

THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC



# MEDICAL STUDENT SUPPORT

at the GW School of Medicine  
and Health Sciences

The financial burden of a medical school education is significant. Our vision is to raise funds that will enable us to attract and retain a diverse cohort of outstanding students. Scholarships and other forms of student support ensure that the most-qualified students can come to the GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences and thrive, regardless of their financial circumstances. With increased donor participation, we can make this vision a reality.



## SCHOLARSHIPS

Increasing the number of scholarships and fellowships is a top priority. We are committed to educating the health care leaders of tomorrow and supporting students as they pursue their passion to help others. We are also seeking ways to address the financial burden of our students. Today, philanthropy from SMHS alumni and friends provides scholarship assistance to nearly one-third of our students, enabling many to select specialties based on their calling and passion to serve their communities—not on financial need. Our goal is to make it possible for more talented students to come to GW.



## ADOPT-A-DOC

The Adopt-a-Doc program provides alumni and friends the opportunity to support current GW medical students. Adopt-a-Doc enables tangible connections and facilitates lasting relationships that are important to future physicians, especially as they begin their journeys. With a minimum commitment of \$20,000 to be gifted annually over a four-year period, in equal installments of at least \$5,000, an Adopt-a-Doc donor will support a student throughout that student's four years of medical school.



## WHITE COAT INITIATIVE

The MD White Coat Initiative was established to create a lifelong connection between GW students and alumni. The gift of a white coat and support of educational activities throughout their years at GW remind students every day that the quality of their education and experience at GW depends on the contributions of those who preceded them. With the support of donors, the MD White Coat Initiative sponsors many activities that benefit students, including white coats as they start their medical careers; Community Service Day; educational technology and software; and special gifts for graduates to welcome them into the alumni family.



SUSHMITA MALIK, SMHS '20

# SCHOLARSHIP ENABLES GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES



As a child, **Sushmita Malik, SMHS '20**, loved to switch her television between her two favorite shows: "Arthur" and "ER." Her fascination with emergency medicine never waned. "Someone comes into the emergency department with a problem and you're there to fix it," she says. "It's often the worst day of a patient's life but an ER doctor can have a huge impact and make the patient's day and life better."

Last summer, Malik pursued her passion for international emergency medicine in Kerala, India, thanks to the Christopher L. Barley MD Scholars Fund. During her time in India—where Malik was born, but had not visited since she moved to the U.S. at the age of four—she completed a qualitative research project about emergency medicine residency training programs. "I analyzed the use of social media—including WhatsApp and Facebook—and Free Open Access Medical Education (FOAMed) within emergency departments," she says.

Malik says that the scholarship not only gave her the opportunity to travel abroad for the summer but also helped shape her path of becoming a well-rounded physician. "I gained understanding and compassion towards diverse patients even though we did not speak the same language," she says. "In India, I was able to learn acute management care with ultrasound and advanced cardiac life support early on in my medical education."

She believes that her experience in India will help her be a better doctor. "I believe all medical school students should have the chance to immerse themselves in a new culture so they can view medicine through a different lens. It opens up your mind and helps you appreciate more about other people when you work with a diverse population. I'm grateful for this experience," says Malik.

KOFI D. ESSEL, MD '11, MPH '17, FAAP

# SCHOLARSHIP ALLEVIATES FINANCIAL BURDEN



With a deep commitment to ensuring the health of marginalized populations, **Kofi D. Essel, MD '11, MPH '17, FAAP**, builds on relationships he developed during his training at the GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences. A board-certified community pediatrician at Children's National Health System, Dr. Essel is active at GW. In addition to serving as an assistant professor of pediatrics, he is director of the Community Urban Health Scholarly Concentration, a key member of the school's Clinical Public Health team, and director of the Clinical Public Health Summit on Obesity for second- and third-year medical students.

Working in the Anacostia neighborhood of Washington, D.C., Dr. Essel not only provides clinical care to patients, he is involved in advocacy and research on issues that influence health, especially in underserved areas. Partnering with organizations throughout the District, Dr. Essel—whose work has been recognized nationally—is involved with a variety of health initiatives, particularly in the areas of food insecurity and obesity.

"Being raised in a single-parent multigenerational immigrant family in Little Rock, Arkansas, with little knowledge of important resources, I recognized the disparity in what we were able to access," says Dr. Essel. "I wanted to see what I could do about that access when I became a doctor."

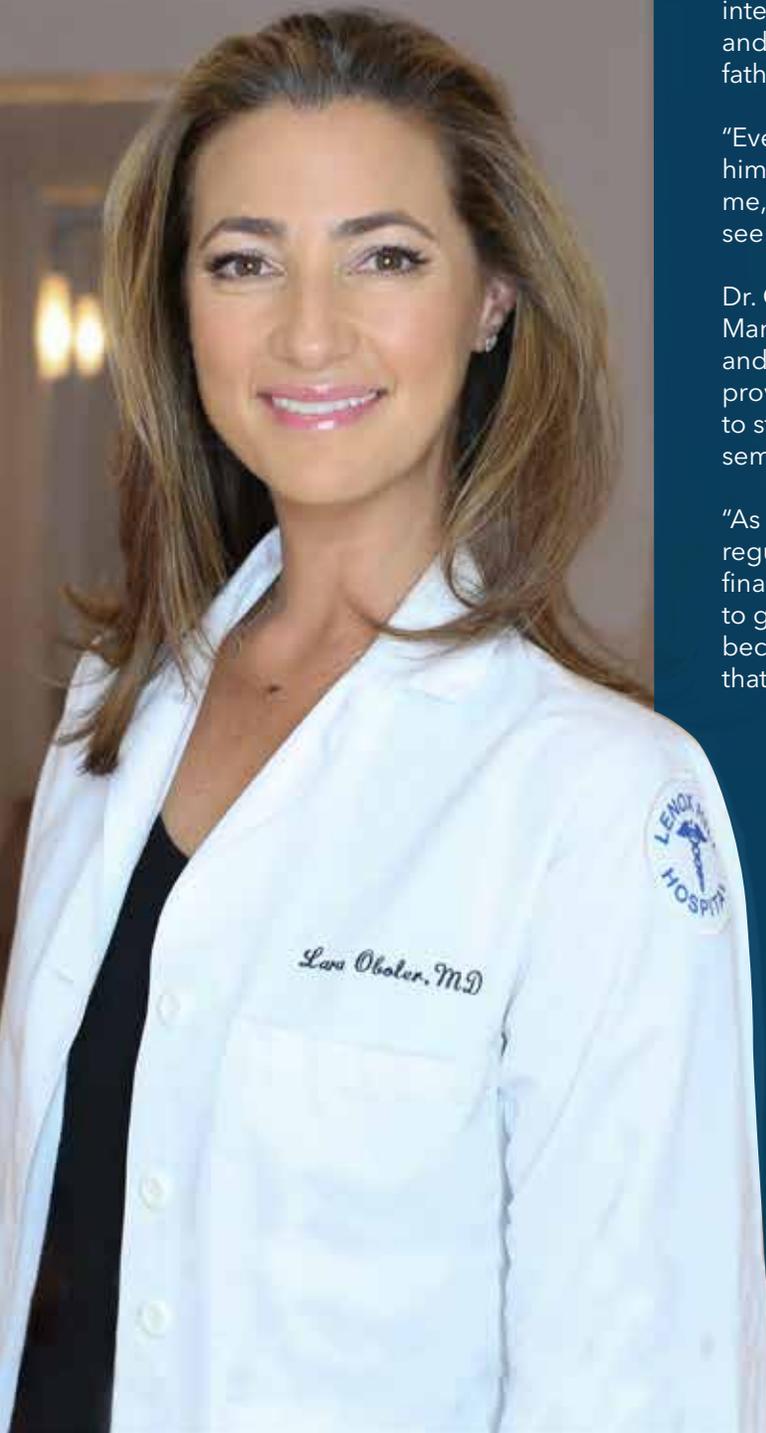
Scholarship support from GW relieved some of Dr. Essel's financial burden and allowed him to commit himself to primary care. "Medical school is expensive and a huge investment," he says. "But I knew I wanted to be at GW because of the strong education, great mentors, and opportunities for community experiences."

Dr. Essel says he is honored to be a member of GW's medical school faculty. "It's a privilege to be a colleague of those who invested so much in me," he says. "And it's exciting to be able to invest in the next generation of students who will become physicians helping others."

School of Med

LARA OBOLER, MD '95

# AN INVESTMENT IN FUTURE GENERATIONS OF DOCTORS



Lara Oboler, SMHS MD '95, became a doctor because she wanted to help people, which she does each day as an interventional cardiologist at New York City's Lenox Hill Heart and Vascular Institute. She follows in the footsteps of her late father, Dr. Allen Oboler, also an interventional cardiologist.

"Even when I was a young girl, my dad would take me with him to the hospital and his office, where patients would tell me, 'Your dad saved my life,'" says Dr. Oboler. "Saving lives seemed like a great job."

Dr. Oboler also helps future doctors through the H. George Mandel, Ph.D. Endowed Memorial Scholarship, which she and her husband, Louis Jaffe, endowed in 2012. This fund provides an annual need-based scholarship, to be applied to student loan debt, to a medical student in his or her final semester at SMHS.

"As a member of the medical school's Council of Advisors, I regularly hear from Dean Jeffrey Akman about the need for financial aid for medical students," says Dr. Oboler. "I wanted to give back to the school and help medical students in need because I know how tough it can be to get out from under that cloud of debt."

Dr. Oboler and Mr. Jaffe named the scholarship in memory of Dr. Mandel, a faculty member in the SMHS Department of Pharmacology and Physiology for over 60 years. "Dr. Mandel took me under his wing and mentored me, not only during the yearlong research project I did in his lab, but also outside of school," says Dr. Oboler. "He cared so much about all of his students and made a big impact."

Dr. Oboler enjoyed and values her GW education and, by supporting scholarships, is ensuring that future generations of medical students can provide top-notch care without the concern of crushing debt. "GW did an excellent job of preparing me to be a good doctor," she says. "The faculty put their heart and soul into teaching and making learning fun."

# — HOW YOU CAN — MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The cost of a medical school education continues to escalate, with the American Association of Medical Colleges reporting in 2017 that the mean debt of medical students attending private institutions is now more than \$206,000. Over half of all medical students have debt levels exceeding \$200,000, and approximately 21 percent of students are more than \$300,000 in debt.

Beyond its impact on medical students, this crisis has wide-reaching implications. High levels of debt may influence young physicians to forgo positions in primary care fields or in underserved areas, and prohibitive costs discourage some highly qualified students from entering the medical field at all.

The GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences is committed to increasing the financial support we provide to our students through the scholarship programs detailed in this brochure. This is a critical need and is our school's top philanthropic priority. The practice of medicine is a noble calling, and helping a promising individual realize their potential as a doctor is among the most outstanding examples of philanthropy.

Your generosity can help mitigate rising student debt and serve as a vote of confidence in our students, and an investment in the future of medicine.

## For more information, contact:

SMHS Development and Alumni Relations Office  
2600 Virginia Avenue, NW, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20037  
202-994-7511  
smhsalumni@gwu.edu

[go.gwu.edu/smhsstudentsupport](https://go.gwu.edu/smhsstudentsupport)

@GWSMHS



[smhs.gwu.edu/linkedinpage](https://smhs.gwu.edu/linkedinpage)



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