



Fireside
PATHWAY TO SUCCESS:
Chat

RM
RABB - VENABLE EXCELLENCE IN OPHTHALMOLOGY RESEARCH PROGRAM

2020 OPHTHALMOLOGY APPLICANTS

NATIONAL MEDICAL ASSOCIATION | OPHTHALMOLOGY SECTION



Pathway to Success
Co-Chairs

O'Rese Knight, MD
Dolly Padovani-Claudio, MD, PhD



Rabb - Venable
Course Directors

Mildred MG Olivier, MD
Eydie Miller-Ellis, MD

Pathway to Success Co-Chairs



O'RESE J KNIGHT, MD

Rabb - Venable Class of 2008, 2010, 2011 & 2012

O'Rese Knight, MD, Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology and glaucoma specialist at the University of North Carolina Kittner Eye Center. He has research interests in 24 hour intraocular pressure measurement and clinical device design. His work has received funding for the National Eye Institute, the American Glaucoma Society, and the University of North Carolina. He is a prior Rabb - Venable Research Competition participant and owes much of his professional success to mentors he developed relationships with through the NMA Ophthalmology Section. Beyond ophthalmology he serves on national committees concerned with increasing physician workforce diversity and physician licensure.



DOLLY PADOVANI-CLAUDIO, MD, PHD

Rabb - Venable Class of 2013 & 2014

Dolly Padovani-Claudio, MD, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. She is a board-certified ophthalmologist and member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus. She practices at the Tennessee Lions Eye Center at the Vanderbilt Eye Institute. Her laboratory is focused on finding new treatments for angiogenic retinopathies such as diabetic retinopathy and retinopathy of prematurity. Due to the growing incidence of obesity and diabetes in the pediatric population, and advances in neonatal care, an increase in the prevalence of complications associated with these conditions is expected.

Her research centers on understanding processes at the intersection of inflammation and vascular growth in the retina, and on repurposing existing drugs developed to target these processes in non-ocular systems to prevent, abort or revert them in angiogenic retinopathies. She hopes that repurposing such drugs will bypass the costly, lengthy, and risky drug development process and accelerate the translation of her research to effective therapies for patients with blinding conditions.

Fireside PATHWAY TO SUCCESS: Chat

The Fireside Chats provide an opportunity for Under-Represented in Medicine (UiM) applicants to highlight their unique strengths, diverse backgrounds and life experiences. The ophthalmology residency programs through the AUPO have the opportunity to answer questions and highlight aspects of their training that would be of value to these potential candidates. This program is conducted using a virtual platform.

2020 OPHTHALMOLOGY APPLICANTS



Antoinette Alban, MD

HOWARD UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
Washington, District of Columbia

- ◆ Graduated 3rd in her class at Howard University College of Medicine. Completed her transitional year at Mt. Sinai in Miami where she was Intern of the Year
- ◆ Worked at an eye clinic in Brooklyn, NY while volunteering for underserved-communities in Connecticut.
- ◆ Passionate about research and writing. Has worked as a consultant for a publishing company where she reviewed and evaluated grant proposals, and performed in-depth structural editing of manuscripts for journal publications
- ◆ Member of Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society



Modupe Adetunji

PERELMAN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

- ◆ Awarded the Jeffrey W Berger Medical Student Research in Ophthalmology Award and conducted translational research on the development of novel glaucoma therapies.
 - ◆ Dedicated to helping support Philadelphia's underserved populations and serves as a coordinator of the Agnew Surgery Clinic and a volunteer with the Penn Sight Savers.
 - ◆ Served as co-chair of the Perelman chapter of the Student National Medical Association, where she organized minority mentorship events for pre-medical and medical students.
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Nuana Augustine Amakiri

TEXAS TECH HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER SOM
Lubbock, Texas

- ◆ Gold Humanism Honor Society: President, 2020-2021
 - ◆ Dean's Ambassador: President, 2019-2020
 - ◆ Poet: Men of Substance Award Winner, 2017
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Aaron C Brown, MD

NEW YORK EYE AND EAR INFIRMARY OF MT SINAI
New York, New York

- ◆ During his second year of medical school, Aaron utilized his proficiency in software coding to launch a mobile app startup with the goal of helping students overcome obstacles to different learning styles and achieve high scores on board exams. This app, called LectureKeeper, earned a \$10,000 grant from his medical school and resulted in a journal publication.
- ◆ Has showcased a strong history of mentorship and outreach, and is presently advocating for reform in medical education as a member of his medical school's Social Justice Task Force.
- ◆ Initiated several diverse research projects. As a research fellow at New York Eye and Ear Infirmary, Aaron continues to demonstrate his desire to learn, adept interpersonal skills, and his hardworking, goal oriented nature.



Jennifer Camia

VIRGINIA COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE
Blacksburg Virginia

- ◆ Masters in Health Management Systems - Duquesne University 2012
 - ◆ Participated in three medical outreach trips: Tegucigalpa, Honduras 2017, 2018. Chennai, India 2009
 - ◆ First generation Filipino-American who will be the first doctor in her family
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Pamela Capellan

WEILL CORNELL MEDICINE
New York, New York

- ◆ The first student in her public high school in the Bronx to gain acceptance to Cornell University.
 - ◆ Founded a mentorship program at Cornell University for over 300+ pre-medical, minority students.
 - ◆ Conducted and published research with the ophthalmology group at Imperial College London in the UK.
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Cheryl N Fonteh, MS

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
Chicago, Illinois

- ◆ Masters in biomedical engineering
- ◆ Author of a published book
- ◆ Adaptable to environment (I have lived in 2 different continents, 3 different regions in the US and have visited over 10 countries across the world).



Jibran Fateh

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN MEDICAL SCHOOL

Ann Arbor, Michigan

- ◆ Member of the Leadership in Medicine for the Underserved Certificate Program at the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine at the Flint, MI campus.
 - ◆ Passionate about education. His experience and skills as a former middle school algebra and high school chemistry teacher, directed his medical education and goals.
 - ◆ Aspire to be impactful through literature. I have diverse research experiences and serve as a senior editor of Medical Student Research Journal.
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Natalia Garza

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Nashville, Tennessee

- ◆ Leadership: Student Government Vice President, Ophthalmology Interest Group co-leader, and Co-President of VMS Dance.
 - ◆ Service: Starting as a Spanish interpreter for the student-run clinic, she eventually became the Director of Interpreter Services and is now the co-Director of the Ophthalmology and Refraction Clinic.
 - ◆ Gold Humanism Honor Society - 2019.
 - ◆ Mentoring: Peer-mentor for her learning community of approximately 100 students, taught physical diagnosis terminology in Spanish through the LMSA organization and clinical reasoning and physical diagnosis skills through the student-run Shade Tree clinic.
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Georges V. Guillaume

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE

St Louis, Missouri

- ◆ Serves as president of the Job Lamour Foundation, a non-profit geared toward collecting and donating basic necessities and educational resources to those in need in Haiti
- ◆ Recognized by the White House Initiative on HBCUs for accomplishments in scholarship, leadership, and civic engagement
- ◆ Takes pride in having mentored and tutored dozens of students from all ages and backgrounds



Saif Hamdan

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Nashville, Tennessee

- ◆ **Research:** Dedicated to understanding health literacy and its impact on care delivery; he has translated this knowledge into quality improvement efforts across multiple fields of medicine, including primary care, general surgery, and ophthalmology.
 - ◆ **Leadership:** Co-director of an Ophthalmology community clinic; President of the Student National Medical Association chapter.
 - ◆ **Advocacy:** Advocated for equitable, patient-centered care through his roles as a patient health educator, Spanish and Arabic interpreter, and tele-ophthalmology coordinator.
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Maryam Ige

YALE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
New Haven, Connecticut

- ◆ Taught nutrition workshops at her local homeless shelter in order to empower participants with healthy and budget friendly decision-making skills
 - ◆ Collaborated with Haven (free clinic) to provide free vision and glaucoma screenings to uninsured patients
 - ◆ Mentors high school and pre-medical students from backgrounds underrepresented in medicine
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Haroon Ismail

HOWARD UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
Washington, District of Columbia

- ◆ Invented and developed three medical devices, two during medical school.
- ◆ Recently had his first, first-author paper, examining the feasibility of using smart speakers to administer visual acuity exams autonomously, accepted for publication by JAMA Network Open.
- ◆ Passionate about innovation and mentorship and has co-founded a university startup incubator program, with 51 portfolio companies, at Cornell University, which he ran for almost five years. He also founded a similar program focused on recruiting and developing underrepresented minority founders in the DC/MD/VA area and regularly involves alumni from that program in his device research and development projects.



Chad Y Lewis

DARTMOUTH GEISEL SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Hanover, New Hampshire

- ◆ Nationally-recognized leader in health equity who is a NMQF 40 Under 40 Leader in Minority Health, an AAMC Herbert W. Nickens Scholar, and a Gold Humanism Honor Society member.
 - ◆ Former Marine Sergeant and Iraq Veteran who also spent over two years in working in community health promotion under the 17th Surgeon General of the United States.
 - ◆ Former member of SNMA's National Board of Directors and is currently one of two medical students selected by his Dean to sit on Dartmouth's Committee on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion.
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Elise V Mike, MS

ALBERT EINSTEIN COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

Bronx, New York

- ◆ 8th year MD/PhD candidate
 - ◆ Served as a local, regional, and national leader in the Student National Medical Association to support the needs and concerns of medical students of color
 - ◆ Conducted both basic science research on the pathogenesis of neuropsychiatric lupus and clinical research on health disparities, including a recent Clinical Ophthalmology call to action on health equity in ophthalmology in the COVID-19 era.
 - ◆ Co-founded the Student Collective for Action on Diversity to work with the Einstein administration to improve diversity and inclusion and founded the Einstein White Coats for Black Lives chapter to address racism as a public health issue.
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Gideon Mkrumah, OD

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Pittsburg, Pennsylvania

- ◆ Interest in eye care was drawn from his empathetic response to the cultural stigma associated with blindness in his village in Ghana.
- ◆ Service and Leadership: Vice President of American Medical Students Association (AMSA), Board member and co-chair of Student Executive Council (SEC) - Guerilla Eye Service (free eye clinic service).
- ◆ Research and Innovation: Presented at AAO, NANOS and NMA Rabb - Venable Research Program. Has 3 peer reviewed publications and 1 editorial.
- ◆ Gideon and two medical students were finalists at the University of Pittsburgh Hackathon competition for their creation of a mobile simulation application, NephRun.



Andrea Nortey

NEW YORK MEDICAL COLLEGE
Valhalla, New York

- ◆ Recently identified a novel neuroprotective mechanism in retinal degeneration with her lab group at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute which she presented at ARVO 2020
 - ◆ Developed and implemented CDC sponsored interventions to prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in public hospitals throughout New York City
 - ◆ Former nationally ranked coxswain
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Jiali (Mary) Ma

HOWARD UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
Washington, District of Columbia

- ◆ Has worked consistently on research throughout her medical school career, which has yielded a diverse research experience, and awards that reflect her curiosity and affinity towards learning.
 - ◆ In her clinical years, she has been an insightful team player, who is consistently empathetic, meticulous to detail, and supportive of those around her.
 - ◆ Voted by peers for the Gold Humanism Award.
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Matthew Martin

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Detroit, Michigan

- ◆ As Clinic Coordinator of Sight Savers, the student-run free vision clinic for uninsured patients of Detroit, he implemented key changes to the clinic to increase patient education and access to care.
- ◆ Awarded the Robert C. Fraser, M.D. Endowed Scholarship (2019-2020), a competitive Scholarship awarded to Wayne State University students based on past participation in ophthalmology through research and clinical work.
- ◆ Accepted to present research projects at ARVO 2020 (cancelled due to COVID-19) and the Rabb - Venable Research Program 2020.



Urmi Mehta

WESTERN UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES
Pomona, California

- ◆ Gold Humanism Honor Society: nominated for her involvement in organizations that provide free healthcare to the underserved, including Lion's Club, Montclair Clinic, and American College of Family Physicians.
 - ◆ Compassion: Strives to spend time with patients and their family, looking beyond their diagnosis to form a meaningful connection.
 - ◆ Passion: Took a gap year in between my third and fourth year of medical school to learn more about ophthalmology, leading to manuscripts, case reports, and abstracts that are under review.
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Zeremayat K Mekonnen

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
San Francisco, California

- ◆ Leadership/Mentorship: co-director of the Health Career Academy, a 10-week high school program in East Oakland focused on mentorship and exposure to the health careers and the Summer Urban Health Leadership Academy, a 3-week high school program in San Francisco for marginalized youth through the Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital.
 - ◆ Advocacy/Community service: served as provider coordinator and volunteer for the UC Berkeley-UCSF Joint Medical Program Suitcase clinics and volunteer with the UCSF Ophthalmology Homeless clinic to provide homeless and marginally housed patients with comprehensive eye exams, eyeglass prescriptions, and referrals for urgent advanced ophthalmologic evaluation.
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Mubarik Mohamed

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
Columbus, Ohio

- ◆ Former refugee, and first in his family to attend college and medical school.
- ◆ Recipient of Pelotonia Fellowship and American Society of Hematology Minority Medical Student Award for research work in hematological malignancies
- ◆ Lead the implementation of a health and nutrition education program at local charter school in Columbus, Ohio primarily composed of refugee and immigrant students



Richard Morgan Ph.D

CDU/UCLA MEDICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM
Los Angeles, California

- ◆ Research: Co-authored 13 publications. Recipient of numerous awards including an Excellence in Research Award by the American Society of Gene and Cell Therapy, the Paul Calabresi Award from PhRMA Foundation, and the prestigious Ruth L. Kirschstein NRSA from the NIH.
 - ◆ Leadership: Co-Chair of the Student Admissions Committee for MSTP, CDU and MSTP Student Liaison with the Medical Student Council; a founding Coordinator for the Pathology Interest Group.
 - ◆ Recipient of Franklin C. McLean Award, a national honor presented annually to medical student in recognition of outstanding academic achievement, leadership, and community service.
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Tochukwu Ndukwe

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN MEDICAL SCHOOL
Ann Arbor, Michigan

- ◆ Published research highlighting socio-demographic differences found in the use of eye care for older adults in JAMA Ophthalmology. Paper titled “Self-Reported Eye Care Use Among US Adults Age 50-80 Years”.
 - ◆ Led a conference to expose 20 underrepresented middle and high school students to the world of medicine and facilitate workshops on college readiness.
 - ◆ Student Leader for the Michigan Ophthalmology Pipeline Program - a program that provides underrepresented minority students an opportunity to explore ophthalmology and strengthen their residency application to increase diversity in the future workforce.
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Ronaldo Nuesi

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
Miami, Florida

- ◆ Started a vision screening program in my community for uninsured and lower socioeconomic status patients to increase access to care as well as access to free or reduced cost resources.
- ◆ Completed a year of research in a neurodegenerative eye disease lab and published various first author papers.
- ◆ Created and carried out an initiative to increase the recruitment and lower the attrition rate of underrepresented minorities in medical school.



Ndidi-Amaka Onyekaba

MERCER UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Macon, Georgia

- ◆ Part of the executive board at Mercer SOM to set up a pipeline program aimed at increasing minority matriculation. The program has subsequently been expanded to other Mercer campuses, and now includes undergraduate students from the three public HBCU's in Georgia.
 - ◆ Recipient of the prestigious Landings Summer Cancer Research Scholarship program, in which she performed basic science cancer research with a member of Mercer faculty between her first and second years of medical school.
 - ◆ Worked as a medical assistant for two years before matriculation into medical school.
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Jasmine Rudolph

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

East Lansing, Michigan

- ◆ Previous career in healthcare as a registered nurse. Continued work throughout her pre-clerkship years of medical school while maintaining active involvement academically.
 - ◆ Service: Built long-standing relationships with community members of the inner city Detroit as part of a street team that facilitated weekly health clinics and care runs for individuals experiencing homelessness. Founding member of task force to identify and improve food insecurity in pediatric patient populations.
 - ◆ Global Health: Has participated in study abroad programs to Padova, Italy and the Yucatan Mexico. Plans to continue pursuit of combating global health deficits through future medical missions.
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Ja'Quane Scales

HOWARD UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

Washington, District of Columbia

- ◆ 2nd place winner of medical student paper presentation for Rabb - Venable Excellence in Ophthalmology Program 2020
- ◆ Gold Humanism Honor Society
- ◆ 2nd highest-ranking student in Medicine & Society course
- ◆ Notable characteristics: Resilient, Honest, Compassionate



Kirsten L Simmons

DUKE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Durham, North Carolina

- ◆ Became a Theology, Medicine and Culture Fellow through Duke Divinity School, where I served as a Chaplain intern for the senior citizen population.
 - ◆ Organized Duke School of Medicine's Inaugural Pan-African flag raising in honor of Black History Month.
 - ◆ Detailing cars is one of my favorite hobbies.
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Brian Wogu

SIDNEY KIMMEL MEDICAL COLLEGE
AT THOMAS JEFFERSON UNIVERSITY

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

- ◆ Strong interpersonal skills, capable of establishing trusting relationships with his patients.
 - ◆ Participated in the Bridging the Gaps Program, where he worked with youth from an underserved Philadelphia community and presented his experience at the end of the summer symposium.
 - ◆ Continued his passion for learning about healthcare disparities by writing a research paper focused on solutions regarding barriers to care in ophthalmology. He is currently preparing his paper for submission.
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Bethlehem Wole

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA, CARVER COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

Iowa City, Iowa

- ◆ Traveled to Ethiopia to establish and implement a new research project at a new teaching hospital. Collaborating with Ethiopian physicians, helped identify and train data collectors to use REDCap and develop objective interviewing techniques. Our partners are continuing to collect data and we have over 600 records collected so far.
- ◆ Summer Research Fellowship NIH scholarship award
- ◆ Dean's scholarship award



MILDRED MG OLIVIER, MD

Mildred MG Olivier, MD, is Assistant Dean for Diversity, Global Health Chair for Chicago Medical School and Professor of Ophthalmology at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science/ John H Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County.



EYDIE MILLER-ELLIS, MD

Eydie Miller-Ellis, MD is Professor of Clinical Ophthalmology and Director of the Glaucoma Service at the Scheie Eye Institute, Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania.



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