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ANNUAL REPORT

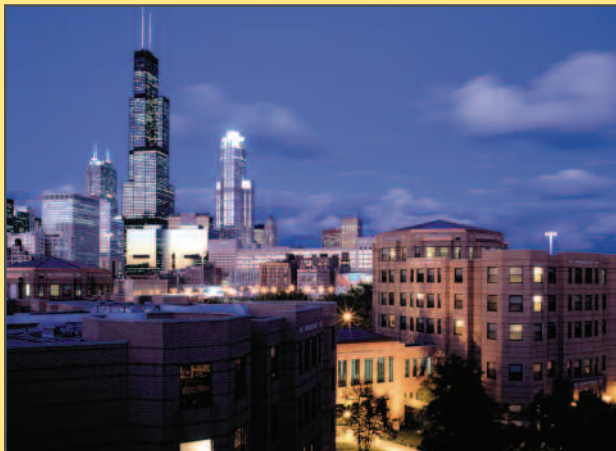
UIC Hispanic Center of
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT CHICAGO Excellence
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE





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DEAN'S MESSAGE

In 2004, I became Dean of the College of Medicine at the University of Illinois at Chicago. During these past six years, I am proud to have witnessed and become a part of an institution that has not only excelled, but has set the standard for

these changes to begin at the medical school level. I am proud to acknowledge not only the widespread diversity within our medical school, but also to acknowledge much of the hard work that the Hispanic Center of Excellence has put

THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO COLLEGE OF MEDICINE SETS THE STANDARD FOR DIVERSITY

other universities in maintaining a diverse medical student population. The significance of this achievement unfortunately has not received the full recognition that it deserves. As we all well know, the field of medicine is a practice that extends itself to all people regardless of their ethnic, social or religious background. The need for diverse and culturally competent physicians is greater than ever and it is naturally crucial for

forth in an effort to provide and guide Latino students in their quest to become physicians.

I wish to congratulate Dr. Jorge Girotti and the staff of the Hispanic Center of Excellence as the Center approaches its twentieth anniversary of serving the university and all the students it has guided throughout those years.

JOSEPH A. FLAHERTY, MD



Dean
College of Medicine

DEPARTMENT HEAD'S MESSAGE

ILENE HARRIS



Department Head
Medical Education

The Department of Medical Education (DME) takes great pride in having the HCOE as a unit in our department. The HCOE provides exemplary programs to recruit and nurture a competitive pool of Latino students and to recruit and develop Latino faculty, with the ultimate goals of helping to eliminate health care disparities, overcoming the shortage of Latino physicians in the workforce, providing culturally competent physicians, increasing the number of Latino faculty members and improving the academic achievement of Latino students.

The HCOE has been very successful in achieving its student recruitment and retention goals. In 2010, the UIC College of Medicine (COM) had the largest Latino incoming class in the country, with 45 of 320 medical students enrolled, outnumbering Texas, California, New York and Florida; and of 318 graduates, 49 Latinos received MD degrees, 13% of all degrees granted. One hundred and ninety-five (195) Latino medical students were enrolled at the UIC COM for the 2009-2010 academic year, comprising 13% of the total student body. "Hispanic Business Magazine" (September 2010 issue) ranked the UIC College of Medicine one of the top 10 medical schools for Hispanics.

Among the most important goals of the HCOE is recruitment of a strong applicant pool. This is accomplished through programs to develop the pipeline of applicants, beginning in high school and extending to college students. The Medicina Academy and the Latino Health Sciences Enrichment Program (LA HSEP) are both

programs aimed at high school students and their parents, with 45 participants each in 2010. Medicina Scholars introduces college-level students (81 participants in 2010) to a medical career through a three-year curriculum, including a Leadership Development Conference. The Summer Undergraduate Student Research Fellowship provides a stimulus for careers in medicine for Latino college students interested in research, with 10 fellows enrolled in 2010. The HCOE also nurtures and supports Latino students once they have been admitted to medical school. The Summer Medical Student Research Fellowship Program enrolled 11 fellows in 2010. The HCOE also sponsors a support program for assisting students with preparation for the USMLE exam. These are just a few of the HCOE programs and activities supporting Latino students and faculty members.

This annual report provides compelling testimony to the work of the HCOE, in descriptions of programs and accomplishments, in the statistics documenting success, and perhaps most poignantly in the comments and stories of Latino students and alumni who have been touched by its programs. The HCOE and DME are undertaking collaborative work to conduct research rigorous program evaluations and thereby disseminate HCOE's impressive results and programs. These efforts will take the work of the HCOE to the next level, of enhancing their national reputation for leadership in recruiting, nurturing and producing Latino physicians and health care leaders to serve the health care needs of the Latino community and the nation.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By all accounts 2010 was a very successful year for the Hispanic Center of Excellence. On the programming side, we began to create and establish initiatives to deal with all levels of the educational pipeline leading to professional/graduate programs in medicine or other health professions. One of the programs that we piloted in 2009—*Medicina Academy*—became better grounded thanks to successful partnerships with Chicago public, charter and private high schools. Another program that began very modestly in 2009, the *Latino Health Science Enrichment Program (LaHSEP)*, was expanded in 2010 to cover more academic and personal development content and that extended to a larger number of Latino high school students from throughout the city. Furthermore, there is no doubt that LaHSEP became such a success because of the partnership we developed with colleagues in the Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services (LARES) program at UIC. These collaborations are critical in our efforts to expand the pool of competitive applicants.

This report also highlights a new program: the *Summer Undergraduate Health Disparities Research Program*, which exposes college students to research focused on disparities that are prevalent in the Latino community. We believe that in order to reduce or even eliminate the disparities that plague Latinos locally and across the country, we will need physicians and other health practitioners equipped to study and serve in all aspects of health care: practice, research, advocacy and outreach.

On the educational side, 2010 also proved to be an excellent year. In the spring, 49 Latinos received their MD degree; in the fall 45 Latinos began their medical studies at UIC. According to data from the Association of American Medical Colleges, in 2010 UIC had 212 enrolled Latino medical students, the highest number in the continental US; more than schools in California, Florida, New York, and Texas, states with much larger Latino populations. I encourage you to read the inspiring stories of the students behind the statistics; you will agree that our work must continue and grow.

JORGE A. GIROTTI



Director
Hispanic Center of Excellence
(HCOE)

OUR MISSION

We aim to improve the medical care of Latinos in Illinois by providing programs that strengthen the pipeline of medical school applicants; enrich the education of Latino medical students, with an emphasis on producing linguistically—and culturally—competent physicians; and build global partnerships with others that share the same vision.

GOALS

- Develop a competitive applicant pool of Latinos for medical school admissions, in conjunction with partners within and outside of UIC.
- Enhance the academic performance and overall experience of Latino medical students.
- Provide opportunities for undergraduate and medical school students to collaborate with faculty on researching Latino health issues.
- Design curricular initiatives to increase the linguistic and cultural competence of College of Medicine students.
- Promote faculty development activities to recruit, train and retain Latino faculty.
- Raise funds to support scholarships for Latino medical students.
- Develop international partnerships/affiliations with medical schools in Latin America, and
- Provide, in collaboration with College of Medicine departments, continuing medical education (CMEs) programs for Latino physicians in the Chicago area.

OBJECTIVES

- Increase the pool of competitive Illinois Latino applicants to the UIC College of Medicine by 20% from the current baseline.
- Increase the pool of competitive Illinois Latino applicants to college by 10% from the current baseline at each Medicina Academy partner school.
- Increase the number of Latino students pursuing research opportunities on Latino health-related issues by one each year.
- Increase the Latino student pass rate on the first attempt in the USMLE Step 1 to 90%, and increase the number who graduate on time to 92%.
- Increase the number of tenured Latino faculty at UIC, and raise the number of Latino faculty on the tenure track.
- Introduce and expose students to Latino medical health issues and needs and improve resources for education.



Students attending the 2009 White Coat Ceremony at the UIC Forum.

OUR PROGRAMS

Medicina Academy: Developed in 2009, Medicina Academy is a 4-year program, conducted in partnership with Chicago high schools, providing an educational pathway into medical school by investing in the preparation of Latino students that aspire to become physicians; it also assists with their preparation and transition into college. A total of 60 apprentices are selected each year to participate in professional development seminars held monthly at the university. Participants take part in undergraduate-level training to raise their awareness of the medical field and hands-on experiences that range from lab sessions to certification courses with the American Red Cross.

Latino Health Science Enrichment Program

(LaHSEP): This program began in 2009 and is offered in partnership with the Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services (LARES) program at UIC, to enrich the academic preparation of students attending Chicago public and charter high schools. Every summer 50 participants engage in a series of seminars to enhance their skills in science reasoning, mathematics, and writing in order to prepare for the ACT. Also, students take part in workshops geared towards college readiness and career exploration in the health sciences.

The HCOE Network: High school and college students from all over Illinois participate in the Network each year to learn more about medicine and other health professions. Network members are invited to grand round-type programs where they meet other interested students and hear lectures from local physicians and Latino faculty

members. Students are also informed of scholarship, traineeship, and volunteer opportunities. This year the Network has over 1,500 registered participants.

Medicina Scholars: Established in 2005, this 3-year program guides and supports Latino undergraduate students interested in the medical profession, with the ultimate goal of preparing students to become competitive applicants for medical school admissions. It admits a cohort of 30 students every fall and each group partakes in a series of professional development/medical seminars designed to expand their knowledge of the health field. The curriculum specifically provides a strong foundation in the history of medicine, professionalism issues, public health policy, cultural competence, primary and specialized care, and issues and guidelines for medical school admissions processes. Additionally, Scholars are required to take part in academic advising and community service activities.

2010	Male	Female	Total	% Hispanic
Applicants	34	81	115	100
Acceptances	31	66	97	100
Enrolled	30	65	95	100

Summer Undergraduate Health Disparities

Research: A 10-week summer research experience for junior and senior college students that was established in 2010 and introduces them to the field of health disparities research. Selected candidates are matched with appropriate UIC researchers engaged in research related to Latino or other minority health disparities such as diabetes, cancer,



Medicina Academy students participate in a Red Cross training session.



The 2010 Medicina Scholars cohort prepare for a team building activity. Left to right (Camilo Iribarren, Alejandro Bravo, Andres Davila, Luis Manon, Mauricio Mendez, and Christian Gomez).

OUR PROGRAMS *(continued)*



HCOE staff member Kendy Olaguez addresses the Academia de Padres during a Medicina Academy T-shirt exhibit.

asthma, obesity, and kidney disease. Participants learn skills to test a hypothesis, interpret preliminary data and findings, and appraise the outcomes of research. Above all, this program aims to ultimately improve the quality of health care by providing participants with practical knowledge of research applications and its importance in the medical field and the treatment of patients.

Summer Medical Student Research: This 10-week program introduces second-year medical students to the field of biomedical and clinical research. Participants work with UIC faculty who conduct research focused on Latino or other minorities. Also, throughout the summer they take part in weekly seminars presented by distinguished faculty on a variety of research topics, and they have their own work reviewed by well-established investigators. Participants receive support after the program to present their research at various local or national conferences.

	Male	Female	Total	% Hispanic
Applicants	8	16	24	83
Acceptances	6	5	11	90
Enrolled	6	5	11	90

Preparation for the US Medical Licensing

Examination Step I: All second-year Latino medical students are invited to take Web-based practice exams in preparation for a national licensing examination taken at the end of the academic year. This year 30 students are participating as they prepare for the test in June.

Faculty Development: This is a two-year individualized program that provides junior Latino faculty with support and skill development to ensure their success in academia. In conjunction with the Department of Medical Education, fellows participate in a year-long academic development workshop series and, in Year Two, are guided by mentors in their research and writing skills.

Continuing Medical Education (CME) Program: In October the Center co-sponsored the “Bridging the Gap” CME program with the Department of Surgery. All local Latino physicians are invited to participate and learn more about prevalent medical issues in the community and hear presentations on research being conducted at UIC to address those challenges.

Affiliations/Partnerships with Latin American Medical Schools: This past year we solidified affiliations with the medical college at the Universidad Cuauhtémoc in Aguascalientes, Mexico, as well as a consortium of four medical schools in Peru.

YEAR IN REVIEW

This upcoming year, 2011 will mark the **twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Hispanic Center of Excellence**. In anticipation of this momentous event, the HCOE hosted this past fall its second Latino medical alumni reunion. The reunion was well attended by alumni, who traveled from various states ranging from New York, California, Florida, and Texas among many others. The successful event has served as a prelude to the much anticipated and larger alumni reunion set to mark the twentieth anniversary of HCOE. It is the hope of HCOE that these reunions can help establish a stronger outreach and thus solidify a relationship with UIC's medical alumni.

The Hispanic Center of Excellence this past year also launched its **Medicina Academy** program in order to reach out and provide direction to the high school level Latino students who aspire to be physicians. Medicina Academy was also established in order to define further HCOE's recruitment pipeline, which had already included undergraduate and medical students. Medicina Academy is currently has partnerships with the following institutions: Gordon Tech High School, Mirta Ramirez Charter School, Roosevelt High School, and Benito Juarez Community Academy.

The Medicina Academy also included a parental component, **Academia de Padres** (Parents' Academy). The parental component consisted of seminars to help parents participate in their children's education and future. This is a critical element of the program as many of the student's who participate in Medicina Academy will be the first in

their family to pursue higher education, let alone graduate from high school. Parents naturally have a difficult time understanding the academic pressures that their children face as well as career paths they can explore. The Academia de Padres helps inform parents of options and strategies in how to efficiently support their children's educational journey.

The HCOE further extended its high school initiatives by forming a partnership with the Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services (LARES) Program of UIC in order to offer its **Latino Health Science Enrichment Program** (LaHSEP). Through LaHSEP, high school students were offered a series of seminars to enhance their skills in science reasoning, mathematics, and writing in order to prepare for the ACT.

The center's summer activities were not limited solely to high school students. This past year marked the first time that undergraduate college students were offered a chance to partake in **Summer Research**, which traditionally was offered only to medical students. The 10-week Summer Research program matches students with preceptors engaged in research related to Hispanic or other minority health disparities such as diabetes, cancer, respiratory illness, obesity, and kidney disease.

This year, the HCOE undertook grant-funded evaluation of its programs to further improve and evaluate their effectiveness in fitting the needs of the students it serves.



Dr. Girotti and Sully Paz-Cardona at the White Coat Ceremony.



Medical students Sara Prieto and Bianca Castellanos attending the National Hispanic Medical Association Conference in Washington D.C.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Ninety five (95) Latino college students are currently participating in the *Medicina Scholars* program (60% of them are enrolled at UIC).
- Three cohorts of *Medicina Scholars* (90) have completed the program; 8 of them are in medical school and an additional 14 have recently applied.
- There are 45 participants in the *Medicina Academy* program, representing six high schools: B. Juarez, Roosevelt, M. Ramirez, Gordon Tech, Schurz and Pritzker College Prep.
- In July, 45 high school students took part in the four-week *Latino Health Sciences Enrichment Program* at UIC. Ten (10) Chicago public schools were represented in this group.
- The HCOE Network has had a total of 2035 members since 1995. At least 110 students attend each Grand Rounds presentation.
- Ten (10) undergraduate students (8 of them from UIC and UIUC) participated in the *Summer Undergraduate Health Disparities Research Fellowship*, conducting exciting projects with faculty in medicine, nursing and public health.
- Eleven (11) medical students completed the *Summer Medical Student Research Fellowship*; 4 of them were invited to continue work with their mentors during the academic year; 2 others presented at the fall COM research forum; 1 earned a gold medal and the other an honorable mention; finally 1 student presented his work at the Mid-American Orthopedics Conference. Since its inception in 1998, 183 medical students have participated in the program.
- Thirty (30) second-year medical students took advantage of the USMLE Step I support program; 90% of them passed the exam on the first attempt, the other 10% passed on their second try.
- The Center sponsored four Latino junior faculty members for a three-day development conference at Stanford University, and three individuals for the annual faculty development conference sponsored by the Association of American Medical Colleges.
- One junior faculty member in psychiatry took part in the Faculty Development Fellowship; the individual produced two scientific papers out of this experience.
- The affiliation with a consortium of medical schools in Peru led to seven Latino medical students spending six weeks over the summer doing research and clinical externships in Peru.
- In fall 2010, the work of HCOE led to the enrollment of 45 Latinos in the first-year medical school class, or 14% of the total. This makes UIC #1 in the nation for matriculation of Latino medical students.
- In spring 2010 the COM graduated 45 Latino MDs comprising about 15% of all graduates.
- Of the seven medical schools in Illinois, UIC graduates 60% of all Latino MDs

MEDICINA ACADEMY

Perseverance and passion are the tools of success that drive Jose Rojas. He is a sophomore at Benito Juarez Community Academy and is one of the most dedicated Medicina Apprentices participating in our Medicina Academy, Latino Health Science Enrichment Program, and

It is this passion and inquisitive mind that allow him to fully engage in numerous activities at the HCOE, his community, and high school and to ask key questions not only for the purpose of knowledge but to better society. His activism extends to fighting for immigrant rights and advocating for

“WHAT I LIKE ABOUT MEDICINA ACADEMY IS THAT WE’RE LIKE A FAMILY WHERE EVERYBODY KNOWS WHO YOU ARE AND YOU FEEL LIKE YOU BELONG AND THAT SOMEBODY CARES ABOUT YOU. THIS PROGRAM IS HELPING ME PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE. I GET TO LEARN ABOUT DIFFERENT SPECIALTIES IN MEDICINE AND ISSUES LIKE DIABETES, ASTHMA, HEART DISEASE, AND MORE!”

student professional development opportunities. Jose is interested in emergency medicine and would like to contribute to the healing of patients with acute illnesses and injuries. He is always seeking opportunities for growth and development in order to maximize his potential of giving back to others and helping those who are less fortunate.

opening the doors to education. Academically, he is an outstanding student with a grade point average above a 3.0 and has participated in numerous competitions which include the Chicago History Fair.

JOSE ROJAS



Cohort 1

SILVIA VALADEZ



Cohort 1

MEDICINA ACADEMY

A highly motivated individual, Silvia Valadez is one of the top academic achievers in our Medicina Academy program. She currently ranks 3 in her sophomore class at Benito Juarez Community Academy and carries a full course load of Honors classes—an exceptional academic focus that has contributed to her 3.95/4.0 grade point average and multiple academic recognitions.

community—a social consciousness that she is presently implementing.

Ms. Valadez is a peer leader at her high school where she mentors first year students throughout their freshman year by assisting them with their transition and acclimation to the high school environment. She also participates in the

“MEDICINA ACADEMY IS A GREAT PROGRAM THAT IS PREPARING ME FOR THE FUTURE...I HAVE A SENSE OF WHAT COLLEGE IS GOING TO BE AND WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME.”

As a Medicina Apprentice, she is highly engaged in lectures and makes inquiries to further her understanding of the medical field. As early as high school she developed an interest in the study of virology and would like to conduct research in this area in the future. Her ultimate goal is to become a cardiac surgeon and to get involved with Doctors without Borders so that she can contribute back to the

STARS Project as a mentor/tutor to 8th grade students and continuously looks for other service opportunities in her community. Ms. Valadez feels that her work ethic and life goals can best be summed up by her motto, *“Ask not what you can do for yourself; ask what you can do for your community.”*

MEDICINA SCHOLARS

Lupe Chavez was born to Mexican immigrants in the Gage Park neighborhood of Chicago. As a child, Lupe was always interested in the medical field, but it was the film *The Motorcycle Diaries* that inspired her to seriously consider medicine as a career choice. The film documented the journey of a medical student through Latin America, becoming a changed man after witnessing the ailments that poor farmers faced without access to healthcare. It is for this reason that Lupe volunteers at the Community Health Clinic, a free clinic that services Chicago's uninsured population.

As a student at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Lupe became affiliated with the Hispanic Center of Excellence, joining the Medicina Scholars program her freshman year at UIC. Since then, she has graduated from the program and will be applying to medical school in the year to come. Medicina Scholars helped to establish her interest in

healthcare for the underserved and introduced her to a number of medical fields. The program and the affiliated HCOE staff have motivated her to continue on with the premedical curriculum. Medicina Scholars has also introduced Lupe to a number of other opportunities at UIC. She is currently the president of the Health Oriented Latino Association (HOLA), an undergraduate pre-health student organization. In addition, Lupe tutors biology and chemistry for the Confederation of Latin American Students (CLAS), and is also a member of the DREAM committee at UIC, working to establish a scholarship for students who are ineligible for federal financial aid.

Lupe recently participated in the 2010 HCOE Summer Pre-Med Health Disparities Research Program, in which she explored pipeline programs for underrepresented minority students, focusing on problems to be addressed for future improvement of these programs.

LUPE CHAVEZ



2007 Cohort

MEDICINA SCHOLARS

ALEX MERLO



2008 Cohort

Alex, who was born in Chicago and was raised in Aurora, IL, was initially inspired to pursue medicine during a mission trip to Honduras while translating in a clinic an hour outside of San Pedro Sula. He was absolutely fascinated by the work of the physicians, who not only cared for their patients, but also since Alex was raised in a Latino neighborhood, he was already clearly aware of the need for

emergency room of Valparaiso's Porter County Hospital, has helped found a health oriented mentoring program in the university, and has worked for the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. Finally he has volunteered time tutoring Latino elementary school children in Valparaiso. He commented, "It would be impossible to convey here how critical the Medicina Scholars Program

“IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO CONVEY HERE HOW CRITICAL THE MEDICINA SCHOLARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN TO MY KEEPING ON THE MEDICAL TRACK.”

physicians that understand Latino culture. Since then some of his extracurricular activities have included mentoring Chicago high school students during a summer for LARES at UIC, and traveling to Honduras as part of the medical mission this past summer. He has in addition been a treasurer for two years for a Latino organization (LIVE) at Valparaiso University and has been elected to be its president this past year. He has since established new mentoring and outreach programs for Latinos within and outside the school. Alex has also volunteered in the

has been to my keeping on the medical track. Listening to open talks from real physicians and learning the obstacles that must be overcome and can be overcome, has helped me immensely in determining how I should pursue my goals. There is no doubt that much of what I learned I now consider indispensable knowledge, but the best advantage of the program is that it gave me the feeling of support that has allowed me to succeed through college with the clear goal of becoming a physician.”

MEDICINA SCHOLARS

Janely Villa grew up on the east side of Aurora, Illinois. She comes from a family that originated from Mexico. She is the youngest and the first of her family to attend college. She is currently a junior at the University of Chicago and is pursuing a major in psychology. After graduation, she hopes to do research geared toward health as well as pursuing a Master's Degree in Psychology.

Janely, who plans to pursue a career in the medical field, feels that the Medicina Scholars program has played a major role in strengthening her decision. She states, "I think Medicina Scholars has definitely helped me. I think this program has managed to keep me motivated and aware that studying and practicing medicine is something

"I THINK MEDICINA SCHOLARS HAS DEFINITELY HELPED ME. I THINK THIS PROGRAM HAS MANAGED TO KEEP ME MOTIVATED AND AWARE THAT STUDYING AND PRACTICING MEDICINE IS SOMETHING THAT YOU REALLY HAVE TO BE INVESTED IN, BUT ALSO THAT IT HAS ITS REWARDS."

Janely has volunteered and performed research at the Comer Children's Hospital. She has also volunteered as a tutor for teens that attend Chicago public schools. When she is not in the classroom, she likes to play club badminton at the Ratner Athletic Center on the University of Chicago campus. In the summer of 2009 and 2010, she was a mentor for students who attend Chicago public high schools that are located in violent and poverty-stricken areas of Chicago.

that you really have to be invested in, but also that it has its rewards. I think it has done this by allowing me to hear the experiences of the doctors that come to talk to us when we meet. Also I think it's also allowed me to be aware of what types of things I need to do in order to be a good applicant for medical school."

JANELY VILLA



2008 Cohort

UNDERGRADUATE SUMMER **RESEARCH PROGRAM**

LAURA AVELAR



Class of 2010

Laura Avelar was born in Guadalajara, Mexico and at the age of 13 moved to Chicago. She was the first of her family to attend college. In 2010 she graduated with a Bachelors of Science in Kinesiology with a concentration in Movement Sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her educational goals include applying to medical school for the 2012 academic year, and upon finishing medical school she would like to complete a residency program in Obstetrics and Gynecology in order to close the gap in health disparities affecting the Latino community. In addition, she would like to mentor and motivate other Latinos students as they pursue higher education.

Laura's research experience naturally positioned her to apply to the HCOE Undergraduate Summer Research Program which in turn helped her continue her work with Dr. Elena Gutierrez. As part of the summer research program, Laura was responsible for recruiting female subjects in the participating clinics, collecting and entering the data in the database for data analysis and completing a literature review.

Laura summarizes her experiences by stating that "the HCOE undergraduate summer program was a great learning experience. Above all, this program allowed me to

“HCOE UNDERGRADUATE SUMMER PROGRAM WAS A GREAT LEARNING EXPERIENCE. ABOVE ALL, THIS PROGRAM ALLOWED ME TO BECOME AWARE OF THE HEALTH DISPARITIES THAT THE LATINO COMMUNITY FACES IN THE CHICAGO AREA.”

A year prior to graduation Laura held a research assistant position in a bi-national study between the University of Zacatecas, Mexico and UIC. The study was conducted in collaboration with Dr. Elena Gutierrez from UIC's Gender and Women Studies Department and Dr. Maura Castañeda from the University of Zacatecas. The study focused on the reproductive health of Mexican Migrant women and the barriers to obtain reproductive health services in the Chicago land area.

become aware of the health disparities that the Latino community faces in the Chicago area. I was exposed to every element of the study; for example conducting interviews, data entry, literature review, and more. Therefore, the summer program not only helped me to understand every aspect involved in the development of a research study, but it also sparked my interest to be active in trying to improve the healthcare services and availability to the Latino community."

HCOE SUMMER MEDICAL RESEARCH PROGRAM

Yury Parra's passion for working with underserved communities locally and abroad originates from witnessing firsthand the needs of these communities. From her experiences as a child raised in Colombia, she realized that vulnerable populations are significantly affected by

formulate a good question; despite the fact that it can appear to be simple step, it is one that requires significant thought. For Yury a major challenge was finding what resources were needed and determining the data that was going to be collected. She felt that at points it was a very

“REACHING THE POINT AT WHICH I WAS ABLE TO COMMUNICATE THE FINDINGS IN A CONCISE AND ORGANIZED WAY, AND THEN RECEIVING A HONORABLE MENTION FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE RESEARCH FORUM GAVE A ME SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT.”

preventable diseases. It was therefore no surprise that she partook in the HCOE Summer Research Program this past year and focused on the most practical and effective cervical cancer screening methods for low and middle-income countries. Through her research, Yury felt it provided the opportunity to learn and strengthen the skills that are crucial to conduct effective research. The research focused on identifying the most effective cervical cancer screening interventions for low-resource settings. One of the most important lessons that she learned was how to

long process, going from not having data, to having an enormous amount, and then determining how to organize the information. Yury summed up her summer research experience by commenting, “Reaching the point at which I was able to communicate the findings in a concise and organized way, and then receiving an honorable mention for participating in the College of Medicine Research forum gave a me sense of accomplishment.”

YURY PARRA



Class of 2013

HCOE SUMMER MEDICAL RESEARCH PROGRAM

RICARDO RIOS



Class of 2012

As a nontraditional medical student, Ricardo Rios has taken an unconventional route to medicine. He is a Chicago native who worked in the biotech industry in California for six years and spent an additional year earning a Master's degree researching molecular and genetic markers implicated in prostate cancer. Having a strong desire to help others and work with patients, Ricardo began his transition from the laboratory to the clinic as he entered the UIC College of Medicine in 2008.

After his first year of medical school, Ricardo was one of several Latino students awarded the HCOE summer medical student research fellowship. He spent the summer investigating the clinical treatment of prostate cancer with Dr. Robert Nadler, a specialist in robotic assisted laparoscopic prostatectomy (RALP). Learning to apply his basic science knowledge of prostate cancer to the clinical

aspect of treating the disease was a very rewarding experience for Ricardo. He is currently researching the correlation between incontinence and/or erectile dysfunction following RALP procedures that are complicated by a vesicoureteral leakage. Previous projects involved a study demonstrating abnormal Weck clip migration from the prostate vascular pedicles through the small bowel into the GI mucosa, which resulted in a publication in December 2009.

Ricardo hopes to specialize in urology and through the opportunities made possible by the HCOE, he was able to make connections with established researchers and clinicians in urology this past year. His experiences will serve him well in the future as he continues to bridge the laboratory and clinic together.

HCOE SCHOLARSHIP

Jered grew up in Cicero, a predominantly Hispanic Chicago suburb, where scholastic achievement runs far below students' scholastic potential. According to Jered, he was lucky enough to gain both the grounding experience of growing up in Cicero and then continuing on to one of the country's top residential high schools, the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA). That transition convinced him that, intellectually, students expand to fill

their environment. Through Jered's experiences at IMSA, he gained a strong interest in science, technology, engineering, and math. Jered eventually went on to earn a BS in biomedical engineering which led to an interest in medicine since it intertwined his interests with real world applications. Now, as an M1, Jered hopes to leverage his engineering background with his cultural background and eventually make a contribution in the medical field.

Since childhood, Amanda has always entertained the notion of being a doctor. The idea of having a career that is genuinely helpful to the population, especially in the area of health, has always appealed to her. Although chemistry was difficult, she found it quite interesting. It was during a summer that she volunteered at a hospital for the first time that she became much more familiar with what the healthcare professions are actually like.

When Amanda took a class, Spanish for Healthcare Professions, she learned about the economic, cultural, and educational barriers that Latinos in Chicago face in addition to not receiving proper healthcare. Amanda eventually participated in an organization in Chicago called

Project Vida that solicits the help of doctors to give presentations on the importance of things such as immunizations and prenatal care. Amanda was especially attracted to its commitment to providing healthcare education to Latinos and at the same time, its mission to break down the cultural barriers that exist for minorities in receiving healthcare. Amanda hopes to return to Project Vida and other such organizations as a doctor who can provide valuable health education to people in need of it and who can treat all patients in a culturally sensitive manner. Not surprisingly, Amanda loves contact with patients and therefore especially enjoys volunteering at children's hospitals.

JERED LINARES



Class of 2014

AMANDA MUÑOZ



Class of 2014

DEAN'S SCHOLARSHIP

LUIS RIVERA



Class of 2014

Luis Rivera was born and raised in the South Chicago neighborhood. Luis's parents are Mexican immigrants and he was the first in his family to attend college. Luis, who is married with two beautiful children, spent 10 years working as an electrician before deciding to return to college to pursue his dream of becoming a physician. Luis has credited the Hispanic Center of Excellence through the Medicina Scholars program, with bringing him closer to fulfilling that dream. Luis feels that the courses that are part of the program, which range from Public Health to Cultural Competency, have provided him with the foundation necessary to succeed as a future medical student and physician. The program has also opened up numerous opportunities for Luis. These have included

shadowing Latino physicians, as well as opportunities to participate in research.

In 2010, Luis was accepted into medical school at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Prior to being accepted into medical school, Luis had already been involved in a number of activities during his time at the University. Luis was a research assistant in the Department of Medical Education and in the Department of Latin American and Latino Studies. Starting in the fall semester of 2008, Luis participated as a mentor in the LARES Leaders Mentorship Program. Throughout the program Luis mentored three UIC Latino freshmen, by helping them make a successful transition to the rigorous academic environment of UIC.

CORONA[®] SCHOLARSHIP

Christina Foreman graduated from the Hispanic Center of Excellence's Medicina Scholars Program in 2009 and matriculated into the University of Illinois College of Medicine in 2010. As a freshman, Christina had already been involved in research in the Neurosurgery Department in addition to participating in the Summer Chicago Academic Medicine Program at the University of Chicago.

MEDICINA Scholars Program. It has given me knowledge of the various medical specialties and exposed me to the issues facing physicians in the healthcare system. The need for bilingual physicians is critical, especially as the Spanish speaking population continues to grow. I believe that it is in addressing this need that I can best serve as a physician. This knowledge has motivated me to begin coursework for

“I AM EXTREMELY FORTUNATE TO HAVE BEEN SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE UIC MEDICINA SCHOLARS PROGRAM. IT HAS GIVEN ME KNOWLEDGE OF THE VARIOUS MEDICAL SPECIALTIES AND EXPOSED ME TO THE ISSUES FACING PHYSICIANS IN THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM.”

Christina's research experience in Neurosurgery provided her the opportunity to both witness and take part in the everyday tasks of a physician. It is through these experiences that Christina has seen the invaluable role of Physician Educators. Christina states, “I am extremely fortunate to have been selected to participate in the UIC

a Masters in Public Health. This degree, in conjunction with a medical degree, will enable me to evaluate individual patient care in the context of a larger population. This will both allow me to serve patients to a greater capacity and open a new avenue for possible research or administrative roles.”

CHRISTINA FOREMAN



Class of 2014

ALUMNI

DR. EVELYN FIGUEROA



Class of 1999

Born and raised on the north side of Chicago, Evelyn Figueroa was interested in science since early childhood. After finishing high school at Von Steuben Metropolitan Science Center, she attended Northeastern Illinois University as a pre-medicine biology major and graduated with honors in 1995. Evelyn Figueroa matriculated into UIC COM in 1995, worked as a research and teaching assistant, served on many medical student council committees, was LaRama president, was active in NNLAMS, and participated in many community health projects. Dr. Figueroa received her MD in May 1999, matched into Family Medicine and completed her residency at Lutheran General Hospital (LGH). At LGH, she served as resident house staff president, in addition to being a health volunteer, and was named "Resident Teacher of the Year." After residency, Dr. Figueroa worked in an OB/Gyn department at a county hospital in Oakland, California, where she obtained additional obstetrics and women's health training and

served as co-director for the UCSF medical student clerkship. In 2005, Dr. Figueroa returned to Chicago and to UIC as an Assistant Professor of Clinical Family Medicine. Her full practice is composed mainly of women and children, although she practices all aspects of Family Medicine. Dr. Figueroa, who directs several curricula within the residency, was recently promoted to Associate Program Director. She teaches family medicine women's health, obstetrics, and ultrasound to students, residents, and her fellow faculty. She also volunteers as both a speaker and mentor for the Hispanic Center of Excellence and in a clinical capacity at the Student Run Free Clinic. Dr. Figueroa has received several teaching and volunteer awards from the College of Medicine, Hispanic Center of Excellence, and Family Medicine Residency since her appointment in 2005. She currently resides in Logan Square with her partner, two sons, and scrappy dog.

ALUMNI

Dr. Carolyn Lopez is the President of the Chicago Board of Health. She feels she has been fortunate to participate in the Hispanic Center of Excellence for the past four years. She has attended activities of the Medicina Scholars program, joined in receptions for students as well as the executive

Director for a community health center, allows her to serve the Latino community directly. Dr. Lopez feels that as President of the Chicago Board of Health, she can advocate not only for the Latino community, but other underserved communities in Chicago as well. Dr. Lopez states, “All of this

“WE MUST FOSTER AND ENCOURAGE HEALTH CARE CAREERS FOR YOUNG LATINOS. THIS IS OUR FUTURE AND IN MY OPINION THIS IS WHAT THE HCOE IS ALL ABOUT.”

director of the National Hispanic Medical Association. Through these activities she has tried to share what she has learned over the years in the varied positions she has been privileged to hold. Dr. Lopez’s current position, as Medical

pulls me toward the importance of what I learned many years ago—that we must foster and encourage health care careers for young Latinos. This is our future and in my opinion this is what the HCOE is all about.”

Dr. Andrés Smith graduated from the University of Illinois College of Medicine in 1993 and did his residency at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science. He is the current Medical Director of Emergency Medicine at Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center in San Diego, California and Vice President of the Mexican Red Cross Board of Directors. He has helped expand Sharp Chula Vista’s Emergency Department, and has been heavily involved

with Sharp Healthcare’s International Patient Services Program. Dr. Smith has also been honored by the Emergency Medicine Care Committee.

In 2008, Dr. Andres Smith was awarded by the Hispanic Center of Excellence for his continual strong commitment and leadership utilized in aiding the Latino community.

DR. CAROLYN LOPEZ



Class of 1978

DR. ANDRÉS SMITH



Class of 1993

ALUMNI

DR. CARLOS TEJERA



Class of 1986

Dr. Carlos Tejera graduated from the University of Illinois at Chicago Medical School in 1986. He completed his psychiatry residency at Hillside Hospital Long Island Jewish Medical Center (LIJMC) in New York and graduated in 1990. Dr. Tejera then began his private practice in psychiatry, specializing in psychopharmacology, in Manhasset Long

Nassau regional associate medical director of FEGS, a non-profit mental health agency in New York, where he has worked a third of his time since 1994. In addition, Dr. Tejera annually conducts medical school applicant interviews. Tejera has more recently become involved with the HCOE. He has participated in the Leadership Development

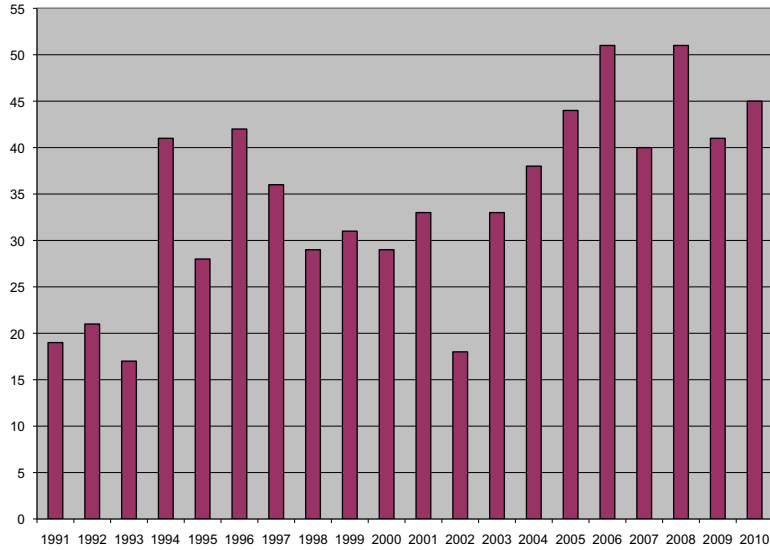
”MOVING FORWARD HAS BEEN A REWARDING EXPERIENCE TO BE PART OF THE UNIVERSITY AGAIN AND TO BE PART OF THE HCOE.”

Island. He was on the voluntary staff at LIJMC. He was also Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. In 1991, he became Board certified in psychiatry. In 2003, he became a fellow of the American psychiatric association and by 2010; he was elevated to the status of distinguished fellow of the American psychiatric association. Dr. Tejera currently is the

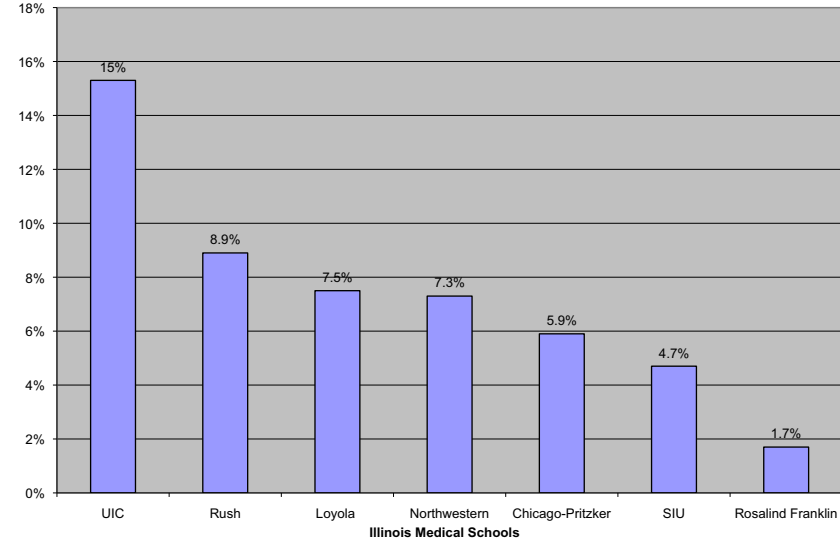
Conference in 2009; and has followed this by having attended the first HCOE reunion in 2009. Consequently, he was asked to be part of the planning committee for the upcoming HCOE 20th Anniversary reunion. Dr. Tejera states, "moving forward has been a rewarding experience to be part of the university again and to be part of the HCOE".

BY THE NUMBERS

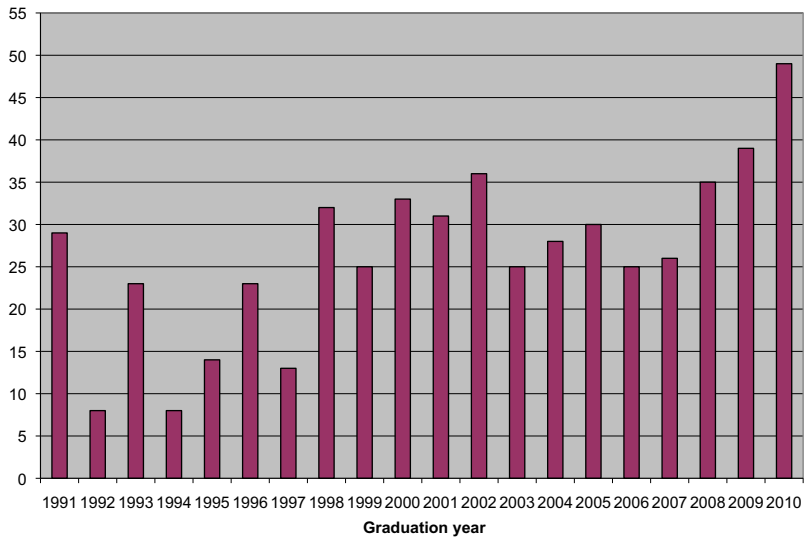
**Entering Latino Medical Students—UIC College of Medicine
1991-2010**



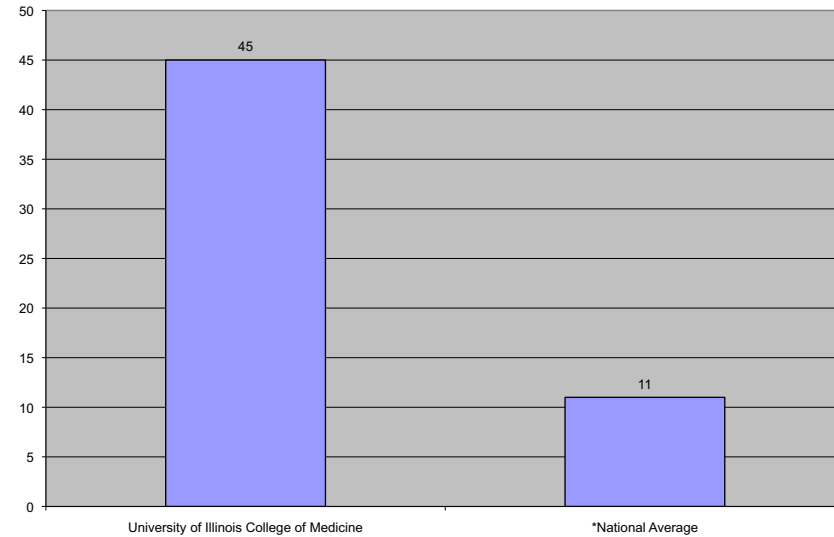
**Proportion of Latino students to total enrollment
Illinois Medical Schools, Academic Year 2009-10**



**Graduating Latino Medical Students—UIC College of Medicine
1991-2010**



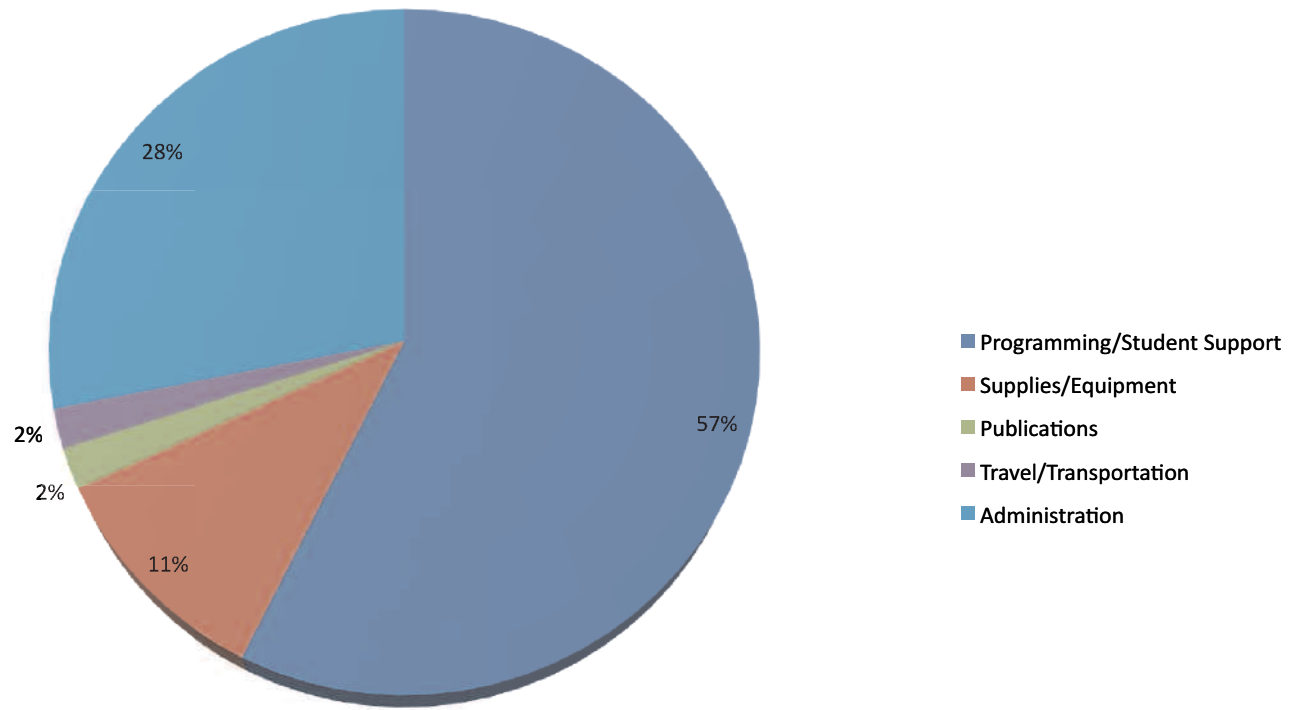
**2010 Average Latino Matriculants
*Out of 128 Accredited U.S. Medical Schools**



FINANCES

The Hispanic Center of Excellence is currently funded through the generous support of the Illinois Latino Caucus. Special thanks to the College of Medicine for their continued support and the Illinois Hispanic Physician Association (IHPA) for helping to promote HCOE's mission of raising Latino health care awareness and medical education.

2010 HCOE Expenses



SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Access Community Health Network
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
Aspira Mirta Ramirez Computer Science
High School
Benito Juarez Community Academy
El Meson Express
Gordon Tech High School
Health Oriented Latino Association
(HOLA)
Illinois Latino Council on
Higher Education (ILACHE)
La Raza Medical Student Association
(LaRAMA)
Latin American Recruitment and
Educational Services (LARES)
Mi Tierra Restaurant
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