

## BOARD NEWS

# 2005 Pisacano Scholars

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The Pisacano Leadership Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM), recently selected its 2005 Pisacano Scholars. These 5 medical students follow in the footsteps of 53 scholar alumni who are practicing physicians and 13 current scholars who are enrolled in family medicine residency programs across the country. The Pisacano Leadership Foundation was created in 1990 by the ABFM in tribute to its founder and first Executive Director, Nicholas J. Pisacano, MD (1924–1990). Each Pisacano Scholar has demonstrated the highest level of leadership, academic achievement, communication skills, community service, and character and integrity.

**Bridget Harrison**, a 2005 Pisacano Scholar, is a 4th-year medical student at the University of California-San Francisco (UCSF). She is also completing her Masters in Public Health at the University of California–Berkeley. Bridget graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Physics from the College of William and Mary. At William and Mary, she was also a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Mortar Board, and ODK Honor Societies. In addition, she was the recipient of the Carr Cup Award, given to one graduating William and Mary senior for scholarship, leadership, and service. Bridget was one of 20 students chosen nationally for the USA Today College All-Academic First Team, which is awarded based on scholarship, leadership, and community service. During her winter and summer breaks, Bridget volunteered for a children's home, a home for sick and dying adults, a wound clinic, and a hospital pediatrics ward in Haiti and Kenya. She also taught high school physics and math while in Kenya.

After graduating from William and Mary, Bridget taught middle school and high school math and science to underserved students for 3 years. While teaching, she restarted and advised a chapter of the mathematics, engineering, and science achievement (MESA) program for underrepresented students and coached students to multiple awards at annual MESA fairs. She also advised the school's gay-straight student alliance. She then

taught in 2 private schools, where she also helped coach the Ultimate Frisbee class and club. During this time, Bridget served as a medical volunteer with several organizations, including serving homeless and sex worker populations in an HIV intervention program.

As a medical student, Bridget has continued her academic excellence and community service. She served as co-president of the UCSF chapter of the American Medical Student Association and helped organize events in support of universal health insurance. She also co-designed and co-coordinated a new health policy elective course at UCSF and has been involved in developing UCSF's required health policy curriculum. During her family medicine clerkship, Bridget co-developed a community project that involved visiting physicians' offices, completing mailings to county physicians, walking precincts, and writing op-ed and letter-to-editor pieces in support of "Measure Q." Measure Q was a local ballot proposal to raise money to support the county's financially ailing sole public hospital, which serves an underserved agricultural field worker population. She spent a month in Cuba studying that country's family physician-centered universal health care system with the MEDICC program. She has also worked with UCSF's Women Medical Student Association and Medical Students for Choice chapters. To maintain a balanced life, Bridget enjoys the outdoors and sports. She has been active in UCSF intramural sports and also plays with a local competitive club-level coed Ultimate Frisbee team, competing in tournaments across the country. She was selected by her teammates for the most improved player award. Bridget plans to practice family medicine in a public clinic in an urban underserved community and hopes to incorporate health policy advocacy and international volunteer work into her career.

**Kristen Kelly**, a 2005 Pisacano Scholar, is a 4th-year medical student at the University of California San Francisco (UCSF). She received a fellowship from the University of California Berkeley to complete her Masters in Public Health over the

past year. Kristen graduated with distinction from the University of Virginia with a double major in Spanish and Middle East Studies. As a Virginia Scholar, she received a 4-year scholarship from the State of Virginia based on demonstrated academics and leadership during high school. She was named an Echols Scholar, an award given to approximately 8.5% of the incoming class. During her junior year, Kristen spent a semester in Cairo, Egypt, where she studied Arabic and Middle East Studies at the American University in Cairo. Later that year, she was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. She was one of 3 students selected from the state of Virginia to intern in a United States Senator's office after her junior year. Throughout her undergraduate years, Kristen volunteered with a student-run organization, visiting disabled patients at local hospitals, collecting food for needy families, assisting a kindergarten teacher, and manning a crisis hotline. She was a first-year juror and later a councilor for the University of Virginia student-run judiciary committee. For 4 years, she was a member of University Singers, serving as social chair and secretary, and filling several committee positions. During her fourth year, she assisted in the revival of the still-ongoing Virginia Women's Chorus at UVA.

After graduation from Virginia, Kristen worked for 2 years as a business analyst and associate consultant for a consulting group in Washington, DC. She then took a leave of absence for 3 months to volunteer at an orphanage in Honduras, taking care of disabled children. After spending only one month there, Kristen decided to extend her stay in Honduras, where she eventually took on the job of Administrative Director for a year until the orphanage could find a permanent administrator. It was from this experience that Kristen realized that she wanted to practice medicine and work with poor/underserved populations. On returning to the United States, while completing premedical requirements, Kristen worked for 2 years as a live-in assistant for a disabled person, assisting in all aspects of care, daily activities and household tasks. This position further reinforced her commitment to medicine.

Kristen has continued her academic achievements and community service as a medical student. She has received a number of scholarships, including a Dean's Scholarship from UCSF. During the first 2 years of medical school, she helped organize a retreat designed to inform medical students about

universal health care as well as an elective on pertinent health policy topics. She also participated in a smoking cessation program at a local homeless shelter and volunteered at the UCSF Homeless Shelter. Kristen coordinates the Family Medicine Interest Group at UCSF and was elected as one of 4 students nationally to attend the Society for Teachers of Family Medicine Annual Pre-Doctoral Education conference during her second year of medical school. She spent 6 months of her third year participating in "Model Fresno," a UCSF core clinical training program that emphasizes primary care, working with medically underserved and ethnically diverse populations, and community health. She focused on community health during her MPH program, and concurrently worked to improve teaching about community health in the Family Medicine 3<sup>rd</sup> year clerkship at UCSF. As a family physician, Kristen plans to practice in a community setting with underserved groups.

**Lenny Lesser**, a 2005 Pisacano Scholar, is a 4th-year medical student at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry. He graduated with honors from Cornell University with a Bachelor of Science in Nutritional Sciences. Lenny was also a member of the National Honor Society of Collegiate Scholars, Kappa Omicron Nu National Honor Society and the Mortar Board Senior Honor Society. In addition, he received the Dean of Students Distinguished Service Award for his service as production director for the Cornell Concert Commission, and a Rescue Director's and Diehard Firefighter's Award for his service as a volunteer firefighter and emergency medical technician. Lenny was a member of the Honors Program with the Division of Nutritional Sciences at Cornell, where he developed a research project studying the factors influencing freshmen's increase or decrease of physical activity in comparison to high school. He later presented his thesis at a meeting of the American College of Sports Medicine. During his undergraduate years, Lenny worked in a number of positions including nutrition program assistant, an athletic training assistant, a research intern, a nutrition intern and as a research supervisor and assistant.

At Rochester, Lenny has continued his academic excellence, community service and strong interest in nutritional research. He served for 2 years as the president of his school's American Medical Student Association (AMSA) chapter, revitalizing an inac-

tive chapter. He was also a member of the Universal Health Care Task Force, attending the first Health Care Leadership Forum at AMSA headquarters. As the coordinator for Community Health Activism on Obesity and Tobacco, Lenny created and coordinated a national "No Soda Day" to focus attention on the negative effects of sugared drinks, especially in schools. He was interviewed on the Fox News Channel and for the local newspaper regarding his work. He also worked with local chapters around the country to coordinate activities in their medical schools. After his first year of medical school, Lenny received an International Medicine Award allowing him to complete a summer internship at a community health center in Australia that combined research and clinical experiences. Last year, he presented his findings at the AMSA Convention's Poster Session. After his second year of medical school, Lenny spent a year as a research fellow working with the Obesity Research Group at Children's Hospital at Harvard Medical School. He has published several abstracts and articles, most related to the topic of improving public health through nutrition. In addition, Lenny has been interviewed by a number of media outlets, including a story on the front page of the New York Times and an appearance on NOW with Bill Moyers. Most recently, he was accepted to the Paul Ambrose Health Promotion Student Leadership Symposium. Lenny hopes to have a career that combines practice, research, public policy and teaching. He would like to establish a community health center affiliated with a university where he can continue his nutrition and community research in an effort to improve health and prevent disease, as well as teach both undergraduates and medical students.

**John Raser**, a 2005 Pisacano Scholar, is a 4th-year medical student at Dartmouth Medical School (DMS). He graduated with a major in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from Dartmouth College. During his undergraduate years, John served as chair of the LEAD Mentoring Program, where he mentored middle and high school aged students from a public housing development in the Dartmouth region. He also worked as a research assistant with the C. Everett Koop Institute, conducting research and contributing writings for an educational website on hepatitis C. As a Tucker Fellow, John taught in a Dominican Republic public school. In addition to his duties as a teacher, he

conducted a fundraising effort among the local tourist companies to raise money to refurbish the town's only baseball field. John also helped organize a school play and tutored some of his students' family members in English. He was awarded the Aranowitz Prize for his exemplary work as a Tucker Fellow. In addition to his community service, John was named Academic All Ivy League for rowing and served as team captain his senior year. He also received the Peter W.V. Gardner Award his senior year for inspirational leadership as member and captain of the Dartmouth Heavyweight Crew Team.

Before entering medical school, John served a year with AmeriCorps, developing curriculum and running an after-school program at a middle school in Escondido, CA. He also spent 2 mornings a week shadowing family doctors and other primary care physicians at a local community health center.

Since beginning medical school, John has continued his academic excellence and community service. He participated in DMS Partners in Health, and with a student co-presenter created lesson plans in cardiovascular anatomy, exercise and smoking and presented to a seventh grade class. During his first 2 years of medical school, John worked half-days in a clinic with Dr. Peter Mason, whom he credits with cementing his decision to enter family medicine. He worked with Dr. Mason as a member of the Dartmouth Community Service Council, as well as in a rural clinic in Honduras. In Honduras, John also worked with PROMESA, a joint public health outreach project between Brigham and Women's Hospital and Zamorano University. Along with 2 other members of his class, John received an Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Student Project Award and an Upper Valley United Way Emerging Needs grant to fund the start-up of the Mascoma Valley Satellite of the Good Neighbor Health Clinic, a student-run clinic he helped launch in 2003. After recognizing the need for a forum to discuss how social issues affect health on a global scale, John co-founded a local chapter of Physicians for Human Rights. He is also a member of Dartmouth's Family Medicine Interest Group, the American Medical Student Association, and the Public Health Political Action Committee with the Dartmouth Student Government. This spring, John was one of 3 students in his class to be inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society as a junior medical student.

John looks forward to working in a community health center setting, where he will naturally be involved in outreach and advocacy as well as direct care of his patients.

**David Rider**, a 2005 Pisacano Scholar, is a 4th-year medical student at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston (UTMB). David graduated from Rice University with a double major in Political Science and Public Health Policy Analysis. He spent his summers during his undergraduate years leading small groups of American volunteer health workers in Latin America through an American public health non-governmental organization, Amigos de las Américas. He was recognized for his work with a Community Service Award by the Ministry of Health for the Republic of Paraguay. Shortly after graduation from Rice, David was employed by the same agency to lead its public health and youth development projects in the Dominican Republic, where he developed and led an HIV/AIDS prevention peer education program in which Dominican and American youth worked together to educate at-risk Dominican youth. David's work in the Dominican Republic was recognized with a service and leadership award from the Save the Children organization of the Dominican Republic and the President's Volunteer Service Award from President Clinton.

Returning to his home town of Austin, Texas, David worked as a public health educator with the local department health and as a coordinator for health education for a managed care organization. In these positions, David developed and facilitated health education programs, composed health promotion curricula for public health professionals, and authored a number of patient education documents and pamphlets. In 2000 he returned to the

Dominican Republic to continue his work with Amigos de las Américas, ultimately supervising 124 volunteer health promoters undertaking community education and development projects in 44 distinct rural and urban Dominican communities. In the year before entering medical school, David worked as a caseworker for Child Protective Services, acting as legal guardian for 16 children in the foster care system.

As a medical student, David worked to develop a peer education project at UTMB, organizing and training fellow medical students to provide HIV prevention education to high school science and health classes in Galveston. He has also volunteered for the past 3 years with St. Vincent's Clinic, a student-run clinic treating indigent patients. Earlier this year, he received the Most Dedicated Student Award, awarded for his dedication to patient care and mentorship of other medical students at the clinic. Since this summer David has been directing the clinic along with 3 of his fellow classmates. In addition to his community service, David has received a number of honors and awards. During his second year of medical school, he was awarded the Evans Swann Medical Student Scholarship, a scholarship awarded based on character, potential as a future physician and community service experience. Most recently, David was honored with a William Osler Student Scholarship from the John P. McGovern Academy of Oslerian Medicine, chosen by the academy's faculty members in recognition of student leadership, professionalism, and incorporation of science and humanism in medicine. After residency, David plans to settle in central Texas and use his training as a family physician to directly contribute to the health of his patients and community.