

The GW Healing Clinic

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



PROVIDING. LEARNING. SERVING.



GW HEALING CLINIC

Dedicated to serving our community by providing evidence-based medicine through research, teaching, community outreach, and advocacy.

“It is so impressive that Bridge to Care is student run with an excellent sense of organization and collegiality among student volunteers.”

Gretchen Brandt, MD

Bridge to Care Volunteer Clinician



“At a time where many people feel marginalized, alone, and concerned about their safety and health concerns, the Healing Clinic is an engaged community partner that impacts our most vulnerable residents.”

Lisa Mustone Alexander, EdD, MPH, PA-C

Former Healing Clinic Faculty Advisor

“The GWU medical students are exemplary and dedicated in all aspects of care. It is astonishing to witness the impact when a diabetic patient who had presented to us with much denial several months prior (but was seeing a different team on that day) exclaimed- ‘those are my doctors and they fixed my condition.’ The patients remember, and greatly value and identify the unique provider teams.”

Hein Nguyen, MD

Bridge to Care Volunteer Attending Clinician

“Despite there being waves of student volunteers at Bridge to Care, the enthusiasm remains so strong!”

Terry Jodrie, MD

Bridge to Care Volunteer Attending Clinician



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Established in 2006, **The GW Healing Clinic** is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization committed to expanding access to healthcare among vulnerable populations in and around Washington, D.C. It is run entirely by medical and physician assistant students of The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences. It consists of four volunteer branches that serve unique populations:

The **Bridge to Care Clinic** is a student-run primary care clinic operating in partnership with Family and Medical Counseling Service, Inc. (FMCS) in Seat Pleasant, Maryland. Bridge to Care is fully staffed by volunteer students, physicians, and physician assistants, and provides free primary medical care, health education, and laboratory testing to patients. Patient navigators help connect patients to affordable specialty care, social services, and other community resources.

Whitman Walker Health is a nonprofit community health organization in the Washington, D.C. area with special expertise in LGBTQ and HIV/AIDS care. Student volunteers assist with routine outreach tabling regarding sexual health, harm reduction counseling, mobile clinic efforts, and potential opportunities to advance into HIV testing.

ARCH, or Advocates for Reducing Community Harm, aims to empower the local community by understanding people who use drugs and people who engage in sex work and learning about and applying harm reduction practices that can support these individuals. This branch has established a new partnership with Bread for the City, a Federally Qualified Health Center in Southeast DC.

The Homeless Medicine Initiative (HMI) is our newest branch, still in its early stages of development. HMI aims to increase access to primary medical care among people experiencing homelessness in the Washington, D.C. area. Throughout the year, our team has established the foundation for a new outreach program in partnership with local community organizations.

In addition to these volunteer branches, The GW Healing Clinic is supported by an Executive Board responsible for organization-wide **education** events, **fundraising** efforts, **research** projects, and internal and external **communication**.

Clinic Information

Bridge to Care Clinic

Family Medical Counseling Services, Inc.
5936 Martin Luther King Jr., Hwy • Seat Pleasant, MD 20743
Phone: 202-994-0148 • Fax: 202-994-0293

Whitman-Walker Health Clinic

1525 14th St., NW 2nd Floor • Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: 202-745-7000



Welcome Message from Co-Directors

Welcome to The GW Healing Clinic's 2022 Annual Report. The purpose of this report is to keep the GW community, our community partners, our supporters, and our generous donors informed of the progress we've made this past year. We are grateful to have served as this year's Co-Directors, as we continue the work of fifteen generations of GWSMHS students who have helped build this organization.

The evolution of The GW Healing Clinic is the cumulative response to the needs of our patients and community. This report highlights our commitment to consistently assessing our progress and areas for growth to help set goals for the year ahead.

This year, we adapted to new changes in the medical system as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and found new ways to improve patient care while also expanding our community partnerships and outreach. We were thrilled to be able to hold in-person events again and hosted a number of professional development sessions, in addition to the Heel to Heal 5K which has been paused for two years. We are so proud of what we accomplished this past year and are even more excited to see where this organization has gone in five to ten years. The Healing Clinic is an enormous part of GW's community and we know it will continue to serve our vulnerable populations in the DC area for years to come.

On behalf of The GW Healing Clinic, we thank you for your continued support. We hope this annual report demonstrates the resilience of our organization and the people, programs, and partnerships that continue to uphold it.

If you are interested in learning more about the Healing Clinic or how to get involved, please contact gwhealingclinic@gmail.com.

Sophia Cordes, MSII

Lauren Sullivan MSII

Co-Directors of The GW Healing Clinic

Annual Report 2022

Message From Dean Barbara L. Bass, MD

I am very proud of our Healing Clinic volunteers and the work they do for our community. The Healing Clinic's mission to expand health care access to the vulnerable populations in and around Washington, D.C., regardless of insurance status or ability to pay, reflects the mission of the GW academic medical enterprise and our unique commitment to health and health equity. Over time, the Healing Clinic has grown to become an essential health care resource for its patients. It also serves as an important part of the GW SMHS experience for our students – affording them the opportunity to provide critical service, while also gaining valuable experience they might not find elsewhere in their educational careers.

Since my arrival as Dean and Vice President for Health Affairs, I have been gratified to witness the impact the clinics have had on the DC metropolitan area and how our students have improved the lives of their patients. I have also been impressed with the ability of our volunteers to adjust to changing circumstances and help evolve the Healing Clinic to serve as a resource for our community and its changing needs. Throughout the pandemic, our student volunteers worked to ensure the clinic remained open and ready to serve the needs of patients, despite significant barriers. This year, Healing Clinic volunteers worked to grow existing partnerships and expand to new sites throughout the city. The Homeless Medicine Initiative is planning to start a weekly volunteer program at Charlie's Place in Dupont Circle this spring, and the Advocates for Reduction in Community Harm branch is extending its partnership with Bread for the City to include one of their new clinics in Anacostia.

I am proud to support our volunteer students and faculty in this important work. The Healing Clinic exemplifies the commitment of the entire GW academic medical enterprise to serving all members of our community and improving the health of our entire city. This is why we have specifically allocated endowment funds to this initiative, to ensure its continued success. I am continually impressed by our student volunteers, and the dedication, energy and commitment that they demonstrate every day to serve their patients. Congratulations on another successful year and thank you for being a wonderful example of care and compassion in our community.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barbara L. Bass". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Barbara L. Bass, MD
Barbara Lee Bass, MD, FACS, RESD '86
Professor of Surgery
Walter A. Bloedorn Chair of Administrative Medicine
Vice President for Health Affairs
Dean, School of Medicine and Health Sciences
Chief Executive Officer, The GW Medical Faculty Associates



Message from Clinical Faculty Advisor

Maria Portela-Martinez, MD, MPH

The students of the Healing Clinic year in and year out find ways to surprise us.

Every year, I am humbled by the service and leadership characteristics of many of the students volunteering in the Healing Clinic. The past 2-3 years have been tough as we adjust to the pandemic challenges but the Healing Clinic has grown to be more resilient. Between a new location in the past three years where we serve our patients to our telemedicine capabilities, to an expanded research arm, the students' commitment to service and patient care continues to be evident.

This year we were also lucky to gain Melissa Maloof as Associate Medical Director to the team who has been a wonderful addition. We miss and wish well to Eleanor Frye previous associate medical director whose leadership and dedication inspired us all. We thank her for her incredible service.

One of my favorite aspects of the Healing Clinic is working with students and witnessing the development of second year volunteers as they evolve and return as 4th year liaison leaders and help improve the operations and workflows of the clinic. It is thanks to the student volunteers, the student leaders and the committed faculty volunteers that we are able to service an underserved patient population in PG county year after year. In turn, the Healing Clinic provides a unique opportunity for students to practice medicine in an underserved area, be stewards of resources, practice leadership skills and apply and gain knowledge about health systems and social determinants of health.

Thank you all for your exceptionalism and service to keep the Healing Clinic running and congratulations on your achievements this year.

Maria Portela-Martinez, MD, MPH

*Clinical Faculty Advisor and Medical Director, GW Healing Clinic
Chief, Family Medicine Section, Department of Emergency Medicine*

WINTER

- Built our leadership team. We focused on transitioning into our roles and clearly defining and prioritizing goals for the coming year.
- Refined operations at the Bridge to Care Clinic, working both in-person and virtually to meet the needs of patients.
- Updated our website to ensure that our patients, donors, and future volunteers have the most accurate information.

SPRING

- Hosted our annual Heel to Heal 5K in-person for the first time in three years.
- Initiated a new pap smear prevention program at the Bridge to Care Clinic called the “Pap Smear Project.”

SUMMER

- Defined the infrastructure for our Homeless Medicine Initiative and explored partnerships with local medical schools and community organizations.
- Worked with Bread for the City to create a partnership between Advocates in the Reduction of Community Harm (formerly partnered with HIPS) at their new Southeast Center.

FALL

- Developed a Spanish interpreter program through partnership with GW Salud to service Bridge to Care patients every Thursday night.
- Welcomed new 1st-year medical and physician assistant student volunteers for all Healing Clinic branches through a “Meet the Directors” event at Tonic.
- Hosted a Murder Mystery fundraising night to benefit Healing Clinic and welcome new volunteers.
- Established a new partnership with Charlie’s Place. This was the first major step in establishing a new clinical outreach program through our Homeless Medicine Initiative.

Message from Co-Directors of Education

To better serve our patient population, the education team has worked to provide several clinical development opportunities for all Healing Clinic volunteers. Grand Rounds Events and Clinical Skills Training were taught by 4th year medical students, which enhanced approaches to patient care at the Healing Clinic. For example, sessions have been dedicated to developing practical skills, while others have discussed cultural humility and motivational interviewing to better serve the patients we serve through the Healing Clinic.

In addition to Grand Rounds and Clinical Skills Trainings, we have collaborated with other GWSMHS student organizations to host physician-led lectures and workshops. These have given volunteers insight into important topics in medicine, such as motivational interviewing and cultural humility.

Our clinical development events have acted as vital supplements to Healing Clinic experiences, both in directly caring for patients and understanding issues they may be facing outside of the clinical setting.

Shruthi Voleti, MSII

Alana Sadur, MSII

Co-Directors of Education

Professional Development Events

Clinical Skills Training

- Phlebotomy Trainings
- Suturing Trainings
- History-taking practice

Special Topics

- Motivational Interviewing (Co-Sponsored with the Family Medicine Interest Group)
- Cultural Humility Training (Led By Dr. Kofi Essel)

Message from the Directors of Research

Research is a vital tool to better understanding and meeting our patients' needs here at the Healing Clinic. In 2022, we have begun new projects to augment the research program model implemented by last year's research directors. These projects include:

- A collaboration with the Bridge to Care branch to conduct a Needs Assessment
 - This would help gather information about potential shortcomings of the clinic, as well as patients' perspectives and satisfaction
 - The data from this project would be used longitudinally to improve the clinic, increase patient comfortability, and pave the way for better patient outcomes
- A survey-based study examining factors of medication nonadherence in patients with chronic conditions
 - Nonadherence to medications exacerbates poor patient outcomes, so we aim to understand what factors contribute to this phenomenon
 - The results from the study would ideally help build better practices on following up on medication treatments and could also be used in patient education on the importance of following treatment regimens

Alongside the initiation of these studies, previous longitudinal studies that were created under previous directors were also continued this year.

Mary Pasquale, MSII

Kunj Patel, MSII

Directors of Research

Previous Research Projects

Society of Student Run Free Clinics

Dick, Alexander; Phan, Megan; Hamilton, Colleen; Ganguli, Sangrag; Newton, Sophia. *Demographics of a student run free clinic (SRFC) in Prince George's County, Maryland*. Society of Student Run Free Clinics, 2021 Conference. Poster presentation.

Newton, Sophia; Ganguli, Sangrag; Hamilton, Colleen; Phan, Megan. *Implementing a Novel Telemedicine Program at a Student-Run Free Clinic During the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Society of Student Run Free Clinics, 2021 Conference. Oral presentation.

Duval, Margaret; Marcinkowski, Bridget; Phan, Megan; Hamilton, Colleen; Newton, Sophia; Ganguli, Sangrag. *Expanding our Patient Navigation Program in a Virtual Environment*. Society of Student Run Free Clinics, 2021 Conference. Oral presentation.

Kupsky, Genevieve; Kurapaty, Steven; Sandhu, Pavneet. *Relocating the GW Bridge to Care Clinic*. Society of Student Run Free Clinics, 2020 Conference.

Sankar, Mathavi. *Student-Led Patient Navigation Programs: Systems-based medical education*. Society of Student Run Free Clinics, 2020 Conference.

Ravenborg N*, Huysman B*, Taskier M*, Popiel D. *Developing a Curriculum for Fourth-Year Medical Students Emphasizing Social Justice, Cultural Competency, Cost Consciousness and Developing Students into Educators*. Student-

Run Free Clinic. Society of Student-Run Free Clinics Conference 2018. Poster presentation. **authors contributed equally to this work.*

Flory E, Linville L, Popiel D. *Cancer Screening Rates in the Bridge to Care Student-Run Free Clinic Population of Prince George's County, Maryland.* Society of Student-Run Free Clinics Conference 2018. Poster presentation.

Stricker K, Shetter E, Popiel D. *Knowing When to Grow.* Society of Student-Run Free Clinics Conference 2018. Oral presentation.

Buldo-Licciardi J*, Fuerst M*, Yang L, Smith S, Sternberg D, Popiel D. *Meeting Patients Where They Are: Piloting a Student-Run Free Clinic to Provide STI Testing to the Sex Worker Populations of Washington, D.C.* Society of Student-Run Free Clinics Conference 2018. Oral presentation. **authors contributed equally to this work.*

Fuerst M, Buldo-Licciardi J, Villa C, Kirsten H, Popiel D. *Creating a Multidisciplinary Referral Model for a Student-Run Free Clinic.* Society of Student-Run Free Clinics Conference 2018. Poster presentation.

Waters A, Stricker K, Shetter E, Buldo-Licciardi J, Fuerst M, Lasswell T, Steinle J. *The Role of Student-Run Free Clinics in Advancing Community Engagement at Medical Schools.* Society for Student-Run Free Clinics Conference 2017. Panel presentation.

Huysman B, Taskier M. *Developing Community Health Providers for the Future: GW Healing Clinic Professional Development Series.* Society for Student-Run Free Clinics Conference 2016. Oral presentation.

Huysman B, Taskier M. *Starting a Clinic.* Society for Student-Run Free Clinics Conference 2016. Oral presentation.

Huysman B, Taskier M, Aje K, Joshi P, Denny K, Popiel D, Alexander L. *Bridge to Care: How a Medical School can Partner with a Health Department.* Society for Student-Run Free Clinics Conference 2016. Poster presentation.

Huysman B, Taskier M, Aje K, Joshi P, Denny K, Popiel D, Alexander L. *Bridge to Care: How a Medical School can Partner with a Health Department.* Society for Student-Run Free Clinics Conference 2016. Panel presentation.

Taskier M, Huysman B, Linville L, Alexander L, Popiel, D. *Developing Community Health Providers of the Future: GW Healing Clinic Professional Development Series.* Society for Student-Run Free Clinics Conference 2016. Oral presentation.

GW Research Day

Shetter E, Stricker K, Popiel D. *Building Referral Services at the Bridge to Care Clinic.* GW Student Research Day 2017. Poster presentation.

Huysman B, Taskier M, Aje K, Joshi P, Denny K, Popiel D, Alexander L. *Bridge to Care: How a Medical School Can Partner with a Public Health Department.* GW Research Day Meeting 2016. Oral presentation. **Awarded Donald H. Glew Prize for second place given to best poster at Research Days by the Beaumont Research Society.*

Practical Playbook

Huysman B, Taskier M, Aje K, Joshi P, Denny K, Popiel D, Alexander L. *Bridge to Care: How a Medical School Can Partner with a Public Health Department.* Practical Playbook National Meeting: Bringing Public Health and Primary Care Together Meeting 2016. Oral presentation.

Huysman B, Taskier M, Aje K, Joshi P, Denny K, Popiel D, Alexander L. *Medical Problems to Health Solutions: Partnership of a Public Health Department and Student-Run Free Clinic.* Practical Playbook National Meeting: Bringing Public Health and Primary Care Together Meeting 2016. Poster presentation.

Rodham Institute Summit

Buldo-Licciardi J*, Fuerst M*, Yang L, Smith S, Sternberg D, Popiel D. *Meeting Patients Where They Are: Piloting a Student-Run Free Clinic to Provide STI Testing to the Sex Worker Populations of Washington, D.C.* Rodham Institute Summit 2017. Poster presentation. **authors contributed equally to this work.*

Taskier M*, Huysman B*, O'Donovan E, Jones A, Broadnax P. *Front-line Health Care: Delivering Community- Based Care and Educating Future Providers.* Rodham Institute Summit 2015. Panel presentation. **authors contributed equally to this work.*

Message from Directors of Fundraising

Each year, the GW Healing Clinic strives to raise funds that are necessary for its growth. Generous donations from sponsors, alumni, and friends of the Healing Clinic directly impact patient care and clinic initiatives. This year, our fundraising team included Meral Barlas and Rami Imam.

This year we are so grateful for the tremendous success we experienced with our fundraising efforts. Our Winter event was called our “Medmingle Fundraiser” and took place right before Valentine’s Day. Students in each year took a fun personality survey and then were notified about the top five people who answered their survey similarly. Not only did we raise around \$250 for our Healing Clinic, but the event served as a great way to foster community within the virtual learning environment.

Our spring event was our 9th annual Heel-to-Heal 5k. Thankfully, this was the first year since pre-COVID that this event was held in-person! Participants used an online fundraising platform called RaceRoster to fundraise individually and gained raffle tickets for each fundraising threshold they reached. We formed partnerships with ten companies who generously donated raffle prizes. Overall the event was a huge success and we ended up raising over \$5,000!

At the beginning of the fall semester, we hosted a happy hour for M1’s to meet with the new eboard at Tonic. Tonic created a “Healing Clinic Cocktail” and a portion of all the proceeds ordered from this drink went to the Clinic. We raised over \$150 from this social event.

In October, we hosted a Murder Mystery Fundraiser, where 10 teams of 6 showed off their acting skills as they brought their assigned characters to life to solve a murder mystery. Participants had a blast using clues and revealing secrets at this spooky event that raised over \$650.

Thank you to all of our 2022 donors. Your contributions have been vital in our organization’s effort to alleviate health disparities in our community.

Rami Imam, MSII
Meral Barlas, MSII

Director of Fundraising

There is no donation too big or small for Healing Clinic. You can donate by visiting <https://smhs.gwu.edu/healingclinic/> and clicking the “Donate Here” button in the website margin. We thank you in advance for your support!

Message from Co-Directors of Bridge to Care Clinic

This year, the Bridge to Care Clinic operated year-round, both in-person and virtually, at no cost to our panel of over 200 patients. Services included annual exams and management of chronic conditions, most commonly diabetes and hypertension. Telemedicine clinics had been adopted by our predecessors as a response to COVID-19 social distancing measures, but we found that the virtual modality enabled greater accessibility to care for many of our patients. As such, we successfully operated a virtual clinic on eight occasions in 2022. We utilized the telehealth model to conduct follow-up and health management visits.

In order to identify and address gaps in care for our patient population, we initiated a needs assessment with the Directors of Research in mid-2022. One ongoing need which was identified was that of language accessibility for our sizable Spanish-speaking population. As such, we worked to expand access to in-person interpretation by selecting and training Spanish interpreters to work directly with our patients. We currently have two Spanish interpreters each clinic night, which we hope will help to ameliorate health care barriers and create stronger connections between our patients and clinicians. We hope to gather additional data regarding challenges facing our patient population to direct future initiatives.

In 2022, we strived to bolster our commitment to preventive care. By working with our physician assistant (PA) liaison, Fatima Elgarguri, and her team, we were able to dramatically expand the number of annual cervical screenings conducted by our care team. Additional supplies were acquired and allocated for this project, and the PA team created and distributed informational resources for patients in both English and Spanish to expand awareness of the importance of cervical screenings. Fatima and her team were awarded a grant to continue this research and to fund follow-up care for our patients who require further evaluation. Additionally, we compiled a list of mammogram-eligible patients who had not yet undergone recommended screenings and prioritized them for future appointments.

Through their work with Bridge to Care, first-, second-, and fourth-year medical students have gained invaluable hands-on experience caring for underserved populations. Additionally, through a collaboration with the Georgetown University ARCHES Program, eight undergraduate fellows from across the country were able to shadow at Bridge to Care and learn about the importance of student-run clinics.

Moving forward, we plan to expand access to specialty services by incorporating Specialty Nights into our clinic schedule. We will also continue to work towards integrating social work and other community partnerships into our care model to ensure that patients are connected to the resources they need.

As we finish this year of clinic, we reflect on the opportunity we have had to serve our community's uninsured and underinsured patients and how wonderful an experience it has been getting to know them. We have learned to continuously assess and adapt while always prioritizing our patients' needs. We are incredibly grateful to our volunteers whose commitment and dedication to serving others has allowed this clinic to function and flourish year after year. We have high hopes for both the future of this clinic and its incoming leaders!

Milan Abbi, MSII

Yael Shapiro, MSII

Co-Directors of Bridge to Care Clinic

Message from Co-Directors of the Patient Navigation Program

The Bridge to Care Clinic provides essential primary care services to members of our community, but we often encounter patients with significant barriers to care and complex needs that exceed our capacities. The Patient Navigator Program was founded to address these needs that cannot be met at the clinic by connecting patients to specialty care and social services. This year, we transitioned back to in-person clinic and patient navigation, and our Patient Navigators (PNs) worked hard to ensure these patients were seen and connected to healthcare resources.

We were excited to welcome 50 medical students and 11 physician assistant students to the PN team this Fall. After completing their virtual training, the PNs began assisting at Bridge to Care Clinic. To enhance the opportunities for learning, PNs worked one-on-one with a fourth-year medical student during each clinic night. When possible, they interviewed the patient together, took vitals, assisted in the exam, presented to the attending, and wrote a clinic encounter note. After clinic, the fourth-year and the PN discussed the patient's case in-depth, highlighting any important clinical findings and teaching moments, and discussing the patient's additional needs. The PN then proceeded to work with the patient over the following weeks to months, facilitating any referrals and providing resources to ensure the patient was connected to care.

In the Spring of 2022 we also started the Spanish Interpreter program to have onsite interpreters for clinic visits. We are excited to say we now have 11 Spanish interpreters for Bridge to Care. The interpreters received formal training and were well-received in clinic. At each clinic date we have between 1 to 2 interpreters on average.

In 2022, we connected many patients to essential health services. Among our most common referrals were preventative health screenings. While many successful referrals were made, we still had difficulty in finding substantial low-cost options for specialty care.

In the new year, we hope to continue working to ensure that patients are connected to the care they need regardless of their documentation status, insurance status, language barriers, or ability to pay. We look forward to the year to come and hope to assist the upcoming Patient Navigation directors in a successful transition.

Rena Mazur, MSII

Cecilia Velarde De La Via, MSII

Co-Directors of the Patient Navigation Program

FOURTH YEAR ELECTIVE

Message from Co-Directors of the Fourth Year Elective

The GW Healing Clinic has served as a formative experience for 4th year medical students enrolled in the Community Health Elective since its inception. They have been eager to learn about and address the unique needs of the diverse patients that we serve at the Bridge to Care free clinic, placing cultural competence, high-value care, and health equity at the forefront of each visit. We are immensely grateful for all the time they have dedicated to giving back to their community.

In their roles, our 4th year volunteers serve as the primary medical providers for patients, under the supervision of volunteer attendings. They have increased autonomy in developing assessments and plans with patients and following up on diagnostic studies, referrals, and other aspects of patient care during and after their visits. This often involves working through the various social determinants of health that our patients face, whether using appropriate translation services to ensure language access, ordering generics and providing GoodRx coupons to help patients afford their medications, or working with our wonderful patient navigators to facilitate connection with specialty clinics and community-based resources.

In addition to their clinical duties, our 4th years also act as junior preceptors to 1st and 2nd year medical and physician assistant students at the clinic. They have each been excited by opportunities to guide more junior students in developing clinical skills such as taking histories, performing physical exams, thinking through differential diagnoses, formulating plans of care, and presenting patients. Through these experiences, our 4th years have been able to hone their own skills in teaching at the bedside, providing meaningful feedback, and acting as peer mentors to students just beginning their journey in medical education.

As former members of the Healing Clinic Executive Board at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been inspiring to witness the growth that the organization has had over the past three years. The incredible progress that the Healing Clinic has made would not be possible without the many junior medical student leaders who have worked tirelessly to manage its many moving parts. Finally, although on most nights our clinic is again bustling with patients and volunteers, we will continue to keep the lessons learned about safety, versatility, patient advocacy, and teamwork at the center of our efforts.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Healing Clinic. On behalf of the 4th year medical student leadership team, we wish you a safe and healthy 2023.

Meg Duval, MSIV
Colleen Hamilton, MSIV
Bridget Marcinkowski, MSIV
Sophia Newton, MSIV
Megan Phan, MSIV

Co-Directors of the Fourth-Year Elective

Message from Director of Whitman-Walker Health Clinic

Whitman Walker Health (WWH) is a non-profit community health organization in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area with renown expertise in HIV/AIDS and LGBTQ healthcare. Founded in 1978 to provide care for the gay and lesbian community, WWH was one of the first responders to DC's HIV/AIDS epidemic. WWH has since expanded with locations throughout DC to include primary, mental, and dental healthcare services, in addition to a stronger focus on queer women's care and youth services.

More than 40 years later, eradicating HIV in the District of Columbia remains a core mission at Whitman Walker. A significant portion of Whitman Walker's operations is spent engaging with the local DC community, including safe sex education and access to care for marginalized populations. Here at GW Healing Clinic, we are fortunate to be in a unique partnership with WWH's efforts to combat the HIV epidemic. The staff at WWH graciously spends hours training SMHS students as community outreach volunteers. Students are trained on working with marginalized patient populations to provide counseling, triaging, and education on substance use, sexual health, and more. With long term involvement, there are opportunities to get trained on more advanced HIV testing and counseling as well.

The 2022-2023 cohort is composed of eight first year medical students, a significant increase from four testers in 2018. Students have the opportunity to sign up for volunteer opportunities via Whitman Walker's database, with various locations and topics updated monthly. Most students went beyond this minimum and volunteered after their year-long commitment ends.

On a personal note, we recognize how fortunate we were to be a part of this team. We were able to gain insightful experience volunteering with Whitman Walker as well as organize the first transgender patient panel. It was a molding experience of our medical education to remain involved in this niche opportunity. It has been an honor to work with WWH, and this experience will undoubtedly inform our careers as both students and future physicians.

Dylan Parsons, MSII

Jack Titus, MSII

Director of Whitman Walker Health Clinic

ADVOCATES FOR THE REDUCTION OF COMMUNITY HARM

Message from Co-Directors of ARCH

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the GW Healing Clinic worked in partnership with Honoring Individual Power and Strength (HIPS), a harm reduction community-based organization in Washington, DC to assist and expand their medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) services. Since covid necessitated a change in partnership, ARCH has been exploring new community partnership relationships, while providing volunteers with local volunteering and education opportunities. All volunteers with ARCH were offered an online course for medical students, sponsored by the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, that meets the requirements for the DEA's DATA waiver, which is necessary for the prescription of buprenorphine.

During the spring of 2022, we focused on team-building and community engagement opportunities for volunteers. We held a virtual harm reduction training and guided volunteers to obtain naloxone. We also held a volunteer event at the food pantry of Bread for the City (BFC), a Federally Qualified Health Center in DC.

In June of 2022, we began discussions with the clinical director at BFC about establishing a partnership between GW SMHS preclinical students and their organization. The clinic-based partnership we envisioned did not unfold, we were connected with the racial equity team at the new Southeast center of BFC with a new plan. Currently, we are working to partner with BFC community health workers (CHWs) to go into the community and hold harm reduction trainings for individuals living at several public housing sites around the city. ARCH volunteers and BFC CHWs have been working to complete certification training on naloxone use. This upcoming spring, volunteers will be trained about decolonization, the criminalization of drug use in DC, and the importance of harm reduction in these settings.

In the fall of 2022 during our ongoing conversations with BFC, we worked to continue engaging volunteers and creating learning opportunities for students. We hosted a second virtual harm reduction training for the new MS1 volunteers and overall class. Additionally, under the guidance of Dr. Madeline Taskier, we facilitated a hands-on homeless health street outreach workshop in the GWSMHS CLASS Center. This workshop featured both a hands-on workshop to practice tangible skills and a didactic portion on common ailments of unhoused patient populations, local resources, and common case-based scenarios. Continuing our partnership with the BFC team, we volunteered at their Holiday Helpings in November, helping with their food pantry to pack thanksgiving care packages.

We look forward to expanding educational opportunities for GW SMHS students within this patient population and furthering our relationship with BFC to create a sustainable and meaningful community partnership and volunteer program.

Julia Xavier, MSII
Julia Mount, MSII
Co-Directors of ARCH

HOMELESS MEDICINE INITIATIVE

Message from Co-Directors of HMI

The Homeless Medicine Initiative (HMI), now in its third year, continues in its mission to serve individuals experiencing homelessness in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. We are committed to our long term goal of providing basic clinical services, leveraging our position as an academic institution and teaching hospital to provide opportunities for medical and physician assistant students to gain experience addressing the unique needs of patients experiencing homelessness.

Our team has continued rebuilding and restructuring from the COVID-19 pandemic. Our predecessors laid the foundation for multiple clinical engagements, yet unfortunately they were not sustainable given limitations both within partner organizations and within the Healing Clinic itself. As a result we were forced to return to a development stage, forcing us to adamantly evaluate all of the ways in which HMI students could make a meaningful contribution to the community. Through a formative summer, we have reaffirmed our long term goal of building towards a volunteer group that is able to provide basic clinical services. However, as we learned while navigating the complexities of student liability when caring for vulnerable populations, such as those experiencing homelessness, we'd be remiss to think the development of such a program will be quick and straightforward. Nevertheless, we have emerged hopeful.

We are currently finalizing a partnership with Unity Healthcare, the largest federally qualified health center (FQHC) in Washington D.C. and a staunch supporter of providing care to vulnerable populations. Unity's Healthcare for the Homeless Division brings care directly to patients; in shelters, soup kitchens, and on the streets. Our proposed partnership will bring students to a community organization, Charlie's Place, where Unity Healthcare providers have been coming for years and have an established partnership. GW HMI students will not only get to shadow a Unity provider but simultaneously serve their community as Charlie's Place is a functioning soup kitchen and provides basic social work resources. This should serve as an influential opportunity for students to enhance their understanding of the adversities faced by people experiencing homelessness. We also hope this arrangement will provide a stable foundation to allow future HMI leadership to continue developing a partnership with Unity Healthcare. We believe this is instrumental for HMI to evolve and encompass a greater clinical component.

By spring of 2023, we believe our partnership will be functioning, with students attending on a weekly basis. We will continue to promote volunteer engagements and service events for our members, such as volunteering at Bread for the City and the Point in Time Count 2023. We will continue the search for external funding sources. And finally, we will continue to be committed in our long term goal of providing care to people experiencing homelessness in the D.C. area, with the understanding that this is an arduous task to develop a program when none has existed before. However, with our mission as our guiding principle, we believe we can achieve our vision and exceed expectations.

David Bronstein, MSII
Mansour Dehan, MSII
Co-Directors of the Homeless Medicine Initiative

2022 LEADERSHIP

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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Interested in learning more about opportunities to volunteer and
get involved with Healing Clinic?

Please contact gwhealingclinic@gmail.com

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