

TOURO LINKS

DIVISION OF GRADUATE STUDIES • FALL 2018



ONE ALUM CONNECTS
THE PAST TO THE PRESENT
p. 22



TOURO COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Where Knowledge and Values Meet

Touro is a system of non-profit institutions of higher and professional education. Touro College was chartered in 1970 primarily to enrich the Jewish heritage, and to serve the larger American and global community. Approximately 19,200 students are currently enrolled in its various schools and divisions. Touro College has 30 branch campuses, locations and instructional sites in the New York area, as well as branch campuses and programs in Berlin, Jerusalem and Moscow. New York Medical College; Touro University California and its Nevada branch campus; Touro University Worldwide and its Touro College Los Angeles division; as well as Hebrew Theological College in Skokie, Illinois. are separately accredited institutions within the Touro College and University System. For further information on Touro College, visit www.touro.edu/news.



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Cause to Celebrate

I am proud to present this year's issue of TouroLinks. Just as you, the alumni, are moving forward in accomplishments and fulfillment, so too, is your alma mater, with some exciting, recent milestones. New York State Department of Education (NYSED) approved a charter amendment to enable Touro College to grant Ph.D. degrees, and our Graduate School of Jewish Studies' Ph.D. program in Jewish Studies was recently registered with NYSED. The Graduate School of Business is now offering an Advanced Certificate in Healthcare Management program, capitalizing on our preeminence in healthcare education across the U.S. The School of Health Sciences' Behavioral Science department started an Advanced Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis program this past year with great success, with the goal of producing trained practitioners to provide therapeutic intervention for children with autism.

In response to the increased demand for physician assistants as crucial members of the interdisciplinary healthcare team, the School of Health Sciences is starting a Physician Assistant program at our Middletown campus addressing the clinical workforce needs of the Lower Hudson Valley region.

Always seeking to find ways to work with and advance the professional goals of our working students, the Graduate School of Social Work (GSSW) and the Law Center have developed Flex programs – the GSSW with an MSW Flex program and the Law Center with a JD Flex program. These programs feature a hybrid course delivery model with on-campus requirements only one day a week.

The Touro College of Dental Medicine opened its doors in a state-of-the-art facility at our Valhalla campus two years ago, and is already making a name for itself as a center of excellence. We are very excited about the upgrade and consolidation of our main campus as we occupy our new home on 31st Street and 8th Avenue this fall. I would like to take the opportunity to say good-bye and thank you to the dean of the Graduate School of Education (GSE), Dr. Arnold Spinner, upon his retirement. Concurrently, it is my pleasure to welcome Dr. Jacob Easley II as he takes over the leadership of the GSE, the largest school in the Graduate Division.

I urge alumni to partner with us in our vision for excellence, and to contribute in any way you can to benefit the next generation of students in the Graduate and Professional Divisions. By all means, contact me with your ideas at nadja.graff@touro.edu.



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farewell to DEAN SPINNER

As interim dean of the Touro College Graduate School of Education (GSE), Dr. Arnold Spinner has best been known for his unwavering dedication to quality – a core value at the center of his five-decade academic career, first at NYU and more recently at Touro. Consistently, he has reinforced to GSE leaders, faculty, staff teams, and students the GSE's mission to prepare graduate degree and certificate candidates to be highly effective teachers, counselors, and school leaders in service to their P-12 students.

LEADERSHIP

With his eye on that prize, Dean Spinner has broadly strengthened GSE's partnerships with P-12 schools and districts and implemented major improvements in GSE's recruitment, advising, and alumni network systems. Internally, he has spearheaded a major restructuring of GSE's teacher preparation programs. Complementing both sets of initiatives, he has pushed for a more vigorous internal Quality Assurance System to position the GSE to comply with new standards of its accrediting agency – a critical legacy for the future success of the GSE and its graduates.

RESEARCH

Moreover, realizing how important research is to both instruction and to personal enrichment and career advancement, Dean Spinner has encouraged GSE faculty research and development, both individually and collectively, through the Lander Center for Educational Research. His advocacy in this regard is consistent not only with Touro College President Dr. Alan Kadish's vision, but it also aligns with key strategic plans implemented by the GSE's late dean, Dr. LaMar Miller, who founded the Lander Center. In his previous role as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Dr. Spinner served as Interim Coordinator of the Office of Sponsored Programs, and after assuming the Deanship, he has continued to serve Touro College as the Human Subjects Administrator for the Institutional Review Board that oversees social science, behavioral, and educational research with human subjects.

ALWAYS AVAILABLE

For Dean Spinner, being available and accessible is fundamental to being a leader, and he has always striven to be there when students, staff and faculty members sought advice and assistance with solving problems. GSE community members share a particular appreciation for his many quiet acts of kindness, including hospital visits and words of timely encouragement. His steadfast commitment to Touro College, the Graduate School of Education, and to the overall field of education have been exemplary. As he prepares for his retirement this summer, Dean Spinner is taking steps to ensure that the GSE is strong and well-positioned when he hands over the leadership reins to his successor. Dean Spinner's energy, ethics, and personality will be sorely missed.

*Being available
and accessible is
fundamental to
being a leader.*





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NEW DEAN AT THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Dr. Jacob Easley II was recently appointed dean of the Touro College Graduate School of Education. Dr. Easley previously served as dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies at Eastern Connecticut State University, where he strengthened a multitude of academic programs and departments and collaborated with leadership to promote quality undergraduate and graduate teacher education programs.

“Dr. Jacob Easley is an innovator in education and leadership preparation and we know he will institute positive change and help Touro’s graduate students excel as they begin their teaching careers,” said Dr. Kadish.

Dr. Easley earned his Ph.D. in Educational Leadership (Curriculum and Supervision) from the Pennsylvania State University, an M.A. in Applied Linguistics/English from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and his bachelor’s degree in Spanish from Morehouse College. He also holds a graduate certificate in Educational Administration from Georgia State University.

Dr. Easley is a member of the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation’s (AAQEP) Inaugural Board of Directors and was formerly one of ten Martin Luther King Jr. Scholars nationally selected by the U.S. Department of Education.

His research focuses on policy and politics of education, leadership preparation and international perspectives on school effectiveness. He has contributed to numerous initiatives related to educational improvement and accountability and his latest book, “Educational Accountability: International Perspectives on Challenges and Possibilities for School Leadership,” explores the meaning of educational accountability around the globe.

“I am proud to join Touro College as the next dean of the Graduate School of Education. The school’s silver anniversary is marked by noteworthy service to New York’s communities and schools. Working closely with faculty, staff, students, alumni and partners, I look forward to furthering the legacy of education with empathy that will positively impact the profession for years to come,” said Dr. Easley.

Touro’s Graduate School of Education is the largest provider of new special education teachers to New York City’s public schools, and one of the largest providers of teachers to “high-needs schools” – those that face special challenges in helping students succeed.



“Working closely with faculty, staff, students, alumni and partners, I look forward to furthering the legacy of education with empathy that will positively impact the profession for years to come.”

DR. JACOB EASLEY ON HIS APPOINTMENT AS DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

TOUROCOM WELCOMES ITS NEW DEAN, DAVID FORSTEIN, DO, FACOOG

In September 2017, after his appointment to dean of Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine (TouroCOM in Harlem), David Forstein, DO, FACOOG returned to the city of his childhood after a 40-year absence. Drawn to Touro because of its mission, particularly to serve the underserved and increase the number of underrepresented in medicine, Dr. Forstein is now hard at work building upon the pioneering efforts of Touro's previous two deans, including developing new programs and strengthening the school's relationships within the local community. One of these efforts will involve the development of an osteopathy family and pediatric medical clinic in Harlem under the Touro name. Another area of focus will be creating a robust alumni network for TouroCOM's growing pool of graduates.

In addition, Dean Forstein is enhancing the successes already achieved in the ten years since the school first opened. "My goal is to grow the existing innovative and engaging educational programs and help osteopathic medical students successfully compete for the residencies of their choice and ultimately, achieve meaningful careers," he says.

Dean Forstein, who is widely published and has a long history as a medical educator, brings a depth of experience to his new post. Most recently, he served as Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine and he's held the positions of clerkship director at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, residency director at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Greenville and vice-chair of clinical operations for the department of obstetrics and gynecology at the Greenville Health System where he directed the clinical service of the largest provider for women's healthcare in South Carolina. He has also held other positions and spearheaded research initiatives. For Dr. Forstein, TouroCOM is a distinctive school that provides a unique opportunity. "The chance to work for a Jewish organization was very attractive," he explains. "The Touro commitment to tzedakah resonated with me, as I considered the move." He was also impressed by TouroCOM's unique Harlem location. "As far as I know, there is no other DO school in the country that is located in an inner city area," he says.



LEADERSHIP

From the moment he arrived on campus, Dean Forstein has been captivated by the students and graduates he meets, describing them as "impressive young physicians." In addition, he values how deeply engaged the faculty and staff on campus are. "They are very dedicated to the students and make themselves available on evenings and Sundays, to make sure that students achieve success."

Compared to his last post in South Carolina, the geographic, religious, cultural and racial diversity is remarkable. "Here on campus are people from all over the world. Secular Jews, observant Muslims, Christians, Orthodox Jews, Hindus, Buddhists. And they all get along," he adds.

Dean Forstein, who has found a home in New York City just a few blocks away from the school and walks to work each day, is enjoying the vibrancy and diversity of City life as well as its cuisine. "It's great to have good New York Italian, Chinese food and pizza."

"My goal is to help osteopathic medical students successfully compete for the residencies of their choice and ultimately, achieve meaningful careers."

DEAN DAVID FORSTEIN ON HIS PLANS WHILE AT HIS POST AS NEW DEAN OF
TOURO'S COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE



INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS
Jennifer Zelnick sits with a group of South African social workers who use their experience to create a better experience for people in TB treatment.

ADVOCATING ACTIVISM

A pioneer in social work

Although Dr. Jennifer Zelnick now spends most of her time back in the States, she still returns to South Africa for research projects. Most recently, she has traveled there to train social workers as part of an initiative to improve outcomes for patients with drug-resistant tuberculosis and HIV. According to Zelnick, social work values, centered in social justice and the dignity and worth of all people, are critical for diseases that have social as well as biological determinants.

You might say that Jennifer Zelnick has activism in her blood. Born in the 1960s and raised around activism in her family, it seemed logical for Zelnick, Associate Professor, Chair, Social Welfare Policy sequence at Touro Graduate School of Social Work to focus her academic and practice career on advocacy and community organizing to improve social policies in health and social services.

In 2001, when Zelnick was a doctoral student doing fieldwork in South Africa, 30 percent of the population in the province where she worked were HIV positive. TB was the most common opportunistic infection impacting HIV patients. By 2009, a drug-resistant strain of TB appeared and people were quarantined and dying. When new drugs appeared on the scene, Jennifer saw a path to contributing to the overall improvement of both healthcare delivery and overall health in her country.

“Recently, new meds have been introduced that are promising to be highly effective for drug-resistant TB strains. The problem is, treatment is long and people face significant barriers to getting on treatment and sticking with it.” Zelnick identified a range of barriers

to health depending on the population, including poverty, a lack of family support, drug or alcohol problems and family violence. “I thought the way people deal with TB needed to be changed,” explains Zelnick. “In the past, patients were ‘directly observed’ when they received their drugs, which means a healthcare worker watched them taking their meds. But this approach didn’t take into consideration how someone may be stigmatized by this and therefore not seek treatment.” Zelnick and others have worked toward shifting care to a more patient-centered approach.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

At Touro, Zelnick shares her experience and passion for social justice and advocacy with her students by exposing them to theory both in and out of the classroom. Students are asked to attend local city council, borough and community board meetings as part of their policy education and use their experiences to dig deep into current social problems. To augment her teaching, Zelnick brings in materials from her own work in South Africa. “We also have an international case study, looking at community organizing within an informal settlement in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Learning about housing activists in the informal settlements in South Africa opens students’ eyes to how homelessness, a very familiar problem here in NYC, plays out internationally.”

A number of her students have been inspired to get involved. “After visiting their local community board, three students went on to serve on them,” she explains. Another time, several students spoke about rent control issues impacting them as well as their clients at the Rent Guidelines Board in Brooklyn. Real-world assignments can lead to sustainable activities that empower our students, as well as their own communities.

In addition, Zelnick takes students on field trips to legislative action days in Albany and Washington, D.C., Social Work Day at the United Nations, and virtual town hall events such as one recently organized in collaboration with the University of Michigan’s Flint campus school of social work regarding that city’s water crisis. “Getting students out in the field and involved with policy practice or hearing about social issues first-hand by those who are impacted by them is at the heart of how we teach social work. Students learn by doing and taking the skills and knowledge we hone in the classroom and applying it in real life.”



BE THE SOLUTION

Taking Aim at Opioid Addiction

Two doctors sort through variations for a map to recovery.



DR. ANDREW SMITH

Assistant Professor and PGY-2 EM Pharmacy Residency Program Director, Touro College of Pharmacy



DR. PRIYANK KUMAR

Assistant Professor of Pharmacology, Lab of Addiction Neuroscience and Metabolic Disorders

With seven Americans dying every hour of opioid overdose, the United States is facing a health emergency. Touro College of Pharmacy is on the front lines with research and education initiatives to help further the scientific understanding of opioid addiction and prepare future pharmacists to respond to the crisis in their workplaces.

OPIOID RECEPTOR A118G

Despite the ever-increasing group of opioids available both legally as a short-term therapy to manage pain or illegally, there are many unknowns about the underlying mechanism of addiction. Dr. Priyank Kumar, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Pharmacology, Lab of Addiction Neuroscience and Metabolic Disorders, and head of lab research in pharmaceutical and biomedical sciences at Touro College of Pharmacy, set out to learn why some patients are less sensitive to opioids and more prone to addiction than others.

Through an extensive literature review of about 60 studies exploring how a genetic variation could influence drug metabolism and addiction, Dr. Kumar found that patients with the A118G polymorphism (genetic variation) rather than the standard A118A genotype

responded differently to morphine. Those patients with the genetic variation experienced less morphine-induced respiratory depression and were less sensitive to the standard dosages set for different

“Knowing which patients have this genetic variation could be useful for making more precise, effective treatment decisions...”

opioid medications. These patients did not experience the same pain relief from standard doses.

“Knowing which patients have this genetic variation could be useful for making more precise, effective treatment decisions and practicing

caution with long-term opioid use,” says Dr. Kumar, who suggests screening patients before receiving opioid-based pharmacotherapy. “Such testing is done routinely when treating illnesses like cancer, and many medications are designed based on this information. But for pain medications, such genetic testing is not popular,” said Dr. Kumar.

The study, which was co-authored by Iryna Pokotylyuk while she was a student at Touro College of Pharmacy, was presented at the Touro College Research Day in 2016. The manuscript was submitted to *EC Pharmacology and Toxicology* and has been accepted for publication. Phase II of the study is expected to begin later this year.

PHARMACISTS ON THE FRONT LINES

“For most people, their local pharmacist is the healthcare provider they see most regularly, often the one they feel the most comfortable with, and the one that is the most available,” says Andrew Smith, Pharm.D., BCPS, BCCCP, Assistant Professor and PGY-2 EM Pharmacy Residency Program Director, Touro College of Pharmacy. “Patients will frequently ask a pharmacist questions that they are afraid to



“Patients will frequently ask a pharmacist questions they are afraid to ask a physician. Part of the training of pharmacy students is preparing them for this role.”

ask a physician. Part of the training of pharmacy students is preparing them for this role.”

By the time Touro pharmacy students graduate and enter the workforce, they have acquired a broad knowledge of opioid use disorder treatment options, their side effects, how to recognize addiction/abuse, and antidotes to reverse the effects of these med-

ications. The experiential curriculum also offers students the opportunity to teach patients and family members living with loved ones suffering from opioid use disorder, including encouraging calls to 911 if they or their loved ones find themselves in trouble, offering information about drug rehabilitation, and furnishing naloxone hydrochloride injection

kits, an emergency treatment for reversal of opioid overdose. Furthermore, students get involved in counseling patients and family members about proper use of the life-saving medication.

“In many states including New York, anyone can purchase a naloxone kit, which will provide approximately thirty minutes of time, enough time for an emer-

gency medical team to arrive,” says Professor Smith, who also serves as a practicing pharmacist in emergency medicine at Saint Barnabas Hospital in Bronx, New York, where, several days a week, two Touro pharmacy students work as interns alongside him. “For the person or family dealing with opioid addiction, this can be life-saving.” ■



WANT TO KNOW HOW THE PHARMACY STUDIES PROGRAM IS PROPELLING STUDENTS INTO THE WORKPLACE? GO TO TCOP.TOURO.EDU TO FIND OUT.



TECHNOLOGY TODAY

On the Digital Dentistry Forefront

Teaching today's dentistry students requires a heavy emphasis on technology.

Digital dentistry technology education at the Touro College of Dental Medicine is putting Touro's newest school at the forefront of dental training. By teaching cutting-edge digital techniques for impression scanning, treatment planning and digital manufacturing with state-of-the-art equipment, the school is developing students who will help change the way dentists practice and how patients are treated. Explains Dr. Alan Jurim, Clinical Assistant Professor, Director of Digital Dentistry at Touro, "Students today are more comfortable with technology. For them, it's almost second nature."

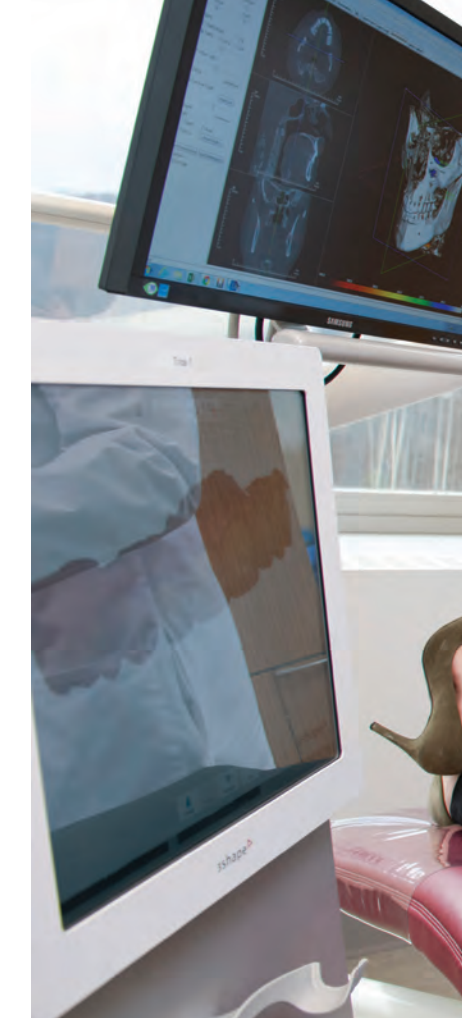
"There has been a paradigm shift over the last ten years in techniques and modalities for treating patients, and how we practice dentistry," explains Dr. Jurim. "We've shaped our program to teach the latest technologies, utilize the latest equipment and are innovating well beyond other schools. At Touro, we've developed a digital ecosystem so that students and faculty have access to digital dentistry tools anywhere on campus," Dr. Jurim continues.

The four-year dental educational program seeks to graduate outstanding dental professionals who will utilize a complex knowledge

base and sophisticated perceptual skills to deliver excellent health-care service to their diverse communities. The preclinical basic sciences curriculum—which includes biomedical sciences, preclinical dental sciences and behavioral science and practice management—combined with a two-year clinical program, lays out the pathway to accomplish this goal.

The school's clinical program starts in the dental simulation laboratory and then pairs students to treat patients in the school's modern clinic. Putting into practice what they've learned in the classroom, dental students create treatment plans for their patients and employ digital impressions, 3-D scanning and printing and other current technologies.

Sonia Suri, a second-year dental student, had always been artistic. "I liked the idea of working with my hands and seeing a finished product. I picked Touro College of Dental Medicine because it was a brand-new institution with an emphasis on technology and innovation," she explains. "Some of the schools I looked at had been doing things the same way for many years. At Touro, there is a willingness to make changes and evolve in its approach



to teaching and curriculum." Suri also liked how the focus of school was on training general dentists. "In the schools with specialty dentistry programs, the difficult cases go to the residents. Here at Touro, we will have a chance to take on some of the more challenging ones so when we graduate we'll have acquired a broad range of clinical training and experience."

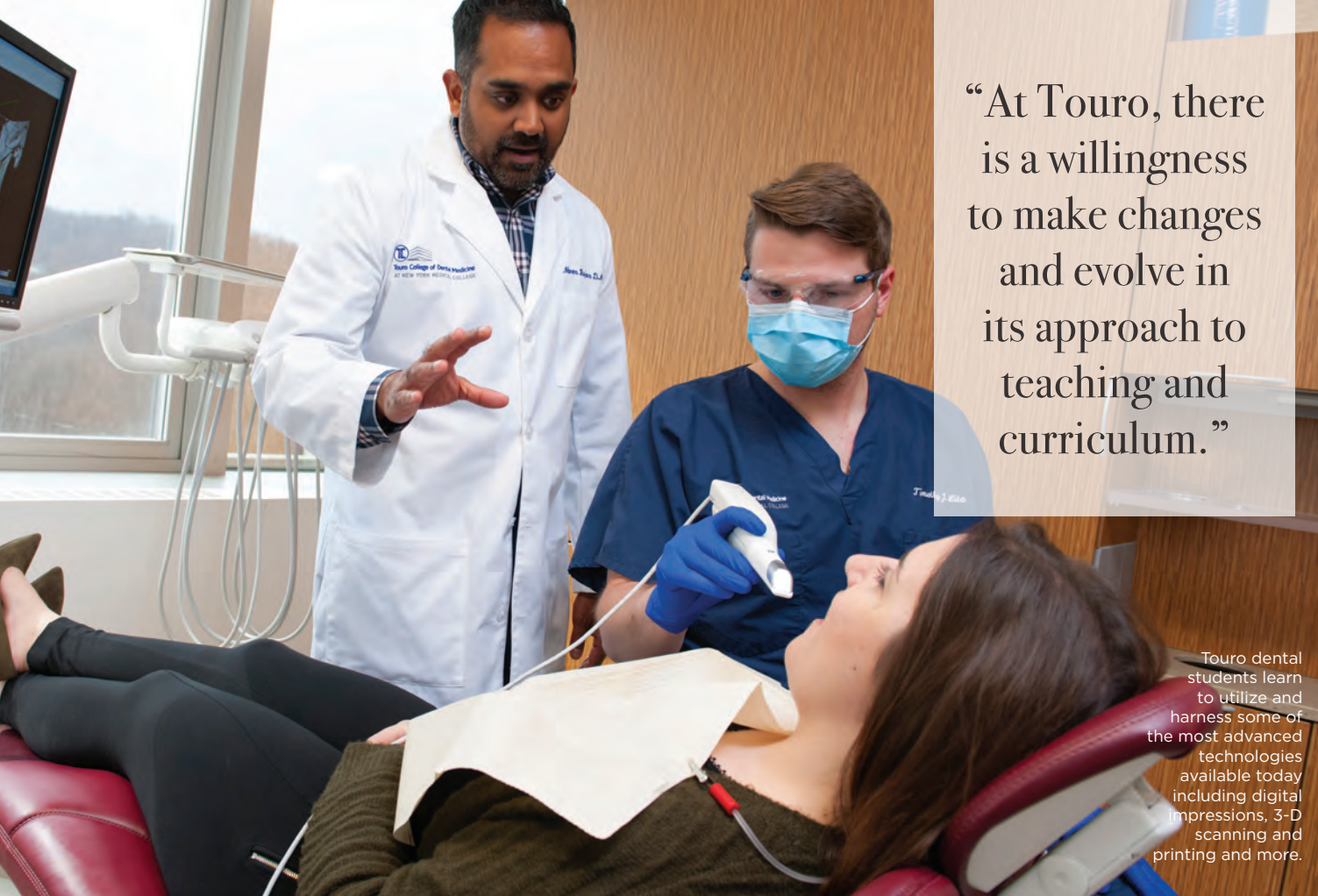
INTRAORAL SCANS

Using a wand-like, non-invasive digital scanner, the students are learning how to take intraoral scans of a patient's teeth and gingival tissue to create a digital map of both the teeth and oral structures. These scans, which can be stored indefinitely for future reference and allow the student to see a clear picture of the inside of a patient's mouth, help with patient consultations regarding various treatment options. In addition, a



DR. ALAN JURIM

Clinical Assistant Professor, Director of Digital Dentistry at Touro College of Dental Medicine



“At Touro, there is a willingness to make changes and evolve in its approach to teaching and curriculum.”

Touro dental students learn to utilize and harness some of the most advanced technologies available today including digital impressions, 3-D scanning and printing and more.

3-D intraoral scan can be used for precise computer assisted design and manufacturing (CAD/CAM) of any desired dental restoration, thereby enhancing the patient experience by eliminating the need for ill-tasting impressions that can cause patient discomfort. The result is increased accuracy, decreased procedure time and the ability to integrate digitally with modern dental laboratories.

3-D X-RAYS

Gathering 360 degrees of data by scanning in one complete circle around a patient’s head, 3-D x-rays provide detailed information of a patient’s entire mouth allowing for more accurate diagnosis and more precision in the treatment. With an entire view of the facial anatomy at their desktop, from any computer on campus, students can study scans and see views from almost every angle and perspective, at different magnifi-

cations. These views can be zoomed in on and rotated to aid in implant planning, the positioning of implants and other reparative procedures.

3-D PRINTING

Students utilize 3-D printing to generate dental models, oral appliances and surgical guides. “With the use of 3-D printing, we can create surgical appliances for prosthetically driven implant placement or a virtual tooth proposal for a potential cosmetic smile makeover,” explains Dr. Jurim.

ENHANCED PATIENT EXPERIENCE

Gone are the days when people dreaded hours in the dental chair and weeks without being able to chew. “Digital dentistry is more efficient and predictable. When used in conjunction with surgical implant and placement it makes the process safer and enhances the patient experience,”

says Dr. Jurim. “It’s faster, more comfortable, more accurate and the digital recordings don’t lose their quality over time.”

“Being part of the first graduating class of a new school has some advantages. You aren’t stuck in a system that’s complacent. You’re not expected to do things just because they were always done a certain way for 20 years. At Touro, if things need to be improved or revised, the administration and professors are very responsive. For instance, if they notice that most of the students aren’t comprehending or retaining a certain section of the coursework, they don’t think, well they need to work at it. Instead they work with us, setting up extra class time or meeting with us individually to make sure that when we graduate, that we leave the school with what we will need to perform in our field,” says Ariel Steinberger, a second-year student. ■



WANT TO SEE MORE OF HOW TOURO COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE IS MAKING AN IMPACT? GO TO TCDM.TOURO.EDU.



RESCUE MISSION

After Maria

Touro aids in the wake of a hurricane that rocked Puerto Rico.



HARRY BALLAN
Dean of Touro Law Center, New York

After Hurricane Maria left schools and dreams in ruins on the Island of Puerto Rico, an email from the Puerto Rican Bar Association went out to U.S. law schools asking for help. Schools and businesses were closed, power was down or scarce, water was undrinkable, basic medical and law enforcement services

were limited and a health and welfare crisis ensued. For students attending the three law schools in Puerto Rico, dreams of continuing their studies were put on hold.

OFFERING SUPPORT

Within minutes of receiving the email and a subsequent phone call, Touro Law Center Dean, Harry Ballan, had agreed to help and contacted Dr. Alan Kadish, Touro College and University System President. Recalls Dean Ballan, “Dr. Kadish immediately agreed that a group of students could come to Touro, tuition-free, to continue their education. The Law Center is fortunate to have such a compassionate and visionary leader. His support has been total and unequivocal.”

MOBILIZING RESOURCES

Within 24 hours, new courses were designed for the students, faculty stepped in to help teach, requests went out for donations and the local Marriott was contacted for temporary housing. Contributions flooded

in from the law firm Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP, iLaw BARBI, an online legal training internet company, and private donors. Soon, nine second and third-year displaced law students boarded planes and flew north for a new semester created for them at the Law Center in Central Islip, Long Island. There, these young men and women quickly settled in to the welcoming and supportive atmosphere at the school.

“Because our school year had been in session since August, the students from Puerto Rico had to start new courses in October. They doubled up on their classroom work and study time,” explains Dean Ballan.

For Astrid Rivera, of Humaco, Puerto Rico, coming to Touro was a blessing. “This was my last year of law school and I wanted to give it 200 percent. After Hurricane Maria,” she recalled, “I felt personally lost, frustrated and powerless – as if my life had stopped for reasons not under my control. All my expecta-

“Dr. Kadish immediately agreed that a group of students could come to Touro, tuition-free, to continue their education.”

tions of going to court, doing pro bono work, and studying for the bar exam were slowly vanishing.”

At the Law Center, visitors from Puerto Rico were excited by the welcoming faculty and students, the superb teaching and learning opportunities and the courthouse campus. “At Touro, I enjoyed the opportunity to learn from highly qualified professors in the areas of intellectual property, constitutional law and criminal procedure, among others,” explains Rivera.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

The experience affected current Touro students, too. Explains Barbara Roman, a student in her final year. “Because we in the New York area and on Long Island went through Hurricane Sandy a few years back, we were sensitive to a lot of things these students were experiencing. We spent time with them, listened when things got rough or just went to the mall and hung out. Most of the time, though, the students were pretty upbeat, despite what they and their families and the Island were going through.” Now that the students are back in Puerto Rico, Roman keeps in touch with some of them through Facebook and texting.

PAYING IT FORWARD

To augment their classroom learning, this group of visiting students taught in a program at the local Long Island high school, where they worked with local students,

many of whom were the children of immigrants, about “street law” (law directly relevant to their lives) and worked on a mock trial. Others, like Rivera, worked in the Touro Law clinics helping the residents of the local neighborhood with a wide variety of legal issues and participating in a number of student organizations.

ASSISTING HURRICANE VICTIMS IN REMOTE REGIONS

While the nine students learned the ins and outs of the Law Center up north, Dean Ballan, having traveled south to Puerto Rico, was on his own learning curve as a relief volunteer on the ground representing Touro’s disaster relief clinic. In conjunction with the University of Puerto Rico, he navigated the back roads into the mountains, where he worked in a clinic with the help of military grade satellite phones to assist hurricane victims in remote mountainous regions to deliver water and to fill out and update FEMA applications.

“In Touro’s mission statement, an ancient Jewish source is quoted, asking, ‘if I am only for myself, who am I?’ Indeed, what are we if we do not help those in need? This deeply felt commitment to others characterizes every part of Touro and is one of the things that makes it the unique and uniquely compassionate institution that it is. Talk is cheap, as the saying goes. We aim to help authentically and wholeheartedly, and that’s what we did,” said Dean Ballan. ■



Touro Law Center opened its doors to nine Puerto Rican law students after their schools were closed following Hurricane Maria. Dean Harry Ballan works to make the students feel at home both in and out of the classroom.



TO SEE WHAT STUDENTS ARE DOING WITH A COURTROOM EDUCATION, GO TO TOUROLAW.EDU.



CHECK OUT ALL OF TOURO'S TECHNOLOGY OFFERINGS AT GST.TOURO.EDU.

LOVE WHAT YOU DO

Playing for Keeps

Classroom-turned-startup gives students a leg up in the gaming industry.

LET THE GAMING BEGIN

Technology students expect to learn about design cycles, teamwork and product testing. But learn those skills while playing video games? In Professor Al Doyle's classroom turned quasi startup, that's exactly what happens.

The course, Education and Entertainment Design, is a hands-on introduction to the design, product testing and iteration (improving versions) of a game-designing platform used by a number of large technology companies. Professor Doyle's class introduces Graduate School of Technology students to the product testing cycle by allowing them to evaluate and test this platform and supply feedback to the maker.

DESIGN, PLAY TESTING, ITERATION

In the 14 years that Professor Doyle has been a member of the Touro faculty, students in his classroom have helped companies launch three different game design platforms. "These are programs that are used by designers to create video games," explains Professor Doyle. "In doing so, they learn the basics of game de-

sign – design, play testing, new iterations. It makes learning fun."

PREPARING FOR THE GIG ECONOMY

For many people, a career in the technology field means working within the "gig economy," where workers often do their jobs off-site and for only as long as the project lasts. "Knowing how to collaborate and communicate," explains Professor Doyle, "often cross-culturally and remotely through an interface such as Skype, is extremely important. The skills learned in this course, prepare them for this kind of work."

DOODLEMATIC COMES TO TOURO

The game platform program that students are testing this academic year, Doodlematic, is an automatic game creation tool for kids, parents, teachers and designers. This platform is a "low threshold and high ceiling" game design engine, meaning that it can be used in a simple and basic way by a child as young as five and in a complex way by a game or app creator. A grade school game designer can create a

drawing, snap a photo of it, and turn it into a simple game. For teachers, the same platform can be used to create interactive worksheets, while developers can utilize Doodlematic's features to develop

“Learning to review a product for its strengths and weaknesses is a key part of game creation.”

fully functional apps and games. Touro students beta-test the product by “playing with the platform,” deciding what would improve the product, and then delivering this information in a set format back to the company. “Learning to review a product for its strengths and



AL DOYLE

*Graduate Level
Professor of
Technology at
Touro College*

weaknesses is a key part of game creation,” explains Professor Doyle, “and a valuable skill for someone entering this field.”

ADVENTURES IN VIRTUAL AND AUGMENTED REALITY

In addition to game platform testing, students are exposed to some of the most state-of-the-art technology being used today in education and entertainment, including augmented reality and virtual reality. Field trips have taken students to one-day workshops at Microsoft. On other trips, students have visited a virtual reality studio where they learned about programs that help architects and designers walk through a building or theatre to test for sight lines, egresses and make changes before a structure is erected. Recently, they assisted Google in testing an augmented reality platform for kids at an elementary school. When they aren't testing products or out in the field, game designers visit their classroom either in person or virtually via Skype, to talk about their work and careers.

When students are asked to rate Professor Doyle's course with a number between one and ten, the reply is often an enthusiastic “11!” However, above and beyond the obvious fun the class provides, it helps prepare students for the work world. Recently, a student who had been interviewing for internships was asked what he knew about virtual and augmented reality. Having taken Professor Doyle's course, he was able to speak about it with some authority and landed an internship in theme park and game design utilizing virtual and augmented reality at Universal Studios in Florida. ■



It might look like fun and games in Professor Doyle's classroom. In reality, his students are helping companies launch a game design platform called Doodlematic. Touro GST students learn the basics of game design - design, play testing and iteration.

UNDERSTANDING EACH OTHER

A Clear Translation

One Touro teacher uses real-life case studies to teach her education students how to bridge cultural gaps.

Dr. Lucia Buttarò, Chair, Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL)/Bilingual Advanced Certificate Programs at Touro Graduate School of Education (GSE), works with 4th grade teacher Ana Lynn Demorizi and 5th Grade teacher, Michael Garcia at PS 192 The Jacob H. Schiff School, where 31 percent of the pupils are limited in English proficiency. The school teaches all of its classes bilingually with the goal of developing students who are 100 percent bilingual, biliterate and bicultural. Dr. Buttarò says, “The work that I do in the schools with teachers, I take to my students at Touro and blend these real-life situations in with the issues we are studying in the classroom. My Touro students are learning about real life scenarios and utilizing real samples of student work.”

BILINGUAL, BILITERATE, BICULTURAL

Xavier, a fifth grader, who recently arrived in the U.S. from South America, wanted to try out for the soccer team. His teacher, who always made sure to know about her students in and out of her classroom, wished

him well as he headed off to practice saying, “Break a leg, Xavier.”

Immediately, Xavier grew very upset. Rather than hearing his teacher’s words as supportive, Xavier translated the phrase literally and believed his teacher wanted him to have an accident so he couldn’t play soccer. In the days that followed, the boy grew disruptive and withdrawn.

When Dr. Buttarò arrived at the school, as part of her work providing ongoing faculty development in bilingual education, she learned of Xavier’s suddenly changed classroom attitude. “As I talked with him and his teacher, I suspected a cultural miscommunication and began asking questions,” recalls Professor Buttarò. Ultimately, it came down to three words: “break a leg.” Once Xavier understood that it meant good luck, harmony was restored.

“There are a whole set of idiomatic phrases that are very confusing to English learners,” explains Professor Buttarò. “Pig-out,’ ‘wolf down,’ ‘cost an arm and a leg,’ ‘pay through the nose,’ are just a few. As native speakers we know what they mean. But for the English learner,



it’s very confusing.”

With New York’s schools some of the most culturally and linguistically diverse in the country, it would be impossible for teachers to speak every language that walks into a classroom. “In Manhattan alone 188 languages are spoken in the schools,” explains Professor Buttarò. “That includes languages such as Swahili and Urdu. In one Queens, New York school, 36 languages are spoken in the same school building.”

The goal of Touro’s GSE certificate program for TESOL is to provide NYS-certified teachers with the tools to provide responsive,

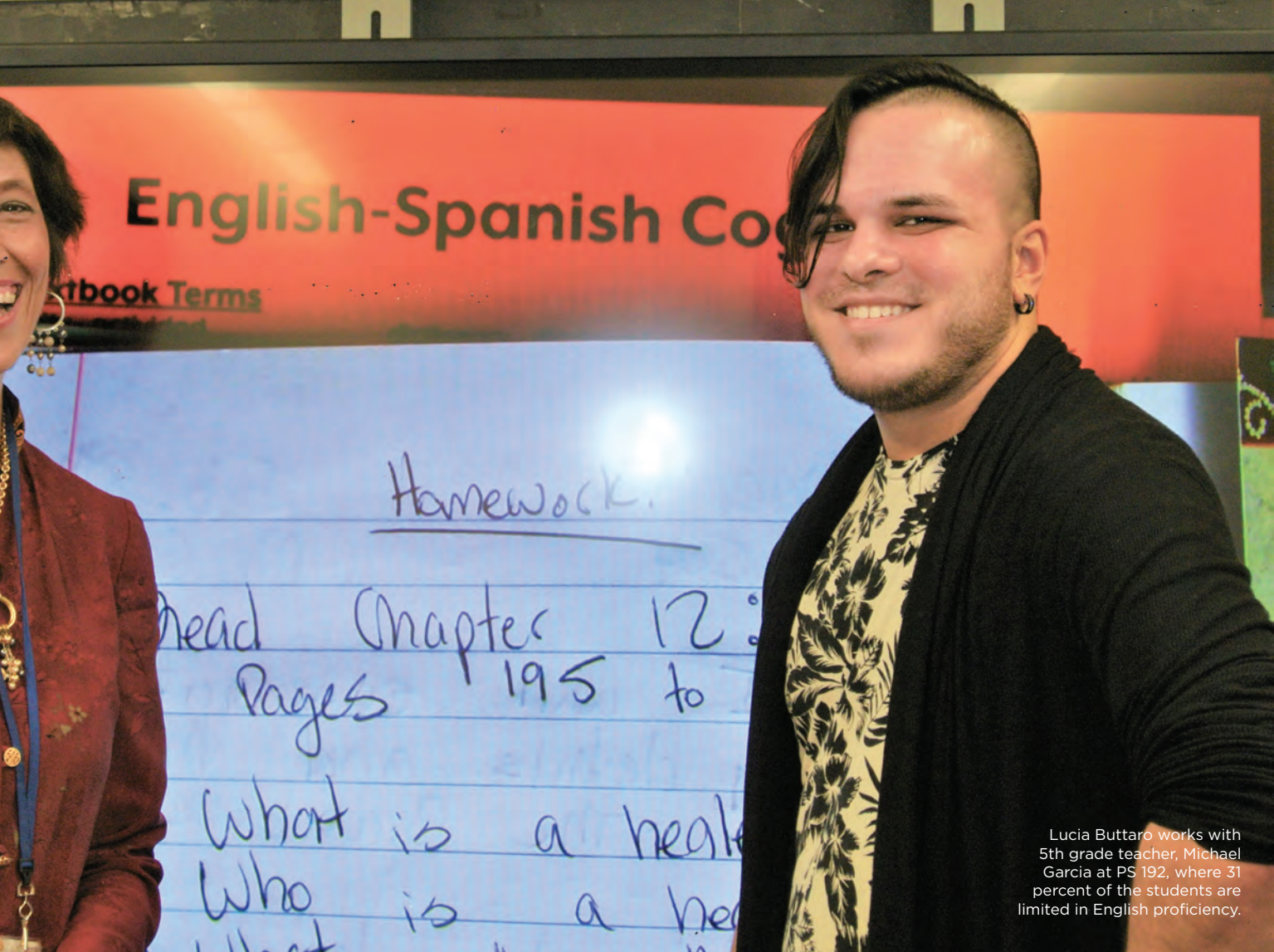


DR. LUCIA BUTTARÒ

*Chair of TESOL/
Bilingual Advanced
Certificate
Programs at Touro
Graduate School
of Education*

WANT TO SEE MORE OF HOW TOURO’S GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION CAN CROSS CULTURAL DIVIDES? GO TO [GSE.TOURO.EDU](https://gse.touro.edu).





Lucia Buttaro works with 5th grade teacher, Michael Garcia at PS 192, where 31 percent of the students are limited in English proficiency.

“I bring back samples of what I find in these schools and present it to my students. I say, this is what I found, how would you go about solving this problem?”

comprehensive education to students, such as Xavier, learning English as a new language. The Touro program provides a combination of classroom work focusing on theory and instruction strategies for multicultural education and second language acquisition. “One of the ways that we do this,” explains Dr. Buttaro, “is by taking real-life scenarios such as Xavier’s and bringing them back to the Touro classroom for discussion.”

Touro students learn techniques to encourage both auditory and visual learning. “We show our graduate students ways to provide visual and auditory cues on the walls in dual languages using pictures as well as words. For instance, elephant sounds like it has an “f” in it but it’s really “ph”. Laugh sounds like

an “f” but it’s a “gh.” Dough has a “gh” but it’s silent. It can be very confusing for a student trying to make connections and looking for ways to follow rules because there are so many exceptions. We call it ‘language stress.’”

Part of Professor Buttaro’s work involves visiting schools in East Harlem, the South Bronx and Far Rockaway, many of them high-need, low-income with populations that are considered “at risk.” While there, she works with the faculty on curriculum development and assessment. “I bring back samples of what I find in these schools and present it to my students. I say, this is what I found, how would you go about solving this problem?”

All in the



Family

TOUROCOM STUDENT, CAROLINE BASTA
FOLLOWS IN HER PARENTS' FOOTSTEPS,
GETTING HER DEGREE IN OSTEOPATHY IN
AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS LIKE A HOME
AWAY FROM HOME

W **HEN**
CAROLINE BASTA

was a junior in college, her mother developed painful headaches. After seeing several specialists and taking various drugs and finding no relief, her mother sought out the care of a doctor of osteopathy. "After a few sessions of cranial manipulation," recalls Caroline, "my mother's headaches were gone."


HOW ARE OSTEOPATHS MAKING A
WORLD OF DIFFERENCE? FIND OUT
AT TOUROCOM.TOURO.EDU.

A

year later, as Caroline applied to medical schools, she recalled how the doctor of osteopathy had helped her mother and decided to include DO schools on her list of potential schools. “My goal was to obtain an excellent medical education at a school that wasn’t a long drive away from my family in New Jersey,” she explains. Touro’s collegial environment, modern facilities and excellent teaching appealed

to Caroline. When she decided on Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine (TouroCOM), her mother was thrilled. “In fact,” says Caroline, “I now show my mother the osteopathic manipulative treatments that I learn.”

At TouroCOM, Caroline likes the intimate community and how the faculty is so approachable and knowledgeable. “My professors are very easy to talk to and eager to offer advice on ways to approach learning challenging material,” she says. “The students all work together; it’s

a very positive place,” she adds. In addition, Caroline appreciates the study of osteopathy and how it is showing her the interconnection of functions in the body. “By learning osteopathic manipulative medicine, I feel like I have an extra tool to use when I’m assessing and treating patients,” she says. “For instance, not all patient complaints need medical intervention. Some ailments, such as muscular pain, can be treated conservatively by osteopathic manipulative treatments.”

For as long as Caroline can remember, she has always planned to have a career in medicine like her parents, who share a pediatric practice. “I grew up surrounded by doctors and often spent time at my parents’ offices,” she explains. Although Caroline began TouroCOM without any preconceived idea of the area of practice in which she would one day specialize, once she began rotations, Caroline was drawn to pediatrics. “I tried to keep an open mind while I was trying out different specialties,” she recalls. “But I so enjoyed treating kids. They are so light-hearted. It’s hard to have a bad day when you are around them. I like the idea of developing relationships with young children and their parents. You get to know them from newborns to young adults.” ■

INTIMATE COMMUNITY

Right: Caroline chose TouroCOM for the intimate community and close relationships with professors. Left: By the time Caroline graduates she will have logged 132 hours of hands on practice time.





PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT
Caroline Basta studies and practices osteopathic manipulation with fellow students.

My goal was to obtain an excellent medical education at a school that wasn't a long drive away from my family in New Jersey.



Making History



Come to Life

JULIE GOLDING MAKES THE HOLOCAUST RELEVANT TO TODAY'S GENERATION.



Golding was named a Wexner Graduate Fellow & Davidson Scholar, a four-year fellowship program granted to exceptional candidates with strong personal commitments to the Jewish community and a record of demonstrated excellence in academic achievement.



When Julie Golding's grandparents decided to visit the local Holocaust museum in Miami Beach, they arrived at the exhibition, reflected at the memorial outside and both began to cry. They got right back into their taxi and returned to their hotel. Explains Julie, "My grandmother told me that museums were not for those who had experienced the horrors of the Holocaust, but for the next generation that needs to learn and remember." Julie often thinks about this incident when she's designing exhibits and programs at several Holocaust museums where she has worked. "I'm always trying to ensure that the information is relevant and accessible to the next generation. Today there are very few living survivors. We are at a crossroads between lived memory and historical memory and the work of museums is becoming even more important."

For Julie, the specter of the Holocaust has been a fact of life. Her grandmother was a Danish Jew who escaped to Sweden on the eve of Rosh Hashana 1943 during the famous rescue of Danish Jewry. She survived along with the rest of her immediate family. In contrast, Julie's grandfather was the sole surviving member of his family. After fleeing from Germany to Holland, he joined the Dutch resistance movement. He was eventually captured and interned in the Neuengamme concentration camp. After the war, he was sent as a refugee to Sweden where he met Julie's grandmother. Two years later, they got married in Copenhagen and later immigrated to New York.

Recalls Julie, "I was very close with my grandparents and inspired by their strong faith despite what they experienced. My grandmother was always willing to speak about her life during the Holocaust." It was different for Julie's grandfather. "He did not talk much about what he went through and I grew up knowing that there were certain things you just never asked him. This dichotomy intrigued me and it played into my decision to further my knowledge about the history of the Holocaust."





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LOOKING FOR ANSWERS

This desire for answers has been a theme running through Golding's life, studies and career choices. At Touro's Lander College for Women, she developed a passion for Jewish history and studies. Following graduation, she continued her academic pursuits and earned a master's degree in Modern Jewish History at Touro's Graduate School of Jewish Studies and then an M.A. in Educational Leadership and Administration from George Washington University. During a relocation to Israel, Golding conducted research at Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, and worked there as an educational consultant. It was at the museum that she saw a way to combine her passion of history, her family's tradition of education and her love of learning through the development of museum programs for children. "My great-grandfather was the headmaster of the ILBA Teacher's Seminary in Wurzburg, Germany. My grandfather followed in his father's footsteps and was a teacher for more than 50 years. Many of my grandfather's teachings have influenced the way I think, and engage my own students, in this difficult history."

When Golding returned to the States, she took a position as Director of Education of the Amud Aish Memorial Museum and Kleinman Holocaust Education Center in Brooklyn, a living memorial to all the victims of the Holocaust with special emphasis on the perspectives of observant Jewish communities and the role of faith and identity within the broader context of the Holocaust. While there, she developed programs for kids based on objects, documenting the micro-histories of Holocaust victims. Explains Golding, "Kids connect to artifacts and the stories associated with them – passports, documents, Ghetto currency, kinder transport tags. Children say, 'That's real' and suddenly history comes to life."



MODERN RELICS

Clockwise from top left: Golding and a colleague put the finishing touches on an exhibit that they hand-curated. Golding sees life through the lens of the exhibits she curates. A close-up of the Holocaust artifacts exhibited in the museum. When at work, no job is too small for Julie Golding.

WEXNER FELLOWSHIP

More schooling will soon earn Golding a Doctorate in Jewish Education. “I want to study how learning about the Holocaust impacts students and how to better train educators to teach this important piece of history,” she says. In 2017, Golding was named a Wexner Graduate Fellow & Davidson Scholar, a four-year fellowship program granted to exceptional candidates with strong personal commitments to the Jewish community, a record of demonstrated excellence in academic achievement, and the potential to assume significant professional leadership roles in the North American Jewish community.

During her fellowship, Golding is continuing her work in Holocaust education research and teaching Holocaust studies at the Bais Yaakov Machon Ora and Ateres Bais Yaakov schools. “I’m named after my grandfather’s sister, Julie, who was murdered in Sobibor in 1943. My grandfather’s sister was a teacher like me and I keep a picture of her on my desk,” explains Julie. “I’ve been told that she was intelligent, vivacious and independent. The least I can do is ensure that her memory, and the memory of the other six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust, are not forgotten.”

Julie is also hard at work at the Holocaust Museum & Center for Tolerance and Education in Suffern, New York where she is curating exhibitions and developing a multi-functional museum and educational resource center for students and teachers. Julie is working with the museum to expand their audience and make their collections more accessible to the community. Recently, she curated an exhibition for them entitled, “Resilience,” that will preview this summer.

THE PEOPLE WHO INSPIRED AND SUPPORTED HER

Reflecting back on her studies and the people who inspired her, of which there were many, she speaks often of the dean of Touro’s Graduate School of Jewish Studies, Dr. Michael Shmidman. “He said, ‘Graduation is just a formality.’ And he was right. Even though I have long since graduated, he has continued to be so supportive of my work. I can call him any time for advice and recommendations. He reaches out to me with opportunities. I am so thankful to the people like Dr. Shmidman who believed in me.” ■

ALL IN THE FAMILY

For Julie, whose grandparents were Holocaust survivors, her work preserving the stories of the Holocaust has special meaning.



Julie Golding designs engaging exhibits and educational programs for Holocaust museums, ensuring that the story of the Holocaust is relevant and accessible to the next generation.



on
SPEAKING
terms

A new speech and hearing center opens at Touro College's School of Health Sciences, giving students a new canvas on which to practice their craft.



TALK OF THE TOWN

Clockwise from far left: Students get practical training with real case studies as the center is open to patients, including children.

Students practice skills such as ear monitoring at the new speech center. The speech faculty pose in the lobby of the new speech center.





ask someone to describe speech-language pathology and they'll probably tell you it's games with kids to help them to pronounce their "Rs" and "Ss". Not so. Today's speech-language pathologist, explains Hindy Lubinsky, M.S., director and chairperson for the Graduate Program in Speech-Language Pathology at the Touro School of Health Sciences, helps people of all ages and backgrounds with a range of speech, language, swallowing and hearing disorders.

"Whether a patient stutters or has a hearing impairment, a cleft palate or a developmental delay, the speech-language pathologist must be able to provide compassionate, competent care across the lifespan," explains Professor Lubinsky. In addition, the aging baby boom population is increasing the need for trained specialists to assist patients with diffi-

culties centered around hearing, speaking and swallowing due to stroke, dementia and other age-related conditions.

NEW TOURO COLLEGE SPEECH AND HEARING CENTER

Students enrolled in the Speech-Language Pathology graduate degree program at Touro's School of Health Sciences learn to identify speech, language and hearing issues in a variety of settings and create concrete goals for therapy and intervention. Degree studies include both an academic portion as well as clinical at the Touro College speech and hearing center, where both children and adults are treated. Within this clinical environment, students work one-on-one with patients while supervised by licensed therapists, and learn first-hand to identify issues and develop treatment plans.

The new center holds eight therapy rooms with observation capability so a parent or family member can watch their child's sessions via computer. Faculty can also observe students and supply feedback to



HEAR, HEAR

Clockwise from top left: Students practice using sound monitoring equipment in the new center. 500 hours of practice time with fellow students and real patients before graduation gives students a boost into their future careers. Students use what they learn in class to practice with one another in their study time.



"DURING THEIR TIME AT SCHOOL, WE STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY."



PLAY DATE

This page, from left: Students get to work one-on-one with real patients at the new clinic, treating issues using play-based therapy. Many of the patients at the clinic are children, giving students expertise in pediatric speech therapy.

them. The clinic utilizes the most up-to-date equipment including voice output instruments that allow patients to see their voices graphed on a screen and adjust pitch and loudness accordingly. Hearing testing, auditory processing testing, fitting patients for hearing aids and other services are also offered by an experienced Licensed Audiologist.

VIRTUAL SIMULATION

One important aspect of student training occurs through computer-simulated, interactive, web-based programs presenting real-life cases featuring a range of challenges such as a head injury, autism, hearing impairment, and others. The scenarios are based on information from actual speech and language therapy cases spanning a broad range of ages and complications. The software encourages users to discover through practice the best ways to interact with patients and others. It also offers the option of consulting with professional colleagues.

"Virtual simulations are intended to build knowledge, skill and professional judgment. Used in conjunction with real-life clinical experience, this helps develop our students to grow into successful, competent clinicians," explains Rosalie Unterman, Ph.D., associate professor and clinical director in the Graduate Program in Speech-Language Pathology.

"Many students have gone through the Touro program and excelled professionally," explains Professor Lubinsky. At speech-language pathology conferences it's not unusual to bump into an alum who is now involved with top experts in the field. In addition, many of the program alumni return to Touro to share their learning and experience as supervisors of current program students. "During their time at our school, we stress the importance of giving back to the community. It's gratifying to see so many of our graduates eager to come back and share their knowledge," says Professor Lubinsky. ■

CAST



USING A CLASS PROJECT THAT WAS GOING TO BE THROWN AWAY, A SECOND-YEAR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENT MADE A MAJOR IMPACT IN A THIRD WORLD COUNTRY. THE RESULT WAS HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS' WORTH OF SPLINTS SENT TO A GHANIAN TEACHING HOSPITAL.



BREAKING THE MOLD

Instead of disposing of splints used for a class project, occupational therapy students shipped them to Ghana. Doctors at a teaching hospital in Ghana were the happy recipients of hundreds of dollars' worth of splints that were used to set bones and muscles in minor fractures and tears.

AWAYS

MAKING THE WORLD A SMALLER PLACE

It was “empty the box” thinking that led faculty and students at the School of Health Sciences Occupational Therapy (OT) Program to donate several hundred dollars’ worth of splints to Ghana this year.

Second-year OT students, enrolled in the Orthotics and Prosthetics class, learn how to fabricate custom-made orthoses or splints for the arm and hand. Each splint is created from Orfit Industries’ low temperature thermoplastic materials, which can be molded into protective functional splints after heating in hot water. During the sixteen-week course, each student practices the fabrication of 15 different splints for the elbow, wrist, hand, thumb, and/or fingers. After creation, the splints may be remodeled by reimmersion in hot water.

“When the class was over, hundreds of splints were just hanging around the lab in a box collecting dust. Or students were storing them in their lockers where they were forgotten,” explains Beth Chiariello, Ph.D., Associate Director of the Manhattan Occupational Therapy Program.

INSPIRATION STRIKES

That’s when class instructor Debby Schwartz, OTD, OTR/L, CHT, reached out on Facebook to learn if there were any groups that could use them, and connected with Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital in Ghana. “We used empty photocopy paper boxes for shipping, the students made mailing labels, and we sent them off,” says Professor Chiariello. This year the school has shipped 220 completed splints and has plans to send more next semester.

“Learning in the classroom from someone like Debby Schwarz, who embodies the belief of giving back to one’s community, provides a powerful role model,” explains Dr. Chiariello. “Students have a chance to see the path Debby is on, to see her passion for helping and they think, ‘Hey, I can do that, I can be like her.’”

Today, these donated splints have been refashioned to help a variety of patients in Ghana, including a new mother diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome, a 45-year-old burn survivor, and a teenager with a poorly healed supracondylar fracture.

“The donations fit with the overall philosophy of the Occupational Therapy program at Touro,” explains Dr. Chiariello. “Students learn both how to care for patients, and to value community service as part of their professional identities. They see the importance of going out into the community and finding people in need and incorporating this into their professional lives.” ■



“THE DONATIONS FIT WITH THE OVERALL PHILOSOPHY OF THE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAM AT TOURO. STUDENTS LEARN BOTH HOW TO CARE FOR PATIENTS, AND TO VALUE COMMUNITY SERVICE AS PART OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES.”

SEE HOW OT IS HELPING PEOPLE HELP THEMSELVES? GO TO [SHS.TOURO.EDU/PROGRAMS/OCCUPATIONAL-THERAPY](https://shs.touro.edu/programs/occupational-therapy).





A HUMAN RESOURCE
 Karlene Williams (right) uses her passion for HR management to impact the organization she works for and the lives of people around her.

Staffing Up

Keeping the Humanity in Human Resources.

“If you teach one other person, the world becomes a better place,” says Karlene Williams. Karlene’s hard work, poise and talent have propelled her from jobs in the food industry on the Spice Island of Grenada to New York to earn a master’s degree in Human Resource Management at the Touro Graduate School of Business (GSB) and into a new career. Upon graduation, Karlene parlayed her position as an HR payroll intern at Children of Promise, a nonprofit supporting children with incarcerated parents, to HR Operations Coordinator and ultimately HR Manager, a position she holds today.

Karlene, who describes herself as a “people person,” has been sharing her knowledge and making improvements wherever she is. During her time at GSB, Karlene worked as a graduate assistant helping students make the most of their time at the school. She also networked in the City, joining the NYC chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), a professional association that promotes the role of HR as a profession and provides education, certification, and networking to its members. When Karlene learned that the Touro M.S. program in Human Resource Management had not been certified by SHRM, she asked Dean Sabra Brock about it. “It turned out to be something Touro wanted to pursue,” recalls Karlene, who then developed and submitted a proposal and upon receiving the go-ahead, began working on the certification process. “This involved reviewing the current curriculum to make sure it was aligned to the SHRM competences for HR professionals,” explains Karlene. The program received certification in 2017. Ultimately, the same organization

awarded Karlene a scholarship to its 2017 conference in New Orleans, a gathering of over 15,000 HR professionals sharing best practices, current and new trends in HR practices and perspectives.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

During her often-hectic days at Children of Promise, which involves overseeing the HR concerns of the almost 50-person staff including recruitment, employee relations, payroll, orientation, benefits and vendor management, Karlene has been able to apply much of what she learned at Touro to her job. “I constantly pull from Professor Skip Vaccarino’s teaching on the various stages in an employee’s life cycle and Professor Charles Priolo’s advice about how HR can be a strategic business partner,” she recalls. “Also, I draw from Professor Wesley Palmer’s class in ethics, since ethics plays a large role in HR, and Professor Robert Bigelow’s Employment Law class, because to be successful in this field you have to understand the law in the workplace.” In addition, Karlene appreciates the personal approach she experienced as a student at Touro. “I valued feeling like a person, not just a number and I try to bring that same experience to the staff at Children of Promise,” she explains.

With a long-term plan to one day open HR Management firms in both the US and Grenada, Karlene is passionate about HR work. “Being a liaison and a mediator between management and employees is crucial,” explains Karlene. “As managers, we can’t always get everything we want; and as employees, we can’t get everything we need. HR allows both sides to come to terms with their situations.” ■

WHAT IMPACT ARE OTHER ALUMNI MAKING IN THE BUSINESS WORLD? FIND OUT AT [GSB.TOURO.EDU](https://gsb.touro.edu).

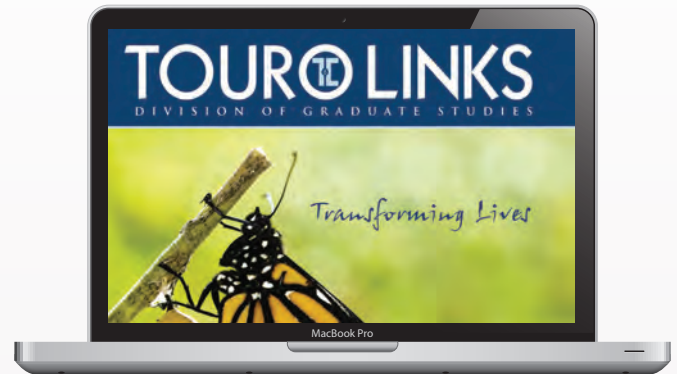


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