Celebrating the Class of 2017

Nick Christian, M.D., M.B.A.

Nick graduated alongside 98 of his colleagues during the 37th Boonshoft School of Medicine Graduation Ceremony on May 26, 2017. The ceremony was held at Victoria Theatre with guest speaker Vivek H. Murthy, M.D., M.B.A., former U.S. Surgeon General. Dr. Christian is currently a first-year resident in internal medicine at the University of Texas Dell Medical School.

Nick Christian has moved on to residency after a productive medical school career, during which he engaged in leadership within the university, as well as the community, particularly around issues of opioid addiction. During the initial years of Dayton Improves Healthcare, a chapter of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) Open School, Nick promoted medical student education on patient safety and quality improvement. Under the IHI chapter, Nick founded the Student Opioid Coalition (SOC) with the vision of collaborating with local public health agencies to engage students in community-based interventions against the opioid and poly-drug epidemic. He brought his passion for mental health on a societal level to the American College of Physicians Leadership Day on Capitol Hill, participating in discussions about curbing opioid abuse. Dr. Christian was awarded the 2017 Excellence in Public Health Award by the United States Public Health Service, which honors a student actively involved in local public health efforts.
Justin Kelley, M.P.H. (Class of 2018), was elected to the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society, reflecting his dedication to academic excellence and professionalism.

Alexandra Lawson, M.P.H. (Class of 2018), was honored with the John D. and Gretchen H. Bullock Endowed Public Health/Medicine Award, which recognizes a student who shows outstanding performance in both medicine and public health. Alexandra also earned the John C. Gilien M.D. Clerkship Award for Family Medicine.

Michael Holbrook, M.B.A. (Class of 2019), is collaborating with Cedarville University’s School of Pharmacy to study the impact of opioid disposal bags in Southwest Ohio. He will be attending the Institute for Healthcare Improvement National Forum in December to present his research, “An Estimated Economic Impact of Observation Status on the American Healthcare System.”

Joycelyn Akamune (Class of 2020) served on the public relations subcommittee of the Leadership Conference Planning Committee. She is also the student representative for the Healer’s Art fall campaign 2017, working to develop materials for the course.

The PLDP hosted the 6th Annual Boonshoft School of Medicine Leadership Conference on October 14, themed “Bridging the Gaps: Interdisciplinary Approach in Medicine.” PLDP students helped with the organization and implementation of the event. Brianna Burlock, Joycelyn Akamune and Jessica Sokol served on the planning committee for the event and Michael Holbrook was a panel member for the small group session on research. The conference drew 57 attendees and 24 speakers.

The conference’s keynote speaker was Yamini Teegala, M.D., M.P.H., a family medicine physician and medical director of Rocking Horse Clinic in Springfield, Ohio. Dr. Teegala spoke to the role of integrative medicine at her clinic, setting the stage for the interdisciplinary theme of the conference. Breakout sessions included discussions on leadership in medicine, interprofessional teamwork, residency interview preparation and student research.

The PLDP hosted “Health Care Here and There,” an event exploring the health care systems of other nations, on November 1. In the midst of the heated health care debates in today’s political sphere, we looked to the nations of Australia, Canada, England and Singapore to see what the U.S. could learn from international health care systems. Dr. John McAlearney, a health economist and professor with dual appointments in the Boonshoft School of Medicine and the Raj Soin College of Business, led a spirited discussion of key issues.
Alumni Q&A: Kyle Horton, M.D., M.B.A.

Dr. Kyle Horton, a member of the PLDP’s inaugural cohort, graduated in 2008 with an M.B.A. degree alongside her M.D. Board-certified in internal medicine, Dr. Horton has transitioned into the world of public policy, advocacy and politics. We check in with her as she begins her congressional campaign back home in North Carolina! You can follow her campaign at www.drkyleforcongress.com or follow her social media @drkyle4congress. This piece was adapted from a phone interview with Dr. Horton.

Thinking back to medical school, what drew you to the dual-degree program?

I was drawn to the thought of a second degree because of the future opportunities it would offer. I chose to earn an M.B.A. because it’s important to understand the business climate in order to navigate health economics. The M.B.A. skillset includes communication, finance, budgeting, and economics. These are universal skills that open doors to career prospects in administration, education, politics, policy, or even management of a private practice. The leadership development aspect of the program was such a selling point, it would have felt like a missed opportunity had I not pursued the dual degree.

“Use the skills and knowledge earned through my M.B.A. every day.”

What issues related to veterans have you worked on?

Much of my work relates to the mental health and unique combat- and service-related health concerns of veterans. I contributed to the passage of the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, to address the public health crisis of veteran suicide that now claims an estimated 20 veteran lives a day. I’ve also been working on policy solutions to advance opiate safety for veterans, prevent suicide in female veterans and address toxic burn pit exposure for young veterans, which is like the Agent Orange for many who served in the Middle East. Because multiple generations of my family have proudly served this country, this is both a personal and a professional fight for me to help ensure that we fulfill our sacred obligation to care for our veterans, which should include high quality health care specific to their unique needs.

Since becoming so involved in public policy and politics, do you miss the day-to-day of medical practice?

When I decided to run for congress, I had to take a leave from my medical practice. For a while, I practiced part time and would go back and forth to the Hill. During that time, I was also working locally on initiatives to end veteran homelessness and planning mental health summits related to my veterans’ mental health and suicide work. Eventually, with the time commitment demanded by my political career, I felt it wasn’t fair to my patients and practice partners to continue. My decision was validated when I ran into one of my former patients. He said to me, “We miss you here, Doc, but we need you in Washington more.” In truth, now, I feel the most pride that I’m fulfilling the Hippocratic Oath of any point in my career as I’m fighting every day to protect Americans’ access and coverage for life-saving care.

How does your M.B.A. contribute to the advancement of your career?

I use the skills and knowledge earned through my M.B.A. every day. As a public policy advocate, I’ve learned that financial and budgetary issues are the crux of many public health policy discussions. Understanding that world is extremely worthwhile and it gives my words meaning and gravitas when speaking to federal lawmakers and policy stakeholders. Being able to dissect issues in the health care system from the perspective of the providers is a tremendous benefit in bridging the gap between health care policy and the well-being of our patients.

What advice do you have for medical students just starting out?

Have a frank conversation with yourself about what you want to get out of your career. It’s not easy as a first-year student, when you’re inundated with information and opportunities, but consider a dual degree. You never know how you’re going to use earned knowledge and experience in your life. I never knew I would feel called to get involved in this way, but having the dual backgrounds in business and medicine put me in a position to make a genuine difference in policy.

Dr. Horton launches her congressional campaign in June 2017 in Wilmington, North Carolina at Battleship Park, in front of the Battleship North Carolina.
Our Mission: To develop leaders in medicine, health systems, and population health through education, communication, collaboration, advocacy, and experience

Our Vision: As students in the Physician Leadership Development Program pursuing integrated degrees in medicine, public health, and business administration, we envision an educational community of global citizens devoted to leadership development, community building, innovation, and advocacy

Alumni Updates

Jessica Vinsant, M.D., M.B.A., PLDP Class of 2009, is a full partner at a general surgery private practice in Knoxville, Tennessee. Dr. Vinsant also serves on the nominating committee for the local hospital and the board of directors for both Susan G. Komen of East Tennesee and Cancer Support Community.

Rocky Jedick, M.D., M.B.A., PLDP Class of 2009, is completing his emergency medicine residency in Salt Lake City, Utah, after serving as a flight surgeon for five years abroad. He continues to serve as a flight surgeon in the United States Air Force Reserve. Dr. Jedick is the entrepreneur of Go Flight Medicine LLC, performing occupational physicals for air traffic controllers and flying-class physicals for pilots. In April 2017, he performed research with NASA, collaborating with astronauts and other flight surgeons at Johnson Space Center.

Matthew Pellerite, M.D., M.P.H., PLDP Class of 2009, completed his neonatology fellowship and accepted a position at Evanston Hospital staffing NICU patients. After completing the MERITS (Medical Education, Research, Innovations, Teaching and Scholarship) fellowship at University of Chicago’s Pritzker School of Medicine, he began work as assistant professor of pediatrics. His research includes developmental trajectories of preterm infants and educational interventions to reduce infant mortality.

Jeffrey Jenks, M.D., M.P.H., PLDP Class of 2010, began as assistant professor of medicine at the University of California San Diego. He has also joined the UC San Diego Health Antitbiotic Utilization Committee. Dr. Jenks conducts clinical research on tuberculosis.

Sarah McBeth, M.D., M.P.H., PLDP Class of 2010, recently accepted positions as clinical assistant professor at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and Medical Director of Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force. Her public health efforts include expansion of HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis in the Pittsburgh area.

Daniel Lui, M.D., M.B.A., PLDP Class of 2010, began as medical director of Grace Medical Services, the only foreign-run medical project in Southwest China. Dr. Lui is the CEO of Giving-BackLife, an organization founded during medical school with the goal of providing desperately needed medical care to the poverty-stricken region of Southwest China. Learn more at GivingBackLife.org.

Chad Garven, M.D., M.P.H., PLDP Class of 2012, was honored with the 2017 Ohio Academy of Family Physicians Foundation Mentorship Award in Columbus.

Laura Previll, M.D., M.P.H., PLDP Class of 2012, accepted a position as medical instructor of the Division of Geriatrics in Duke University Hospital’s Department of Internal Medicine. She also began work as the Medical Director of Geri PACT (Geriatrics Patient Aligned Care Team). Dr. Previll’s research includes reducing inappropriate prescriptions for older adults and refining the assessment of cognitive and functional status in geriatric patients.