.S. Virgin Islands, she attended Jefferson Medical College, where she was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society, and she earned a bachelor's degree in biological anthropology and psychology at Swarthmore College.



## 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.

### Louis W. Sullivan, MD

President Emeritus, Morehouse School of Medicine

U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, 1989-1993

Louis W. Sullivan, MD, is chairman of the Washington, D.C.-based Sullivan Alliance to Transform the Health Professions. In January 2020, in order to further increase diversity and transform health professions' education and health delivery systems, the Board of the Sullivan Alliance voted to become a central program of the Association of Academic Health Centers (AAHC).

He served as chair of the President's Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Universities from 2002-2009 and was co-chair of the President's Commission on HIV and AIDS from 2001-2006. With the exception of his tenure as secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) from 1989 to 1993, Dr. Sullivan was president of Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) – the only predominantly black medical school in the U.S. established in the 20th century – for more than two decades. On July 1, 2002, he retired and was appointed president emeritus.

Dr. Sullivan became the founding dean and director of the Medical Education Program at Morehouse College in 1975. The program became The School of Medicine at Morehouse College in 1978, admitting its first 24 students to a two-year program in the basic medical sciences.



### Herbert W. Nickens Lecture

Monday, Nov. 11, 2024  
10:30-11:45 a.m. ET

***The Importance of Institutions  
in Our Personal Development  
and in Our Society***

Speaker: Louis W. Sullivan, MD

Moderator: Charles P. Mouton,  
MD, MS, MBA

In 1981, the school received provisional accreditation of its four-year curriculum leading to the MD degree, became independent from Morehouse College and was renamed Morehouse School of Medicine, with Dr. Sullivan as dean and president. MSM was fully accredited as a four-year medical school in April 1985. In a study published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* in June 2010, MSM was ranked number one in social mission of all U.S. medical schools. Its graduates include former U.S. Surgeon General Regina Benjamin and former Meharry Medical College School of Medicine President Wayne Riley.

Dr. Sullivan left MSM in 1989 to accept an appointment by President George H.W. Bush to serve as secretary of HHS. In this cabinet position, Dr. Sullivan managed the federal agency responsible for the major health, welfare, food and drug safety, medical research, and income security programs serving the American people.

His efforts to improve the health and health behavior of Americans included (1) leading the effort to increase the National Institutes of Health (NIH) budget from \$8.0 billion in 1989 to \$13.1 billion in 1993; (2) establishing the Office of Research on Minority Health at NIH, which has become the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities; (3) inaugurating the Women's Health Research Program at NIH; (4) the introduction of a new, improved Food and Drug Administration food label; (5) the release of Healthy People 2000, a guide for improved health promotion/disease prevention activities; (6) educating the public regarding the health dangers from tobacco use; (7) leading the successful effort to prevent the introduction of "Uptown," a nonfiltered, mentholated cigarette; (8) inaugurating a \$100 million minority male health and injury prevention initiative; and (9) implementing greater gender and ethnic diversity in senior positions of HHS, including the appointment of the

first female director of NIH, the first female (and first Hispanic) Surgeon General of the U.S. Public Health Service, the first African American Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, and the first African American Administrator of the Health Care Financing Administration (now the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services). In January 1993, he returned to MSM and resumed the office of president.

In March 2008, Dr. Sullivan was appointed to the new Grady Hospital Corporation Board of Trustees in Atlanta. In June 2008, Dr. Sullivan accepted an appointment to Improving the Organization of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to Advance the Health of Our Population, an Institute of Medicine Committee. In 2021, Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM) established the Louis W. Sullivan, MD, Professor of Medicine. The same year, BUSM created the Louis W. Sullivan, M.D., Academic Leadership Program, a selective program for high potential faculty from groups underrepresented in medicine who would benefit from protected time to complete a project that will advance their careers. In 2021, Weill Cornell Medicine launched the Dr. Louis Wade Sullivan Diversity Department of Medicine Lectureship, a lecture in support of diversity and health equity.

A native of Atlanta, Dr. Sullivan graduated magna cum laude from Morehouse College in 1954, and earned his medical degree, cum laude, from Boston University School of Medicine in 1958. His postgraduate training included internship and residency in internal medicine at New York Hospital – Cornell Medical Center (1958-60), a clinical fellowship in pathology at Massachusetts General Hospital (1960-61), and a research fellowship in hematology at the Thorndike Memorial Laboratory of Harvard Medical School, Boston City Hospital (1961-63). He is certified in internal medicine and hematology, holds a mastership from the American College of Physicians

and is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Alpha Omega Alpha academic honor societies.

Dr. Sullivan was an instructor of medicine at Harvard Medical School from 1963-64, and assistant professor of medicine at Seton Hall College of Medicine from 1964-66. In 1966, he became co-director of hematology at Boston University Medical Center and, a year later, founded the Boston University Hematology Service at Boston City Hospital. Dr. Sullivan remained at Boston University until 1975, holding positions as assistant professor of medicine, associate professor of medicine, and professor of medicine.

Dr. Sullivan is the founding president of the Association of Minority Health Professions Schools. He is a former member of the Joint Committee on Health Policy of the Association of American Universities and the National Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities.

In 1985, Dr. Sullivan became one of the founders of Medical Education for South African Blacks. From 1994-2007, he served as chairman of the organization, which raised scholarship funds in the United States and South Africa for more than 10,000 black health professions students, who are now physicians, nurses, dentists, and other health professionals in South Africa.

Dr. and Mrs. E. Ginger Sullivan are sponsors of the Sullivan 5K Run/Walk for Health and Fitness on Martha's Vineyard. Now in its 31st year, the popular event has raised more than \$750,000 to benefit Martha's Vineyard Hospital. Firm believers in daily exercise, the Sullivans have walked in more than 50 countries throughout their travels. In recent years, they have added walks in Senegal, Nigeria, Gabon, South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, Egypt, Morocco, Hungary, and Algeria.

Dr. Sullivan is the recipient of more than 70 honorary degrees, including an honorary doctor of medicine degree from the University of Pretoria in South Africa.

Dr. Sullivan is the author of *The Morehouse Mystique: Becoming a Doctor at the Nation's Newest African American Medical School* (with Marybeth Gasman, 2012, Johns Hopkins University Press), his autobiography *Breaking Ground: My Life in Medicine\** (with David Chanoff, 2014, University of Georgia Press) and *We'll Fight It Out Here: A History of the Ongoing Struggle for Health Equity* (with David Chanoff, 2022, Johns Hopkins University Press).

Dr. Sullivan currently serves on the corporate boards of United Therapeutics and Emergent Biosolutions. He also serves as co-chair of the Henry Schein Cares Foundation. He is retired from the boards of General Motors, 3M, Bristol Myers Squibb, Cigna, Household International (now HBSC), Georgia Pacific, Equifax, Henry Schein, and BioSante Pharmaceuticals.

He is married to E. Ginger Sullivan, an attorney. Together, they have three grown children: Paul, a radiologist on the faculty of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School; Shanta, an actress; and Halsted, a former writer and coproducer of the popular NBC comedy, "The Office," and who is executive producer of "Central Park," an animated musical series on Apple TV+.

\* Winner, 2015 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work - Biography/Autobiography

\* Finalist, 2015 QBR Phillis Wheatley Book Award

\* Georgia Center for the Book 2015 "Books All Georgians Should Read"



# HERBERT W. NICKENS FACULTY FELLOWSHIP

This fellowship 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 effort in addressing the educational, societal, and health care needs of racial and ethnic minorities; and is committed to a career in academic medicine.

## **April A. Edwell, MD, MAEd**

Assistant Professor of Pediatrics

Division of Critical Care

Medical Director, Benioff Children's Hospital Code CARE

University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine



Dr. April Edwell grew up in the South in Greensboro, North Carolina. Her family valued education, hard work, and kindness, which set the foundation for her remarkable academic journey. From a young age, Dr. Edwell had a spark, which came bubbling out in her extroverted personality and love of musicals, but also a fire rooted in a passion for science and helping others, leading her to pursue a career in medicine.

She began her undergraduate studies at Duke University, graduating with distinction with a bachelor of science in biological anthropology and anatomy in 2008. Her commitment to academic excellence was evident early on, as she received the prestigious Trinity Four Year Merit and Leadership Scholarship. Driven by a desire to make a difference in health care, Dr. Edwell continued her education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine, where she earned her doctor of medicine degree in 2012. She still cheers exclusively for Duke in all sporting activities.

Following medical school, Dr. Edwell completed a combined internal medicine and pediatrics residency, demonstrating a deep commitment to both fields. Her leadership qualities shone through as she served as chief resident from 2016 to 2017. Following her residency, she moved to the University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine, where she completed a fellowship in pediatric critical care.

In 2020, Dr. Edwell furthered her expertise by earning a master of arts in education from the University of California, Berkeley. For her master's thesis work, she studied the experience of Black pediatric intensivists and what their stories could tell us about the experiences of other historically excluded and minoritized groups. She received a national research award for this work. This additional qualification underscored her dedication to medical education and improving health care delivery through reducing inequities.

Currently, Dr. Edwell is an assistant adjunct professor in pediatrics at the University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine (UCSF). She has held several leadership roles, including associate program director for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the pediatric residency program and is currently the medical director for the Code CARE program at Benioff Children's Hospital. Her work focuses on addressing health care disparities and promoting equity in medical education and clinical practice.

Dr. Edwell has received numerous awards for her contributions to teaching, medical education, and DEI including the Kaiser-Permanente Excellence in Teaching Award and the UCSF Health Exceptional Physician Award. Her research and publications have made a significant impact, particularly in the areas of racism, equity, and justice in health care.

Throughout her career, Dr. Edwell has been a fierce advocate for DEI, both in her professional and personal life. Her commitment to these principles is evident in her numerous roles and initiatives aimed at creating a more equitable health care system. She continues to inspire and mentor the next generation of medical professionals, ensuring that her legacy of compassion, excellence, and advocacy endures.

# 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 in addressing the educational, societal, and health care needs of minorities in the United States.

## Alec J. Calac, PhD (*Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians*)

University of California, San Diego, School of Medicine

Alec J. Calac, PhD, is a public health researcher and minority health advocate. An MD candidate in the UC San Diego School of Medicine and San Diego State University Joint Doctoral Program in Global Health, he has been a data analytics governance fellow at the UC San Diego Institute for Practical Ethics, graduate fellow in the University of California Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program, and visiting fellow at the National Indian Health Board.



In 2022, he was invited to participate in the White House Health Equity Leaders Roundtable series and advise the National Minority Quality Forum's Cancer Stage Shifting Initiative. His leadership and advocacy, particularly for the betterment of American Indian and Alaska Native health, has been recognized by UC San Diego, the American Medical Association (AMA), Doximity, National Minority Quality Forum, the National Indian Health Board, Building the Next Generation of Academic Physicians, and ARCS Foundation. Calac has been published in peer-reviewed journals, such as *JAMA*, *the American Journal of Public Health*, *the American Journal of Health Behavior*, *Public Health Reports*, *Harm Reduction Journal*, *JMIR Infodemiology*, and the *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*. He is also a reviewer for *JMIR Infodemiology*, *Public Health Reports*, *Health Equity*, and *Addiction Science and Clinical Practice*. His scholarship with the Global Health Policy and Data Institute in San Diego, California, focuses on emerging issues in medicine and public health with particular attention toward Indigenous health equity, health technology, and workforce development.

As the former president of the Association of Native American Medical Students and founding chair of the AMA Medical Student Section Committee on American Indian Affairs, Calac supports American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian medical students with interests in organized medicine and assists in the creation and the review of policy proposals related to the Indian Health Service.



## Sophia M. Ly

Medical College of Wisconsin

Sophia M. Ly is a Hmong American and daughter of immigrant parents. Through her own family and community's experiences, she witnessed how difficult accessing and navigating health care as a person from an underrepresented and socially disadvantaged group can be. These personal experiences inspired her to become a physician committed to providing equitable and compassionate health care for the underserved, along with being an advocate for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) at all levels.

Ly completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she majored in human development and family studies. She then earned a master of science in bacteriology at UW-Madison. Prior to medical school, she worked as a project coordinator at Boston Medical Center. She provided research program support and advanced DEIA initiatives within addiction medicine. In her role, she also directed a new summer research program mentoring and supporting students from underrepresented groups in developing a research project from beginning to end.

Ly is a third-year medical student at the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) in Milwaukee, where she continues her efforts towards eliminating health disparities, helping underserved populations, and advancing DEIA initiatives. Ly has been engaged both on campus and in the community through various student leadership roles. As the Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association Hmong community outreach coordinator, she collaborated with community partners for monthly screenings and health fairs. Ly worked to expand volunteer screening services to include dermatologic

screenings. As co-president of MCW's Medical Students for Choice chapter, Ly engaged classmates

in education and advocacy for reproductive rights, including participation in a small-group roundtable with a state senator and attendance in the launch of Vice President Kamala Harris' Reproductive Freedoms Tour. Ly also served as the director of medical student volunteers for the Saturday Clinic for the Uninsured, where she expanded volunteer opportunities to include undergraduates in the Milwaukee area who were interested in health care in an effort to continue improving the leaky pipeline to medicine for underrepresented groups.

Ly is committed to improving medical school education through research. Her research interest lies in understanding DEIA in medical school curricula and developing tools to identify and address gaps in medical school content to include equitable and representative health care topics in a sustainable manner.

Ly owes her success to her family, friends, mentors, and colleagues. She remains passionate about providing care for underserved communities, being an advocate, and mentoring other future physicians. No matter which specialty she ultimately pursues, Ly aspires to be a physician that always listens to and cares for patients with empathy, respect, and compassion in order to provide the highest quality of care.



HERBERT W. NICKENS MEDICAL STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

## Sumaita Mahmood, BS

New York Medical College

Sumaita Mahmood first heard the call to service when she joined her after-school Beacon Program's Youth Council in Queens, New York. After attending the National Beacon Conference in eighth grade and meeting other council presidents, Mahmood was determined to keep service central to her life's purpose.

Mahmood graduated from New York University in 2021, completing the combined bachelor of science degree program in global public health and chemistry with minors in genetics and history. In recognition of her community outreach work, she received the Public Health Social Justice Award from the NYU School of Global Public Health. After that, she spent a year as the interim coordinator of the Office of Faculty Development at Albert Einstein College of Medicine and clinical coordinator at Jacobi Medical Center's Parasitology Clinic, one of the Bronx's largest tropical medicine and hygiene clinics. In her glide year, Mahmood built foundational medical education and patient advocacy skills that she honed further in medical school.

In line with her commitment to health equity, social justice, and community outreach, Mahmood is pursuing the MD/MPH dual degree program at New York Medical College (NYMC). As part of the leadership for her school's Building the Next Generation of Academic Physicians chapter, Sumaita develops interactive, case-based workshops to empower her fellow medical students in their future careers by teaching them to recognize their implicit biases and better serve underserved patient populations. She and her colleagues recently presented the results of these workshops at the

AAMC 2024 GSA-CiM-OSR National Meeting. She has also served as the lead medical student

mentor in the Summer Career Pathways Program, a high school outreach program run in partnership with the White Plains Youth Bureau for students underrepresented in medicine to gain early exposure to careers in health care. Inspired to further this outreach, Mahmood started the Medical Mavens Workshop to bring high school girls to NYMC's clinical skills center for hands-on activities and to receive one-on-one mentorship from current medical students who identify as women. As a third-year medical student, Mahmood looks forward to increasing the sustainability of the initiatives she has established at NYMC and expanding the reach of these programs.

Mahmood could not be where she is today without the support of her parents, Abu Mahmoodullah and Sameena Bari, who have kept education at the forefront of everything she does. She is grateful to her first mentee, Mahir Mahmood, an excellent sounding board for ideas and a terrific younger brother. In addition to her family, she is humbled by the support from her friends, colleagues, faculty mentors, and family members who make up the village that backs her success. Mahmood intends to honor their support by becoming a surgeon committed to service, healthy equity, and her community.



## Margarita M. Ramirez Silva, BA

Stanford University School of Medicine

Growing up poor and undocumented, Margarita Ramirez Silva witnessed her loved ones work like mules for basic necessities, self-medicate using substances, and enter abusive relationships out of fear of deportation, leading to serious physical and mental health consequences that they could rarely afford to treat. However, instead of allowing this suffering to break her, she used it as fuel for her ambition.

This ambition brought her to the University of Chicago, where she graduated with a bachelor of science in biology. Thereafter, she worked as a care coordinator at safety-net hospitals in Chicago. Yet, every time she placed a patient with an opioid use disorder in a recovery program or found housing for a patient, she felt as if she was merely placing a Band-Aid on a wound that could only be healed by fixing the larger systemic factors at play. This led her to pursue a master of public health at Northwestern University. Through her master's program, Ramirez Silva fell in love with community-based participatory research and began using it with *promotoras* in Latinx communities across Chicago to address their most pressing needs, namely intimate partner violence and diabetes.

Now, Ramirez Silva is a third-year medical student at Stanford University interested in psychiatry, where she focuses on aiding the communities living in the shadows of Silicon Valley's prosperity. Currently, she leads efforts to research premenstrual dysphoric disorder in the Latinx community and develop solutions for disparities in psychiatric care with her self-founded Latina Mental Health Community Advisory Board. Concurrently, she implements and assesses programs addressing homelessness, which

range from substance use treatment programs to psychiatric first-aid training.

In addition to research, she is deeply committed to medical education and championing diversity, equity, and inclusion. Thus, she has created and taught courses such as "Child and Family Resiliency" and "Taboo Topics in Medical Spanish," and advocated for minority medical trainees as a Stanford University Minority Medical Alliance co-chair and a three-year leader in the Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA). Her work extends outside of California to places like Tijuana, Mexico, where she hosted a walk-a-thon to raise funds for migrant health care, and Washington, D.C., where she helped spearhead LMSA's national policy conference.

Lastly, in her spare time, Ramirez Silva loves to write and draw, which led her to author and illustrate the *Tales of Resilience* children's book series. Her first book is *Patty's New Pond*, the story of an undocumented duckling overcoming challenges in a new country and ultimately becoming an immigration lawyer.

Overall, Ramirez Silva owes her success to her mom, sister, and the rest of her support group. Most importantly, however, she owes it to her hardships that, although painful, gave her drive, perspective, and the ability to connect with the marginalized communities she serves.





## HERBERT W. NICKENS MEDICAL STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

### Shelby Snyder

University of Washington School of Medicine

*Yá'átééh, Shí éí Shelby Snyder yinishyé. Lók'aa' Dine'é nishłj. Hashk'aan Hadzohí bashishchiin. Italian dashicheii. Belgian dashinalí. Ákót'éego diné asdzáąh nishłj. Seattle dii shi'ghan.* Snyder is of the Reed People clan, born for the Yucca Fruit Strung Out in a Line clan. Her maternal grandfather is Italian. Her paternal grandfather is Belgian. She is Diné (Navajo), Southern Ute, and adopted Meskwaki. Her family comes from Navajo Mountain, Utah, and White Mesa, Utah, on the Navajo Nation.

By introducing herself with her clans, Snyder acknowledges her kinship ties to others and positionality as a Diné woman. Snyder grew up with her father, Dr. Orrenzo Snyder, as a pillar of Diné physicianship. From an early age, she developed a passion for health care and Indigenous representation by witnessing her father be of service to their community outside of clinical spaces — at powwows or ceremonies. Simultaneously, cultural teachings of relation building, kinship, and balance kindled her passion for advocacy and Indigenous health, with a focus on admissions outreach and Indigenous ways of being in medical spaces.

Snyder received her undergraduate degree in biology and Native American studies from Dartmouth College. After taking a gap year, Snyder decided to attend the University of Washington School of Medicine for its commitment to Indigenous health with the Indian health pathway. Snyder is currently a third-year medical student on her clinical rotations. She has a strong interest in maternal child health and hopes to impact clinical care by incorporating Indigenous strength-based practices into medicine.

Snyder currently serves as a co-lead for the UW School of Medicine Association of Native American Medical

Students (ANAMS) chapter and the treasurer for the national ANAMS organization. In these roles, Snyder works to advocate for admissions outreach to Indigenous students that span across spaces such as powwows and tribal colleges. She helped revive an Indigenous anatomy blessing to protect Indigenous students culturally and spiritually as they enter the anatomy lab. She also spearheaded a collaboration between the UW School of Medicine affinity groups (ANAMS, Latino Medical Student Association, Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association, and Student National Medical Association) to host an annual Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) orientation gathering to welcome incoming students of color. Snyder received the UW School of Medicine 2023 Rural Underserved Opportunities Program Roger Rosenblatt Community Medicine Award for her project titled “*lina' nizhoni ba da'ashzhish*: utilizing powwow dancing to strengthen holistic health at the Seattle Indian Health Board,” highlighting her passion for community, culture, and medicine.

Snyder would like to thank her family, friends, community, and loved ones for their prayers and support, which continue to guide her on her path to physicianship. She is humbled and reminded of the beauty of representation. She hopes to continue to support Indigenous people in their health journeys and advocate for culturally appropriate spaces for healing and health. *Ahéhee'*



## GROUP ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (GDI) EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP AWARD

To increase recognition of diversity and inclusion leaders and teams, the GDI Steering Committee established the GDI Exemplary Leadership Award. This award recognizes innovative leadership and impact from an individual or team responsible for developing and implementing an outstanding and highly effective program that demonstrates evidenced-based best practices for enhancing diversity and inclusion in academic medicine and biomedical sciences.

### **Regina D. Richards, PhD, MSW**

Vice Chancellor, Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion,  
and Community Engagement

Assistant Professor, Department of Family Medicine

University of Colorado School of Medicine at the Anschutz Medical Campus

Regina Richards, PhD, MSW, has over 20 years of experience in academia as a business professional, educator, social worker, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) thought leader in the triplex systems of the University of Colorado (CU) School of Medicine, Children's Hospital Colorado, and CU Medicine.

As the inaugural vice chancellor of the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement (ODEICE) for the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, Dr. Richards is leading a team to develop campuswide DEI initiatives, which include key performance indicators as a system of accountability. She has created the Chancellor's DEICE Leadership Council utilizing the practice of shared governance in decision-making for this committee, engaged in partnerships with campus leaders, key interested parties, and local nonprofit organizations to strengthen trusted ties with community stakeholders and constituents. Dr. Richards also co-founded the new Center for Health Equity at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, securing \$10 million in startup funds in collaboration with the campus chancellor and previous School of Medicine dean and vice chancellor for health affairs. This center was established to advance community health, wealth, and well-being by addressing systemic inequities.



Before her current appointment, Dr. Richards was the inaugural director of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at the CU School of Medicine. The DEI work there included creating and developing programming, policies, education, and processes that span from student pathways to community engagement endeavors. While in this inaugural position, Dr. Richards taught in the Leadership, Education, Advocacy, Development, and Scholarship (LEADS) track, and created the Race in Medicine course, which she currently teaches to medical and physician assistant students. Additionally, she co-developed the CU School of Medicine Community Service-Learning curriculum. Dr. Richards holds a faculty appointment in the Department of Family Medicine. Dr. Richards is a former chair of the AAMC Combined Baccalaureate/Medical Degree Affiliate Group.

Furthermore, Dr. Richards initiated the Health Equity in Action Lab (HEAL), a comprehensive program offering campus-wide training and consultation. This initiative includes the Foundations in Equity certificate program, a Train the Trainer program, community circle practices, and educational opportunities spanning research, education, and clinical care. Since its inception in 2021, HEAL has trained over 7,500 participants, with 110 individuals earning their Foundations in Equity certificate, 15 completing the Train the Trainer program, and over 550 engaging in community circles.

Recognizing the importance of support and advocacy, Dr. Richards established the LGBTQ+ Hub, a vital resource providing social support, networking, and training for LGBTQ+ individuals and their allies. The Hub has successfully trained over 1,500 participants in inclusive and culturally responsive practices.

Additionally, Dr. Richards has fostered over 72 active partnerships, facilitating collaborative efforts to address equity, anti-racism, and structural issues. Her mentorship has extended beyond the campus, with one-on-one partnerships established for 20 medical students, residents, faculty, and staff members not only at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus and CU Denver but also at other institutions, including the University of Minnesota, the University of Michigan, and Yale University.

Dr. Richards received her doctoral degree in social work and higher education from Colorado State University, a master's degree in social work with a concentration in community and leadership development from the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work, and a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Phoenix.

Dr. Richards loves spending time with family and friends, good food, good music (especially live performances/concerts), and retail therapy.



## NATIONAL MEDICAL FELLOWSHIPS AWARDS

To recognize and support the outstanding work of the National Medical Fellowships (NMF), the AAMC honors the 2022 Franklin C. McLean Award and the William and Charlotte Cadbury Award winners. We are pleased to highlight these very deserving recipients.

### FRANKLIN C. MCLEAN AWARD

Instituted in 1968 in memory of the NMF founder, this title award recognizes outstanding academic achievement, leadership, and community service.

#### Hang Nguyen

Yale School of Medicine

Hang Nguyen is a fourth-year medical student at Yale School of Medicine. Born and raised in Vietnam, Nguyen immigrated to the United States with her family when she was 11 years old. She holds a bachelor of science in molecular, cellular, and developmental biology from Yale University, graduating magna cum laude and as a member of Phi Beta Kappa in 2021.

Throughout her academic journey, Nguyen has demonstrated exceptional leadership and commitment to community service. As the head graduate affiliate of Jonathan Edwards College, one of Yale's 14 residential colleges, she has led a team of graduate students to support and mentor undergraduates since 2022. She also co-led the Yale First-Generation and Low-Income (FGLI) Group, advocating for the needs of FGLI students and organizing community-building activities.

She has been involved with a number of research studies in various departments, including anesthesiology, internal medicine, pediatrics, and surgery. Nguyen has co-authored several research papers and presented her findings at national conferences, showcasing her dedication to advancing medical knowledge. As an NMF-Food Allergy Research and Education Health Equity Scholar and under the supervision of her mentor, Dr. Stephanie Leeds, Nguyen led a project investigating the prevalence and phenotype of food allergy in cystic fibrosis. Through this work, she hopes to prevent unnecessary food avoidance in a population already predisposed to malnutrition.



In addition to her academic and research endeavors, Nguyen is also dedicated to community service. She volunteers as a Vietnamese interpreter for the New Haven Legal Assistance Association, assisting non-English-speaking clients in legal matters, and at the HAVEN Free Clinic, providing health care support to uninsured patients in New Haven, Connecticut.

In her free time, Nguyen loves to paint. Her work has been commissioned and displayed at the Yale School of Medicine; Dwight Hall, Yale's Center for Public Service and Social Justice; and Yale's Office of the Provost. In May 2024, one of Nguyen's artworks depicting the feelings she experienced while studying for board exams won her the second-place prize in Yale's Health Profession Students' Creative Writing and Art Contest.

## NATIONAL MEDICAL FELLOWSHIPS AWARDS

### WILLIAM AND CHARLOTTE CADBURY AWARD

Established in 1977 in honor of the NMF's former executive director, William Cadbury, and his wife, Charlotte Cadbury, this title award recognizes outstanding academic achievement, leadership, and community service.

#### Lauren Edwards

Howard University College of Medicine

A fourth-year medical student at Howard University College of Medicine, Lauren Edwards is a National Health Service Corps Scholar and aspiring child and adolescent psychiatrist. She is a neuroscientist by training, earning both her undergraduate and graduate degrees in neuroscience. Her extensive, decade-long research experiences have spanned from cancer, to speech pathology, to motor rehabilitation after stroke.

Edwards currently conducts research with Dr. Erica Coates at Georgetown University, focusing on culturally sensitive mental health care and protective factors for Black families. She is the current recipient of a Helping Hands community grant from American Psychiatric Association Foundation for her work designing individualized Just for Me! Black Cultural Pride Boxes to aid in the racial socialization practices of Black preschoolers.

Throughout her career, Edwards has prioritized advocacy and community service at both local and national levels. In 2019, Edwards began volunteering with the global grassroots nonprofit organization 500 Women Scientists in efforts to make science, technology, engineering, math, and medicine more open, inclusive, and accessible. She went on to serve as their director of fellowship for the future and, eventually, the interim executive director prior to beginning medical school. Edwards looks forward to utilizing her advocacy skills, scientific perspective, and medical knowledge to best serve the mental health of her future pediatric populations.





## DARRELL G. KIRCH, MD, SCHOLARSHIPS

Established in 2019 by the AAMC Board of Directors, this scholarship honors the exemplary leadership of Darrell G. Kirch, MD, and recognizes his deep commitment to creating a diverse workforce of health care professionals. This \$10,000 scholarship is awarded to eight underrepresented minority first-year medical students who are enrolled at a LCME-accredited, MD-granting U.S. medical school for the 2019-2020 academic year. Selected students demonstrate an exemplary record of community service and leadership. This scholarship is renewable for an additional three years, provided that renewal criteria are met. Scholars will use the funds toward their tuition fees or living expenses.

### Adebola Ademola

CUNY School of Medicine

A rising second-year medical student at the Sophie Davis Biomedical Education Program at CUNY School of Medicine, Adebola Ademola's passion for medicine is shown through her commitment to addressing health care disparities. In the summer of her second undergraduate year, Ademola organized a medical mission trip to Honduras. Witnessing the profound health care challenges faced by the residents of Teupasenti – including limited access to medical care, inadequate resources, and prevalent health issues – motivated her to take action. Collaborating with local health care professionals, she secured donations and assembled a dedicated team of students. Together, they organized medical clinics, provided essential treatments, conducted health education workshops, and delivered supplies to those in need.

Ademola has been actively engaged in analyzing health care disparities within underserved communities. At St. Barnabas Hospital in the Bronx, New York, she has been involved in research focused on disparities in health care utilization among different racial and ethnic groups. By examining data on septic arthritis patients, Ademola aims to identify significant discrepancies in preventive care and chronic disease management. Her goal is to advocate for policy changes and community-based programs that ensure equitable access to preventive services, ultimately improving health outcomes for all residents.

Ademola is deeply committed to mentoring inner-city high school students at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and low-income and underrepresented communities across the five boroughs. Serving on her school's e-board for the Health Professions Recruitment and Exposure Program, she has dedicated four years to guiding and inspiring the next generation of health care leaders.



## Cassandra Appiah-Ofori

University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health

Cassandra Appiah-Ofori is a dedicated first-year student at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. She holds a bachelor's degree from Duke University, where she majored in biology and minored in global health and chemistry.

During her time at Duke University, Appiah-Ofori actively organized preorientation programs and community service initiatives, emphasizing diversity and inclusion. After graduating, she excelled in the field of health informatics at Piedmont Health Services, Inc., where she served as a health informatics specialist. Appiah-Ofori's leadership during this time was instrumental in the successful transition to telemedicine and the development of a customized telehealth workflow.

She organized extensive training programs for over 600 health care providers, enhancing system efficiency and positively affecting patient care. She also made significant contributions to streamline the Duke Occupational Employee Health and Wellness new-hire immunization documentation system.

Since starting at UW School of Medicine and Public Health, Appiah-Ofori has taken on leadership roles emphasizing advocacy and diversity within the medical community. As the co-president of the Women and Gender Minorities in Medicine, she fosters experiences in social justice, mentorship, and community service. Additionally, as the Minority Association of Pre-Medical Students liaison for the UW School of Medicine and Public Health chapter of the Student National Medical Association, she is committed to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion in the medical field. In summer 2024, she participated in the Shapiro Summer Research Program, researching "Changes to Orthopedic Sports Medicine Practice Pre-, During, and Post-the COVID-19 Pandemic."

Appiah-Ofori's deep commitment to social justice and improving health care access, both in the United States and her birth country of Ghana, fuels her career goals. She aspires to become a physician dedicated to serving under-resourced communities, advocating for equitable health care access, and conducting research to promote health equity. With a diverse skill set, a background in health informatics, and a passion for health care advocacy, Appiah-Ofori is a promising scholar on a mission to ensure health care becomes a fundamental right for all, regardless of circumstances.



DARRELL G. KIRCH, MD, SCHOLARSHIPS

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## Ashley Hernandez Gutierrez

Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California

As a second-year medical student at Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California, Ashley Hernandez Gutierrez is dedicated to advancing her medical career with a focus on community service, leadership, and research. As co-president of the Dermatology Interest Group, she organized a Dermatology Residency Director Panel with over 700 attendees and implemented the American Academy of Dermatology Good Skin Knowledge Community Grant at the Asian Youth Center in San Gabriel, California, providing skin safety education to children. Hernandez Gutierrez is also the service chair for the Student Ophthalmology Interest Group, coordinating the Steps to Specs clinic and supporting high school mentorship opportunities. As client navigation program chair for the Keck Human Rights Clinic, she scribed during forensic evaluations for asylum seekers and developed a comprehensive social resources guide for Los Angeles.



During her gap years, Hernandez Gutierrez worked as a dermatology medical assistant for Dr. Vinh Chung at Vanguard Skin Specialists, assisting with patient exams, procedures, and clinical tasks. With this clinical experience, she is now serving as clinic coordinator for the student-run dermatology clinic at JWCH Institute, Inc., managing the opening of a new dermatology branch in downtown Los Angeles. Additionally, she is a research assistant in the Department of Dermatology at JWCH, investigating the link between lactose intolerance and gastrointestinal side effects in patients taking doxycycline and conducting chart reviews for pemphigus vulgaris comorbidities. Looking ahead, Hernandez Gutierrez is committed to continuing her community involvement and advancing her clinical research, learning how best to support underserved communities in Los Angeles.



## Austin Le

### University of Illinois College of Medicine

Austin Le (he/they) is a second-year medical student at the University of Illinois College of Medicine in Peoria, Illinois. He graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, in 2020, where he double-majored in integrative biology and molecular environmental biology and minored in conservation and resources studies and global public health. As an undergraduate, Le volunteered as a health advocate at Highland Hospital, co-directed the Southeast Asian Student Coalition Summer Institute, and co-founded the *Asian American Research Journal*.

While working as a pediatric medical assistant, he learned about the framework of toxic stress and its long-term impact on children's health, motivating him to pursue a master's degree in environmental health sciences at UC Berkeley. His award-winning thesis research found an adverse association between chronic air pollution exposure and telomere length, which was stronger among children with greater adverse social context factors. While a graduate student, he served as a graduate student instructor and volunteer youth tutor and received the Kirk R. Smith Memorial Fellowship. He also began conducting research with the Stanford Center for Asian Health Research and Education examining the health impacts of social determinants of health among Asian American populations.

As a medical student, Le serves as an anti-racist curriculum tutor, student coordinator in the Loaves and Fishes Community Free Clinic, and co-vice president of the pediatrics student group. He is involved in health policy at the state level as a councilmember for the Illinois State Medical Society and at the national level by writing resolutions for the American Medical Association.



DARRELL G. KIRCH, MD, SCHOLARSHIPS

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## Kennedy Musgrave

The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences

Kennedy Musgrave is a rising second-year student at The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences (GW SMHS) and a dedicated advocate for diversifying medicine. She graduated from Dillard University in 2023 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Recognizing the disparities that exist within our health care system, Musgrave believes promoting equity in health care is not only imperative, but essential for achieving optimal health outcomes for all patients.

Through initiatives such as her involvement with the AAMC and currently serving as president of GW SMHS's chapter of the Student National Medical Association, Musgrave is committed to advocating for policies and programs that promote health equity and increase representation.

In addition to her advocacy work, Musgrave created and operates a blog, Doctor-ish, a realistic guide to medical school to support premed students in reaching their goals. Passionate about ensuring all aspiring physicians have access to the resources and support they need, Musgrave is committed to making a lasting impact on the field of medicine.



## Clarence Sams

Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science College of Medicine

Clarence Sams is a second-year medical student at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science College of Medicine (CDU). Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Sams is a University of Maryland, Baltimore County, alum with a bachelor's degree in biology. His volunteer work showcases his dedication to serving under-resourced populations, particularly with an emphasis on mentoring. In 2022, Sams founded the Students Seeking Educational Mentoring Enrichment program geared towards matching high school and college students with experts in students' fields of interest. He wants to give students from neighborhoods like his own the opportunity for success. His passion for mentoring extends into medical school as he serves as the associate director of mentoring for the DOF Foundation program, where he focuses on creating a pipeline to becoming a physician through mentorship.

Sams is the founder and president of the CDU MD Dermatology Interest Group. His academic research focuses on dermatological-related scar formations prevalent in minority skin types. His work has appeared in the *Journal of Bio-Medical Materials and Engineering* and he currently has a publication under review in the *Journal of Experimental Dermatology*. As a Stanford University Racial Equity to Advance a Community of Health Historically Black Medical College scholar, he now works with Stanford's dermatology department on research into how artificial intelligence (AI) is impacting the field of dermatology, currently focusing on the development of AI-based identification tools for keloids. He is passionate about skin condition disparities and wants to help shorten the diagnostic and educational gap for the skin of people of color.





## Arantxa Sanchez

### Medical College of Wisconsin

Arantxa Sanchez, a second-year medical student at the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW), is a dedicated advocate for underserved and immigrant communities, passionately striving to increase inclusivity and diversity within the medical field. As a Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipient who originated from Mexico, Sanchez earned her bachelor's degree in neuroscience from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Driven by her belief that health care is a fundamental human right, Sanchez began her journey in advocacy as an undergraduate, conducting research on social disparities and volunteering at a local clinic that served uninsured and undocumented patients. Continuing her commitment as a medical student, she volunteers as a student doctor at MCW's student-run Saturday Clinic for the Uninsured.

As a first-generation college graduate, immigrant, and underrepresented individual in medicine, Sanchez is acutely aware of the unique challenges many students face in their educational journeys. This personal experience drives her commitment to serving as the fundraising chair for the Latino Medical Student Association at both the MCW chapter and national level. In this role, she works diligently to support the organization's mission by securing scholarships, providing professional development opportunities, and enhancing academic resources for medical students. Sanchez's exceptional dedication has been recognized by MCW's Office of Student Inclusion and Diversity, which nominated her for the Wilson Scholars Program at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science. Her acceptance into this highly competitive program underscores her outstanding contributions and impact in her community.

Sanchez co-chairs the DACA Task Force for the Medical Organization for Latino Advancement. In this role, she works actively to enhance opportunities, provide mentorship, and offer support for underrepresented, DACA, and undocumented premedical and medical students. Through her advocacy and leadership, Sanchez is committed to breaking barriers and fostering a more inclusive future for health care professionals and their diverse patient populations.



## Jaron Whitehead

### Morehouse School of Medicine

Jaron Whitehead is a devoted advocate for health equity with a robust academic foundation and extensive practical experience in health care. Armed with a bachelor's in biology, a master of science in medical science, and currently pursuing a medical doctorate at Morehouse School of Medicine, Whitehead exhibits a commitment to academic excellence and addressing health disparities. Spearheading community engagement, Whitehead co-directs the Health Equity for All Lives Clinic's outreach operations at Morehouse School of Medicine, overseeing student training in point-of-care testing and coordinating health fairs across Georgia that provide free health screenings to patients. Collaborating with the Health Careers Exposure Program, Whitehead also imparts his knowledge of organ dissections to high school students in rural areas. His impactful contributions extend to biomedical engineering and genetic studies, showcased through presentations at esteemed symposiums and publications centered on cardiac biology and gene regulation. Possessing a diverse skill set encompassing laboratory procedures, diagnostics, collaboration, and adeptness with software tools, Whitehead exemplifies a comprehensive approach to advancing health equity and delivering exemplary patient care.







## PREVIOUS HERBERT W. NICKENS AWARD RECIPIENTS

### 2023

**Neil R. Powe, MD, MPH, MBA**  
University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine

### 2022

**Thomas A. LaVeist, PhD**  
Tulane University

### 2021

**Judith Salmon Kaur, MD**  
*(Choctaw and Cherokee)*  
Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science

### 2020

**Cato T. Laurencin, MD, PhD**  
University of Connecticut

### 2019

**Maria L. Soto-Greene, MD, MS-HPED, FACP**  
Rutgers New Jersey Medical School

### 2018

**Griffin P. Rodgers, MD, MACP**  
National Institutes of Health

### 2017

**George C. Hill, PhD**  
Vanderbilt University School of Medicine

### 2016

**Somnath Saha, MD, MPH**  
Oregon Health & Science University and Portland Veterans Affairs Medical Center

### 2015

**Ana E. Núñez, MD**  
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

### 2023

**Luis Godoy, MD**  
 University of California, Davis,  
 School of Medicine

### 2022

**Ofole Mgbako, MD**  
 NYU Langone Health

### 2021

**Utibe R. Essien, MD, MPH**  
 University of Pittsburgh School  
 of Medicine

### 2020

**Cherisse D. Berry, MD, FACS**  
 NYU Grossman School of Medicine

### 2019

**Joshua Barocas, MD**  
 Boston University School  
 of Medicine

### 2018

**Marlene Camacho-Rivera,  
 ScD, MPH**  
 CUNY School of Medicine

### 2017

**Risha Irvin, MD, MPH**  
 Johns Hopkins University School  
 of Medicine

### 2016

**Stanley Frencher, MD, MPH**  
 David Geffen School of Medicine  
 at UCLA

### 2015

**Jed Gonzalo, MD, MSc**  
 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**  
 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

### 2023

**Amani Allen**

University of Chicago Pritzker  
School of Medicine

**Max-Edouard Cornely, MPH**

Emory University School of  
Medicine

**Andrés Antonio Maldonado**

University of California, Davis,  
School of Medicine

**Shaheed Marquis Muhammad**

Kaiser Permanente Bernard J.  
Tyson School of Medicine

**Noelle Thompson**

University of Toledo College of  
Medicine

### 2022

**Kemi Alabi**

Robert Wood Johnson  
Medical School

**Cameron D. Clarke**

Columbia University Vagelos  
College of Physicians & Surgeons

**Amanda L. Collar**

University of New Mexico  
School of Medicine

**Sarah E. Rowley**

Perelman School of Medicine,  
University of Pennsylvania

**Ana M. Viteri**

Medical College of Wisconsin

### 2021

**Kaylin G. Batey**

University of Kentucky  
College of Medicine

**Tegan Marie Carr**

University of Minnesota  
Medical School

**Victor A. Lopez-Carmen, MPH**

*(Hunkpati Dakota Oyate and Yoeme)*  
Harvard Medical School

**Nyah Iman Rodman**

University of California,  
San Diego, School of Medicine

**Christian Tejeda**

University of California,  
Los Angeles, David Geffen  
School of Medicine

### 2020

**Russell J. Ledet, PhD**

Tulane University School  
of Medicine and Freeman  
School of Business

**Bernadette N. Lim**

University of California,  
San Francisco, School of Medicine

**Itzel López-Hinojosa**

University of Chicago Pritzker  
School of Medicine

**Rubén D. Vega Pérez**

Icahn School of Medicine  
at Mount Sinai

**Lauren West-Livingston, PhD**

Wake Forest University School  
of Medicine

### 2019

**Betial Asmerom**

University of California,  
San Diego, School of Medicine

**Sylvia Guerra**

Geisel School of Medicine  
at Dartmouth

**Pauline Ngoc Anh Nguyen**

University of California,  
Davis, School of Medicine

**Bria Peacock**

Medical College of Georgia  
at Augusta University

**Alex Villeda**

Duke University School  
of Medicine

### 2018

**Tyler K. Carcamo**

University of California,  
Davis, School of Medicine

**Catherine Castro**

University of Chicago Pritzker  
School of Medicine

**Chad Lewis, MPH**

Geisel School of Medicine  
at Dartmouth

**Sang Minh Nguyen**

University of California,  
Riverside, School of Medicine

**Lawrence Rolle**

Keck School of Medicine of the  
University of Southern California



## PREVIOUS HERBERT W. NICKENS MEDICAL STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

### 2017

#### Yvorn Aswad

Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science/University of California, Los Angeles, David Geffen School of Medicine

#### Nattaly Greene

Oregon Health & Sciences University

#### 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

### 2016

#### Kirsten Concha-Moore

University of Arizona College of Medicine

#### Edgar Corona

University of California, Los Angeles, David Geffen School of Medicine

#### Santiago Diaz

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 Medicine 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 Medical 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

University of California, Los Angeles, David Geffen School of Medicine

### 2013

#### Robert Bonacci

Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania

#### Keith Glover

Stanford University School of Medicine

#### Shermeeka Hogans-Mathews

Florida State University College of Medicine

#### Tyler Mains

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

#### Ray Mendez

Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine

### 2012

#### Ndang Azang-Njaah

University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine

#### Olivia Marie Campa

University of California, Davis, School of Medicine

#### Senyene Eyo Hunter, PhD

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine

#### Elaine Khoong

Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis

#### Alison L. Smith, MPH

Mercer University School of Medicine

#### Brett A. Thomas

Florida State University College of Medicine

# HERBERT W. NICKENS AWARDS

## PREVIOUS HERBERT W. NICKENS MEDICAL STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

---

### 2011

#### **Monique Chambers**

University of California,  
Davis, School of Medicine

#### **Toussaint Mears-Clarke**

University of Chicago Division  
of the Biological Sciences and  
University of Chicago Pritzker  
School of Medicine

#### **Teresa K.L. Schiff**

University of Hawaii at Manoa  
John A. Burns School of Medicine

#### **LaShon Sturgis, PhD**

Medical College of Georgia at  
Georgia Health Sciences University

#### **Martha Tesfalul**

Johns Hopkins University  
School of Medicine

### 2010

#### **Noemi LeFranc**

Florida State University  
College of Medicine

#### **Shazia Mehmood**

University of Medicine and  
Dentistry of New Jersey-Robert  
Wood Johnson Medical School

#### **Marizabel Orellana**

University of California,  
Los Angeles, David Geffen  
School of Medicine

#### **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**

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**

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

## PREVIOUS HERBERT W. NICKENS MEDICAL STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

### 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

#### **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

#### **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

### 2003

#### **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

### 2002

#### **Aimalohi A. Ahonkhai**

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

#### **Lukejohn W. Day**

Stanford University School of Medicine

#### **Tarayn A. Grizzard**

Harvard Medical School

#### **Alejandrina I. Rincón**

University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine

#### **David T. Robles**

University of Colorado School of Medicine  
Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California

### 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 Pittsburgh School of Medicine

#### **Diana I. Bojorquez**

Yale School of Medicine

#### **Jim F. Hammel**

Harvard Medical School

#### **Yolandra Hancock**

University of California, Los Angeles, Medical School

#### **Sonia Lomeli**

University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine



## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

### 2025 Herbert W. Nickens Awards

Honoring individuals who assist medical schools in achieving their diversity objectives and advancing health equity

### Accepting Nominations

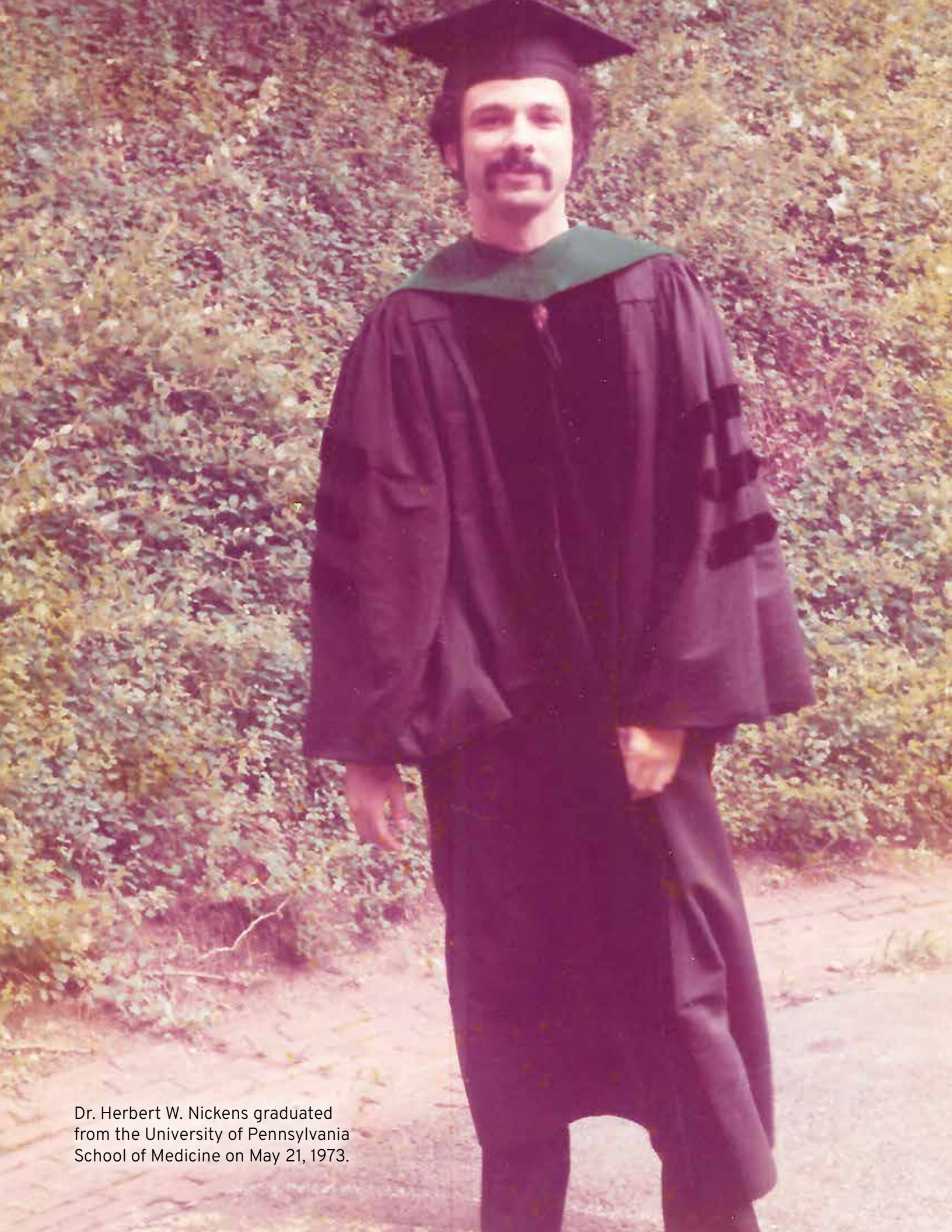
Herbert W. Nickens Award: **Oct. 1, 2025**

Herbert W. Nickens Faculty Fellowship: **Jan. 2, 2025**

Herbert W. Nickens Medical Student Scholarships: **Jan. 2, 2025**

You are invited to join us as we celebrate the Herbert W. Nickens Awards. In recognition of the life of Herbert W. Nickens, MD, and his dedication to eliminating health care disparities, we look forward each year to celebrating his legacy. Plan to join us Nov. 1-5, 2025, at Learn Serve Lead 2025: The AAMC Annual Meeting.





Dr. Herbert W. Nickens graduated from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine on May 21, 1973.



## CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HERBERT W. NICKENS MEMORIAL FUND ARE WELCOME.

Contributions are generally tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

The AAMC's tax ID number is EIN 36-2169124.

Please send contributions to the following address:

**AAMC – Herbert W. Nickens Memorial Fund**  
P.O. Box 419384  
Boston, MA 02241-9384

### **Engage With Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)**

Learn more about AAMC EDI initiatives at  
[aamc.org/about-us/equity-diversity-inclusion/initiatives](https://aamc.org/about-us/equity-diversity-inclusion/initiatives).

