

SJBSM JOURNAL



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DOUBLE COATING SUCCESS

By Tiffany Sánchez, MS3

The White Coat Ceremony is an academic ritual that marks the beginning of becoming a healthcare professional. A white coat, a symbol of professionalism and honor, enforces the purpose that one can be trusted to honor the tradition of the learned professionals, placing the interest of patients before themselves.

The much anticipated White Coat Ceremony happened twice this year at San Juan Bautista School of Medicine. There were two separate ceremonies for the class of 2024 and 2025. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the class of 2024 had their ceremony postponed a year for the safety of students and faculty. Nonetheless, this rite of passage still hailed as a milestone.

The class of 2024 had their White Coat ceremony on October 29, 2021. Students had the choice of attending in person or via Zoom. The students who participated through Zoom had their families coat them and were grateful they could take part in the ceremony. The in-person students gathered in the amphitheater and were coated by faculty and doctors. The guest of honor Dr. Cesar Hernandez Arroyo, spoke on his career and the long journey he had to become an interventional nephrologist.

The class of 2025 had their White Coat Ceremony as scheduled in

their first year and also had the option of attending in person or via Zoom. The guest of honor, Dr. Marina Ruiz Montilla, a San Juan Bautista alumna, inspired the incoming students by sharing her journey to being a pediatric endocrinologist. Both physician speakers shared their experiences in their medical career, emphasizing the values of the medical profession. The Hippocratic oath was recited among the new Latinx, diverse, individuals as they accepted the professional commitment on this important day in the beginning of their medical career.

We look forward to the future successes that come from our students and support each and everyone along their journey.



Pictured above center, President Dean Dr. Yocasta Brugal shares the moment when students from the class of 2024 read their oath to commit to medicine and their education.

More pictures on the next page

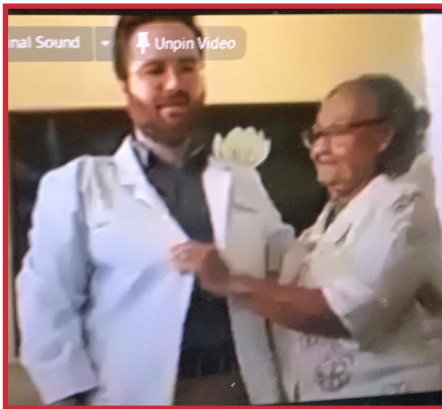
DOUBLE COATING SUCCESS (continued)



In-person ceremony for the Class of 2024 listen in to Dr. César Hernández speech.



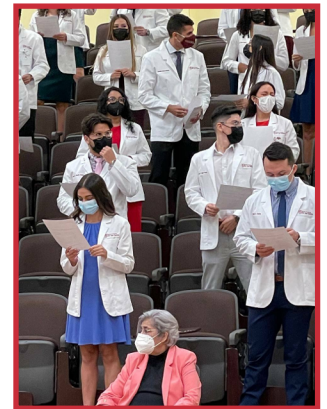
The in-person students from the class of 2024 gathered in the amphitheater and were coated by faculty and doctors.



Rubén G. Ortiz Cordero (MD Class 2024) receives his white coat via Zoom.



Delia Sofía Ocaña Narváez (MD Class 2024) and her family joins the celebration via Zoom.



Students from the 2024 class read the oath, thus culminating the ceremony.



Students from the incoming class of 2025 celebrate together on school premises after their White Ceremony ends.



DR. PAAT'S 2021 MISSION TRIP TO GUATEMALA

By Melyorise Sepúlveda Chervony, MS4

If you ask any medical student why they want to be a doctor, chances are they will say something along the lines of 'I want to help people'. While this answer may be considered cliché, it is the fundamental reason why medicine as a profession exists. The whole point of medicine is to improve, even save lives. The fact is that people who go into medicine obtain personal satisfaction from altruistic acts and some, if not most, feel a moral obligation to use their skills to help others. In a 2020 blog posted by OnlineMedEd they assert that a "catalyst for medical careers" is often "a desire to help an ailing loved one or witnessing health disparities firsthand." However prevalent the drive to serve in medicine, there are doctors who excel at it. Case in point is Dr. Richard Paat.

I haven't met Dr. Paat, but his reputation precedes him. Dr. Paat lives in Maumee, on the outskirts of Toledo, Ohio. He has practiced internal medicine along with his now retired father since 1989, was chief of staff at St. Luke's Hospital, and was recently appointed by the governor of Ohio to serve on the Asian-American Pacific Islander Advisory Council as chairman of the health committee to the State of Ohio. In addition he is the faculty advisor for two service organizations at University of Toledo's medical school and mentors high school students during their senior projects. Before the pandemic he also coached volleyball and ran the Toledo Starlings Volleyball Club for girls. Safe to say the man is busy. In 1994, only 5 years after finishing his residency, he began to organize and lead medical missions that have impacted over 80,000 lives around the world, according to a 2013 Medical Missions Hall of Fame profile. His dedication and commitment to improving the human condition has driven him to create clinics that offer medical services to over 4,000 people in the Toledo area who otherwise wouldn't have access to healthcare. According to an article by Kate Oatis for the National Catholic Reporter (NCR) in October 2020, Dr. Paat asserts that "God has given [him] a set of skills" to help others, and he has definitely put these skills to good use. So much so that I won't be able to do him justice in this article, but I'll try nonetheless.



Marjorie along with a local healthcare promoter and members of the community during one of the water filtration system

In 2017, after hurricane Maria hit the island, Dr. Paat organized a team that traveled to the town of Yabucoa to provide emergency medical services. There he met Dalilah Reyes, an SJB alumna, who brought him to our institution. Since then, SJB students have been invited to join mission trips in Puerto Rico and Latin America. Marjorie Suarez MS4 has been part of 3 of these trips. One in 2018 to a community in the island of Vieques, another in 2019 to Honduras, and the latest one to Guatemala in December 2021, which was the first international mission to take place since the COVID-19 pandemic started. "We were there for one week", Marjorie begins telling me about her experience this winter. On their first day in Guatemala, Dr. Paat's team trained a group of 30 locals who would serve as health promoters along with them throughout the week. This training of local health promoters is part of a \$115,000 grant from the Gates Foundation which was first implemented in Tanzania. "This program now educates local villagers in Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti, allowing basic medical care to exist even after my teams are gone," Dr. Paat explained to NCR. "We went to a different village each day," Marjorie continues. "We see a lot of [different] pathologies, including hemiplegic migraines, breast masses, a lot of uncontrolled diabetes, sexually transmitted diseases, and even a case of myocardial infarction." Some students even had the opportunity to perform tooth extractions thanks to a local Guatemalan volunteer dentist who joined the team. Students performed point of care ultrasound and even EKGs with a phone app.



Marjorie and Dr. Paat perform a point of care ultrasound during one of the clinics.

DR. PAAT'S 2021 MISSION TRIP TO GUATEMALA (CONTINUED)

One goal of these medical missions is to help communities have access to clean water as well as understand its importance to maintaining good health. Marjorie explains that to achieve this they distribute water filters to each community they visit and teach them how to use them correctly. "It was a very fulfilling experience for me." She concludes.

Along with fellow students Carolina Huertas MS4 and Gabriela Guadalupe MS4, Marjorie created a medical missions committee to recruit volunteer students for future trips with Dr. Paat. Students need to be in good academic standing and speak Spanish well.

SJB students with Dr. Paat. From left to right: Ameen Seyedroudbari MS2, Nicholas D'Alessandro MS2, Marjorie Suárez MS4, Dr. Paat, Shania Aponte MS2, Christopher Ramirez MS3, and Rey Grosz MS1.



STUDENTS WITH THEIR SIGHTS SET ON SURGERY

by Tiffany Sánchez, MS3 & Melyorise Sepúlveda, MS4

The American College of Surgeons held its Clinical Congress virtually on the last week of October 2021. Third year SJB students Angel Chavez and Tiffany Sanchez presented on their subject of interest relating to the diseases, techniques, technology, events, or personalities of particular importance to the field of surgery and its sub-specialties. They competed with over 200 other medical students, residents, and Fellows. Their presentation on "*Inca Craniotomy Thriving in Survival Rates Before Times of Modern Anesthesia and Sanitation*" scored in the top 5 among all presenters in the History of Surgery poster session.



Angel D. Chávez, MS3 and Tiffany R. Sánchez, MS3 during the virtual presentation of their poster.

Angel and Tiffany were also accepted to attend **PREPPED** (Plastic Surgery Research, Education, and Preparation Promoting Equity and Diversity), a two-day in-person course designed to help students from under-represented backgrounds and without a home program in plastic surgery prepare for sub internships and residency applications. Through a series of workshops, a faculty panel, and many small-group sessions that focus on teaching plastic surgery basics, help students hone their networking skills, and learn about life during and after residency, the course aims to increase the chances of success for the participants. This great initiative is actually a research project funded (in part) by the Plastic Surgery Foundation's Diversity and Inclusion: Recruitment and Retention pilot grant. The students that participate will indirectly help researchers identify and design tools that can be used by plastic surgery programs to improve the diversity of their recruits. By encouraging students from underrepresented backgrounds to choose a career in plastic surgery the field is aiming to diversify its workforce. This will ultimately benefit the patients in under-served communities which are more likely to seek care from providers with similar cultural or ethnic backgrounds to themselves.

In addition, Tiffany also received two scholarships to attend this year's American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery meeting and the California Society of Plastic Surgeons Women in Plastic Surgery Retreat.

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS AND AWARDS WINNERS

These students gave presentations at virtual conferences representing our school and showing off their hard work. Congratulations!



Evián Pérez Rivera, MS4

Poster presentation: *Positive Outcome with Alemtuzumab in Hispanic Puerto Rican Woman with Highly Active Multiple Sclerosis after Various Failed Disease Modifying Therapies*

Consortium of Multiple Sclerosis Centers (CMSC)

October 26, 2021

Orlando, FL

Poster presentation: *Oligoclonal Band Negative Multiple Sclerosis in Puerto Rico*

Consortium of Multiple Sclerosis Centers (CMSC)

August 23, 2021

Virtual presentation



Marjorie Suárez, MS4

Poster presentation: *Volunteerism vs. Voluntourism: Effective Practices of Medical Volunteering*

AAFP Global Health Summit Conference

October 20-22, 2021

Virtual presentation

These students received the *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Conference Award* sponsored by the Association of Women Surgeons and the Latino Surgical Society. Congratulations!



Tiffany R. Sánchez, MS3



Angel D. Chávez, MS3

WHAT IT'S LIKE TO DO AN ACTING INTERNSHIP: MS4 STORIES

by Melyorise Sepúlveda Chervony, MS4

Acting internships, colloquially known as sub-I (sub internships) are clinical rotations medical students can do during their second clinical year (i.e. fourth year of medical school). As the name suggests, acting internships are meant to mimic the experience of the first year of residency or intern year for about a month. Naturally, students will usually select sub-I rotations in residency programs they are interested in applying to. It gives them a chance to showcase their abilities and enthusiasm, and sometimes offset any weaknesses they may have on paper. Residency programs also benefit from acting internships as it gives them more time to evaluate the qualifications of a potential candidate as well as to how they interact with the team, which help lower attrition numbers especially in particularly grueling residencies like surgery.

Next you will read about the experience of five SJB students who participated in acting internships. I wanted to focus on *good experiences* for this article so I asked them to pick their most enjoyable experience to answer my questions which were:

- 1) *Did anything take you by surprise?*
- 2) *Was it hard to adapt to the new location? Any tips you can give to other students?*
- 3) *Did the experience help confirm/reject your choice in medical career?*

Jacob Alexander



Orthopedic Surgery
Cleveland Clinic Akron General Hospital
Akron, OH

- 1) What took me by surprise was the autonomy with which I was treated. I was given myriad opportunities to practice various suture techniques in the OR. I made my first incision and put in my first traction pin right thereafter, which was a very neat, fulfilling moment. What I appreciated the most was the fact that I was treated with respect by all the residents, attendings, and ancillary staff and felt like a true team member as opposed to a spectator.
- 2) This was my second away rotation, and I did not find it difficult to adapt to a new location. Staying with family nearby made the transition from my prior away rotation much easier. In addition, having already gone through one away rotation in the same specialty, I felt far more comfortable walking into the OR on day 1.
- 3) This experience, coupled with my other away rotations in the specialty, absolutely cemented the fact that orthopedic surgery is all I see myself doing in medicine. I always had an inkling that I would go into this field but never really knew how passionate I was about it until my away rotations this year.

Rosa Frías



Hematology/Oncology
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute/HMS
Boston, MA

- 1) Most people associate oncology with sadness and devastating news. While having cancer is not a reason to celebrate, the patients I saw there had a special "glow" around them. They were filled with positivity and grounded hope. They taught me to take every day as it comes, and reevaluate as more days are granted.
- 2) Although it was not my first time working outside my home state and I had lived in Boston before, it can be overwhelming to arrange a rotation in a timeline that suits our medical school schedule. My best tip is to make a list and set priorities upfront. For example, housing is essential while figuring out public transportation or even a car rental can wait. Use your network and ask friends around in case they know someone who can rent out a room for you. You can find out if there are any alumni living in that city and reach out to them over IG, Facebook or emailing. I found the apartment where I stayed by making a post in my college's alumna association page, for example. Also, fill out all the paperwork required, bring copies and original IDs, and ask whoever is in charge of your boarding process for confirmation that everything is set for you to arrive there. Finally, ask where exactly you need to go the first day and who is your point-of-contact on-site in case any problems or questions arise. Once you are in your training site, give yourself the first week to taste the waters and navigate the system. Create mental pictures of the space, get familiar with the people and their work style, and adapt to that (for example, how they like notes written, whether they have a fast pace or slow pace, what their daily routine is, etc). Take advantage of opportunities to bond beyond the workspace like coffee time, happy hour or lunch orders; the more comfortable you are with the people around you, the best your overall experience will be.
- 3) This rotation absolutely helped me to confirm that a residency in Internal Medicine followed by a Hematology/Oncology Fellowship is indeed what I see myself doing. The bond you form with cancer patients is one of a kind as their vulnerability and your willingness to help in any way you can, regardless of the intention of treatment: curing vs. prolonging life, meet perfectly in the middle. You are part of their journey and they become part of yours beyond your experience and training. Also, Heme/Onc is a field where research plays an important part, and that aligns with my own interest in continuing conducting research along my career.

Marjorie Suárez



Family Medicine
University of Washington
Seattle, WA

- 1) Nothing really took me by surprise.
- 2) Even though it rained every day and it was cold, I enjoyed my time there. I stayed at a house with international students who were all far away from home so we all had that in common and connected in that way making my time there pleasant and cozy.
- 3) I loved my time at the UWFM. Everyone gave me great constructive feedback and I learned so much. This experience helped me improve my case presenting skills and write more efficient notes. In this rotation I was able to work with family physicians with different interests (sport medicine, OB/GYN, and global health) so I got to learn different perspectives and it solidified my passion for global health as well as women and reproductive health.

WHAT IS LIKE TO DO AN ACTING INTERNSHIP: MS4 STORIES

Evián Pérez



Advanced Neurology
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center/HMS
Boston, MA

1) Everyone wanted me to succeed and get the most out of the experience. One of the most challenging things for me was learning to quickly adapt to a new setting, a new team, a new attending, etc. The amount of support they offered to make me feel comfortable and welcomed was very surprising. This spanned from students to attendings, and their goal was to remove any obstacle

that prevented me from having the best educational experience (FREE FOOD!!!). This allowed me to step out of my comfort zone and find ways to become a useful member of the healthcare team. Lastly, I was pleasantly surprised by the importance given to diversity and inclusion at HMS (I was there thanks to the Office of Diversity, Inclusion & Community Partnership). I learned that I could make a significant difference in the care of Spanish-speaking patients (especially inpatient). So, please do not underestimate the benefit of being bilingual and the impact this can have on preventing substandard quality of care.

2) Thankfully, Casey Gilman (SJB MS4), was also in the same city. She took the time to show me around the city she knows so well and some of the states nearby. This was my third away rotation so I had experience approaching a new working environment. My advice would be that if you truly want to make the most out of the experience, be unapologetically open. If you are professional and genuine about your level of experience and knowledge, people will respect that (you are there to learn after all). This way you will feel comfortable sharing your medical opinion, having educational discussions, and asking questions (make sure you know when this is appropriate). You will find mentors who will gladly take you under their wing and lead you to success. In terms of living arrangements, I had financial aid from the Visiting Clerkship

Program for minorities at HMS which immensely helped my transition.

3) I did not have any inpatient Neurology experience in my third year. My first away rotation was on a Neuro-ICU, which confirmed my decision that Neurology was the field for me. Advanced Neurology also reassured this decision because it exposed me to other areas within Neurology including different consult services, the stroke unit, and the Neuro ICU. It also showed me the type of working relationships I wanted to have and what kind of attending I wanted to be.

Nathalie Chang



Obstetrics and Gynecology
Brown University (RI), Emory University (GA),
Washington University (MO), Harvard University
(MA), University of Texas (San Antonio)

Away rotation are very tiring but fruitful experiences. I was surprised by how tiring the travel can be but I would definitely recommend doing away rotations to anyone considering it. It's a great opportunity to audition at the places you are interested in attending while gaining valuable experience for intern year.

Tips:

1. Be prepared to present patients on rounds (practice doing oral presentations)
2. ALWAYS thinking of the next steps of management and possible differential diagnosis (you will be asked).
3. Be proactive about meeting people, helping residents, and completing tasks. This is your time to shine and make memorable impressions, don't be shy! For OB/GYN rotations, read the practice bulletins.

ADVICE FROM FORMER MEDICAL STUDENTS

Asking other students who have gone through the experience of an acting or sub-internship is a great way to get a sense of what to expect, learn from their mistakes and their successes. Another thing I like to do when I am preparing for anything in general is doing a Google search; see what is out there on the topic. I typed the following query: *medical school acting internship advice*. Results yielded many program pages with very sound advice, but one thing I have learned is that to be assertive you need more than sound advice, you need practical advice. The best article, in my opinion, had the following quip at the end: *Work hard, don't complain, and be yourself. Happy Rotating!*

Here is what I learned from it but you can read it for yourself at www.medschooladvice.com/residentstalk/how-to-do-well-on-away-rotations

- Keep in mind two main goals: At the end of the rotation you want to get a letter of recommendation and increase your chances to match in that program.
- Expect: to work long hours including weekends, to arrive earlier than the residents and leave after they leave, not having time to explore the city or go out with friends, little sleep, and lots of studying in preparation for the next day.
- Get familiar with the patients due to be seen the next day by reviewing progress notes, post-op notes, making a mental or physical list of what need to be done, and reviewing their pathology on UpToDate or Dynamed.
- Prepare for cases by reading up the patient history, knowing and understanding any labs or images, reviewing the relevant anatomy, and any procedures.
- Stock your pockets with whatever you may (or may not) need for rounds. This one I firmly believe in. A pediatrician I used to work with once told me to always keep a pair of small scissors in my pocket and a little toy (with a light and sound to help during the physical exam of an infant or child). During my first MS3 rotation I remember taking out my collapsible scissors when my attending had trouble opening a Foley catheter package. He was impressed.
- Try to check on patients to see how they are doing. If there were any labs or studies ordered during morning rounds, check on them later to see when they are back.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS FAIR 2021

by Fabianna Himet Coll, MS2

New and returning students were invited to virtually participate in the Student Organization Fair in September 2021 and discover ways to get involved. Throughout, the goal was to ignite motivation by witnessing concrete examples of each organization's mission and learn from other students' initiatives. The event recruited a diverse pool of students that presented their vision with utmost enthusiasm as they raised awareness and shared their work. The variety of themes covered centered on cultural diversity, social issues, community service, environmental affairs, and interdisciplinary ways that medicine is integrated into our day-to-day. Whether through special interest groups, volunteer service, student councils, or any other type of student organization, it is a valuable educational contribution to lead and join because it exemplifies the role medicine has in different facets of our lives.

Amidst the ongoing pandemic, it was a warm welcome and opportunity to rekindle our purpose as future health professionals and be reminded of our sense of community.



Presentation slides from some of the participating student associations, clubs, and interest groups (from top left): Public Health Students, LGBTQ & Allied Health Professionals, Clinical Ethics, Health Ecology Club, AMWA, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, Emergency Medicine, Pediatrics, SIGN, SJB Journal, PAWS, and Internal Medicine

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