

EDUCATION

Pritzker School of Medicine

The scholarly triumphs of our students, the innovative nature of our curriculum, and the breadth of experiences, ideas, and perspectives that are present within our medical school community speak to the dynamic and enriching educational experience to be found at the Pritzker School of Medicine. We believe such an experience will be further supported by the following initiatives and achievements of our school:

- > Implementation of the Early Start Date in 2008
- > A New Curriculum through the Pritzker Initiative
- > Increasing Diversity
- > Reducing the Class Size at Pritzker: Distinction Trumps Size
- > Ample Resources for Student Scholarship
- > New Academic Affiliation with NorthShore University HealthSystem



HOLLY J. HUMPHREY, MD
Professor of Medicine, Dean for
Medical Education

CHICAGO **BIO**MEDICINE

Science and medicine for the betterment of humanity

Pritzker School of Medicine

OVERVIEW



The average class size for Pritzker students will be reduced, countering national trends. *Photo by Eileen Ryan*



Holly J. Humphrey, MD
Professor of Medicine,
Dean for Medical Education

To our faculty, students, residents, and friends,

I am looking forward to the coming opportunities at our school and energized by the numerous exciting projects that the Pritzker School of Medicine has undertaken over the last year. Our core mission, however, remains unchanged:

“In an atmosphere of interdisciplinary scholarship and discovery, the Pritzker School of Medicine is dedicated to inspiring diverse students of exceptional promise to become leaders and innovators in science and medicine for the betterment of humanity.”

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Implementation of the Early Start Date in 2008

In 2008, the Pritzker School of Medicine welcomed its matriculating students at the beginning of August—a departure from the traditional start date in late September. The purpose of the early start date was to offer first-year students the opportunity to begin their medical curriculum with a strong focus on a key aspect of the curriculum: The Human Body. By changing the organization of the anatomy curriculum from a two quarter experience into an intensive two month block, students immerse themselves in one of the most compelling and powerful rites of passage in medical education. During the same period, students are also engaged in exploring one of the medical field’s most pressing issues of the day—health care disparities—through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-funded initiative *Health Care Disparities in America*. Following completion of these two educational experiences, students begin their basic science coursework. With anatomy over, students use the additional time in their schedule for small group and self-directed learning to explore important concepts of basic science and their application to clinical medicine.

A New Curriculum through the Pritzker Initiative

The early start date is but one aspect of the exciting curricular innovations in The Pritzker Initiative: A Curriculum for the 21st Century. In order for our medical school curricula to remain vibrant and responsive to changes in science and society, it is important periodically to take a broad look at the way we teach. It was in this spirit that we undertook the Pritzker Initiative, with the establishment of several key principles for the curriculum of the future. Through the Pritzker Initiative, we will strive to emphasize active learning, integrate disciplines when possible and appropriate, and provide all students with the resources to complete an integrated scholarly project.

Increasing Diversity

While a progressive curriculum is a key component of a rich education, we recognize the important learning that can be gained from collaboration with peers who are drawn from a diverse set of backgrounds. In 2007, Pritzker's incoming class included a reported 22% of students historically underrepresented in medicine, while in 2008 that percentage was a reported 19%—figures well above national averages. This outstanding number can be attributed in large part to the success of our four pipeline programs, which offer high school and college students the opportunity to learn from medical students, conduct research with faculty members, and be active participants in an engaging medical school setting. The numbers of underrepresented minority students offer just one powerful statistic about the diversity of our class, which is drawn from 35 states, 5 or more foreign countries, and 40 undergraduate majors.

Reducing the Class Size at Pritzker: Distinction Trumps Size

In the spirit of encouraging and supporting students through active learning and engagement, the Pritzker School of Medicine is now taking steps to reduce its class size. In the fall of 2009, we will reduce our average class size to 88 students. By reducing the class size, the medical school will increase student-faculty interactions, devote additional educational resources and financial support to each student, renew our emphasis on scholarship and discovery, and restore some of the personal bonds in modern medical education that are often lost because of pressures on faculty time.



First-year Pritzker students toured area clinics and hospitals, including Jackson Park Hospital, pictured here. Jackson Park's director of surgery Gerrie Pate, RN, (pictured in white lab coat) talks to students about surgical beds and common procedures at the hospital.

Photos by Dan Dry



Ample Resources for Student Scholarship

Success in the medical field can be measured in a number of ways, and throughout the past year our students have been exemplary in their achievements in research and their recognition by national organizations. Our students are currently conducting research and other learning experiences through the support of the country's most esteemed and prestigious organizations and programs including the Fulbright Fellowship (Joshua Wallbrecht), the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation International Clinical Research Fellowship (Zach Rosner), the Centers for Disease Control (Jamie Weiss Krashin), the Schweitzer Foundation (Edward Gometz), and many others. Bapu Jena, PhD '06, a fourth-year student, was the recipient of the Eugene Garfield Economic Impact on Medical and Health Research Award. In addition, third-year medical student Nereida Esparza received the Herbert W. Nickens Medical Student Scholarship, given by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). This scholarship seeks to recognize "outstanding students entering their third year of medical school who have shown leadership in efforts to eliminate inequities in medical education."



Along with notable achievements in medical research, our students demonstrate tremendous scholarly talents in fields outside of medicine. Pritzker offers the opportunity to earn joint and dual degrees in Business, Law, the Biological Sciences, Social Sciences, Public Policy, and Humanities. Nearly 20% of each graduating class includes students who have pursued additional degrees at one of our renowned professional and graduate schools.

New Academic Affiliation with NorthShore University HealthSystem

We anticipate that our students will continue to be met with tremendous success, both in their scholarly achievements and in clinical practice. Our academic affiliation with Evanston Northwestern Healthcare—now called NorthShore University HealthSystem—was completed this summer, and will offer our students the opportunity to work with different patient populations and operational systems in a suburban community teaching hospital. While the majority of medical student training has always been and will continue to be based at the University's Medical Center, we believe the affiliation will provide our students with an even broader medical experience from which to learn and grow.



In the midst of a dynamically changing health care environment, we are committed to sustaining excellence. By providing our student body with ample resources—devoted faculty, opportunities for scholarship, an innovative curriculum—we are confident in our graduates' ability to not only thrive but to lead the next generation of physicians and scientists. *US News and World Report* most recently ranked the Pritzker School of Medicine as 16th in 2007, rising from 22nd in 2004, giving strong consideration for the quality and richness of the education offered at our institution and the high regard in which our students are held.

Sincerely yours,

Holly J. Humphrey, MD

Professor of Medicine

Dean for Medical Education