

HEALTHY SEXUALITY

Over 50 medical students develop a relationship of trust with more than 200 grade 9 and 10 students and stimulate interesting debates on topics related to youth sexuality. Medical students lead small group discussions about sex, birth control, and sexually transmitted infections. Healthy Sexuality is particularly sensitive to issues relevant to all sexual orientations or self-identifications.

ISOLATED SENIORS PROGRAM (ISP)

ISP is organized in association with Central Neighbourhood House. University students visit isolated seniors in the Danforth, St. James, Moss Park, Regent Park and Woodgreen communities. The seniors are matched with two university students based on similarity in cultural background and hobbies. The objectives of this program are to contribute positively to the social support network for alienated seniors and to allow students to understand the associated challenges of everyday life.

KIDS2SEE

This medical student-run initiative provides free vision screening for kindergarten children living in at-risk neighbourhoods. Kids2See connects medical students with their communities to identify children with vision problems, such as amblyopia, and facilitates referral to an eye professional. It provides an opportunity for medical students to become active members of their community, and advocates of eye health and education.

THE SATURDAY PROGRAM (SP)

SP was established in partnership with the Toronto District School Board and The Learning Partnership (Change Your Future Program). This weekly program offers grades 8, 9 and 10 students tutoring and mentoring opportunities. University mentors combine a mix of academic work, fun activities, and workshops to motivate mentees and serve as role models in encouraging them to pursue post-secondary education.

SPEAKERS SERIES (SS)

SS enhances the medical curriculum with salient discourses on controversial community issues as well as topics of general interest. Previous talks have included discussions on the role of environmental toxins in causing cancer, medical marijuana, faith and health, sports psychology, as well as on the physician's role in controlling community violence.



ST. FELIX PROGRAM (SFP)

The objective of SFP is to provide children in disadvantaged communities (Alexandra Park area, Toronto) with role models to help build self-confidence and recognize self-worth. Student mentors and mentees spend time reading and participating in games and activities organized around a weekly theme. Previous themes have included Library Day, Halloween Day, and Multicultural Day. Additionally, field trips are organized to places including the Science Centre and the Winter Carnival at Nathan Phillips Square.

SUN AND SKIN AWARENESS (S&S)

S&S was started by the Canadian Dermatology Association to promote healthy, safe, sun practices in young children. Through presentations and fun-activities, students educate grade 4 children on how to reduce the risks of developing sun-related skin damage.

PARKDALE MENTORING PROGRAM

In collaboration with Parkdale Community Health Centre (PCHC) and Parkdale Art and Cultural Centre, grades 9, 10, and 11 students are exposed to various post-secondary opportunities. One-on-one mentoring and team-building activities are offered to motivate students to hone key employability skills such as organization, leadership, and communication skills.

WOODGREEN HOMEWARD BOUND MENTORING PROGRAM

In collaboration with Woodgreen Community Services, mentoring opportunities are provided for Homeward Bound single mothers associated with Woodgreen. Single-mom graduates from the University of Toronto serve as mentors for the Woodgreen moms, who are in school or in internship. Through one-on-one mentorship, striving to alleviate the stress associated with life circumstances which bring women to homeward programs.

WOODGREEN TUTORING PROGRAM

In partnership with Woodgreen Community Services, this tutoring program is for children of Homeward Bound single mothers and children within the Woodgreen community. Through one-on-one and group activities for the Woodgreen Children, this program has the dual purpose of alleviating the stress of mothers and improving the academic performance of their children.

UNIVERSITY DISCOVERY AND CAREER EXPLORATION

This initiative exposes students to various programs and faculties at the University of Toronto. Emphasis is placed on including students who are historically under-represented at universities. This program is administered through day-long and week-long events at the university.



This brochure was designed by University of Toronto students, Sherry H. Lai and Julian Kirk-Elleker, graduates of the Masters of Science Biomedical Communications program. Their scientific illustrations can be viewed by following these links:
<http://brodel.med.utoronto.ca/~sherrylai/>
<http://brodel.med.utoronto.ca/~julian/>

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University of Toronto Community Affairs Programs



The Community Affairs Portfolio at the University of Toronto Medical School directs seventeen outreach programs to benefit local underprivileged and marginalized groups. The target group ranges from children to seniors. Our programs include tutoring/mentoring, reducing social isolation of seniors, blood drives, preventative health screening, and other service learning activities. Encouraged by the success of these long-standing programs and the need to further contribute to the community, several new initiatives were started: Alternative High School Mentorship Program, ChildArts, Interdisciplinary Medical and Allied Groups for Improving Neighbourhood Environments (IMAGINE), Kids2Hear, Know Your Numbers (KYN), Smiling Over Sickness, and St. Christopher House Outreach.

The success of our programs depends on the invaluable student support from the Faculties of Medicine, Dentistry, Engineering, Law, Nursing, Pharmacy, Physical Education and Health, Social Work, and various graduate/undergraduate departments. We are grateful for the funding received from the University of Toronto Medical Society (MedSoc), Office of Health Professions Student Affairs, and the Graduating Medical classes.

Our vision is to foster values of service and compassion in students and respond to the changing requirements of our community. We welcome your support and participation in our programs.

Sincerely,

Christine Law

Senior Vice President, Community Affairs
University of Toronto Medical Society

Peter Szasz

Junior Vice President, Community Affairs
University of Toronto Medical Society

MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS, HEALTH PROFESSIONS

The Office of Student Affairs (OSA), Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto warmly congratulates the Medical Society Community Affairs group on its ongoing commitment and response to the evolving needs of our community. Societies are judged over time on how they have cared for and protected their vulnerable members. OSA enjoys facilitating student outreach and service oriented initiatives. Students involved in community partnerships develop heightened social awareness and a sense of moral responsibility. They also discover inner strengths, hidden talents and leadership potential.

We encourage our students to take advantage of these fulfilling opportunities.

Anna Jarvis, MBBS, FRCPC, FAAP

Associate Dean,
Student Affairs, Health Professions

Diana Alli, O.Ont

Senior Officer
Service Learning Opportunities,
Community Partnerships, Student Life

“The opportunity for our health professional students to engage in meaningful community outreach programs is a truly enriching personal learning experience. The Faculty strongly supports these worthy initiatives and celebrates the outstanding volunteerism of our student leaders in the Community Affairs Portfolio of the University of Toronto Medical Society.”

Dr. Catharine Whiteside
Dean, Faculty of Medicine



NEW PROGRAMS

ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

In collaboration with alternative high schools throughout Toronto, we offer students the opportunity to have mentorship in achieving higher academic, career and life goals. The focus of the mentee-mentor relationship is on career exploration, life skills, support, guidance and tutoring.

CHILDArts

The aim of this program is to inspire creativity, boost self-esteem, and expand the imaginations of elementary school-aged children through activities such as playwriting, costume and set making, dancing, acting, and singing. Currently ChildArts is offered to children at the Bloorview Kids Rehab centre.

INTERDISCIPLINARY MEDICAL AND ALLIED GROUPS FOR IMPROVING NEIGHBOURHOOD ENVIRONMENTS (IMAGINE)

In conjunction with the Interprofessional Health Sciences Association (IPHSA) students from all the applied health service faculties and related fields work together to provide a hassle-free clinic to the clients of The Meeting Place division of St. Christopher House. This student-run clinic includes students from chiropractic, dentistry, dental hygiene, medicine, nursing, nutrition, pharmacy, physical education and health, public health sciences, rehabilitation sciences and social work. IMAGINE gives students the opportunity to experience service-learning in an interprofessional environment while giving back to the community.

KIDS2HEAR

This new medical student-run initiative, in conjunction with The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), provides free hearing screening for grade 1 children living in various local neighbourhoods. Kids2Hear connects medical students with their communities to identify children with hearing problems facilitating referral to audiologists and otolaryngologists. It provides an opportunity for medical students to become active members of their community, and advocates of auditory/ear health and education.

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS (KYN)

High blood pressure is a health issue that is predominant throughout society but often goes undetected. KYN is a student-run screening program that targets different communities and populations around Toronto that are more susceptible to hypertension. The aim of this program is for early identification of individuals in need and provide them with proper education, support and referrals.

SMILING OVER SICKNESS

With chapters in universities across Canada, this program aims to bring smiles to the faces of children suffering from illness. At the University of Toronto chapter, volunteers visit and spend time with oncology patients at The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids). Other activities include Shave for a Cure to raise donations for the Childhood Cancer Foundation.

ST. CHRISTOPHER HOUSE OUTREACH

St. Christopher House is a Toronto-based neighbourhood centre that predominantly serves the downtown west-end community. Students collaborate with this centre to provide services such as tutoring/mentoring and educational sessions.

EXISTING PROGRAMS

ADVENTURES IN SCIENCE (AIS)

AIS strives to improve science literacy through innovative educational programs, research, and advocacy. Student volunteers facilitate science activities for young children at the Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre and at various Community Centres across Toronto. In addition to creating an excellent platform for development of positive skills, critical-thinking, and problem-solving, AIS also provides students with positive role-models in scientific and health care fields.

BLOOD DRIVE

In conjunction with Canadian Blood Services, we organize two blood drives at the University of Toronto. These drives are part of the Canadian Federation of Medical Students (CFMS) challenge, in which medical schools from all over Canada compete to collect the highest number of donations. Over 70 medical students volunteer at each drive to collect blood from approximately 90 donations.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We collaborate with community agencies and contribute to programs including the Daily Bread Food Bank and Christmas Toy Drive for the Children's Aid Society. Additionally, there are several programs at Soup Kitchens, local Shelter Homes, Street Help vans, and Refugee Reception Centres. Programs such as Out of Cold and Street Help continue to benefit people during challenging weather conditions.

GROWING UP HEALTHY

This initiative promotes healthy food habits and active lifestyles for children and youth through various Community Affairs programs. Growing Up Healthy also hosts a conference for children from Grades 3 to 6. This day-long event includes keynote speakers and small group interactive workshops, in which medical students reinforce themes of healthy eating, physical activity, and creative skills.

HEALING TONICS

This program brings the therapeutic gift of music to community members who are facing hardship. Healing Tonics has contributed to a variety of locations including Women's and United Way Shelter homes. The strong participation of over 30 students includes vocalists and musicians who are formally trained or who simply enjoy music!

