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Quotes of the Month

These “Rules of Life” (there are supposedly 11), are often attributed to a speech by Bill Gates to a group of students, but are believed to come from a book by educator Charles Sykes about 11 things we did not learn in school. Three of those rules are listed below:

Rule 1: Life is not divided into semesters. You don’t get summers off and very few employers are interested in helping you find yourself. You have to do that on your own time.

Rule 2: Television is NOT real life. In real life people actually have to leave the coffee shop and go to jobs.

Rule 3: Be nice to nerds. Chances are you’ll end up working for one.

Did you know?

This summer, the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science is planning to launch a Post-Baccalaureate Program. This new program will only be available to students who have graduated from a campus of the California State University system, and are re-applicants to medical school.

This one year long program will admit approximately 15 students. The Charles R. Drew Post-Baccalaureate Program is scheduled to start this summer on approximately July 1st, 2007.

For more information, please contact Cathy Jalali at cathyjalali@cdrewu.edu.

IMPACT
PREP/RAP ADVISORY NEWSLETTER
Office of Academic Enrichment & Outreach
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Volume 1, Issue 4 April 23, 2007
Rodney Terrell is someone who needs no introduction, and some of you may already know him. A native of the Bay Area, Rodney moved to Los Angeles to play basketball at California State University, Dominguez Hills, partly because he wanted to care for his ill grandmother, who lived just down the street from the university at the time. At Dominguez Hills, Rodney majored initially in physical education, and later switched majors to kinesiology with a minor in biology.

It was in CSU-Dominguez Hills that Rodney says he learned what he calls the “politics of life” and where he was headed. While being involved in athletics opened doors, he strongly believes it locks others, leaving those in its pathway with no plan B, if they did not enter professional sports.

Through his college experience, Rodney redefined his path in life and chose medicine. He initially worked in a physical therapy clinic, but was unsatisfied and wanted to enter a career that was both evolving and advancing. He found that career in medicine. As a first year medical student, he feels it is important for him to help others understand that athletics, rap music, and entertainment are not the only options one has to succeed in life.

Why did you choose the Drew/UCLA program for your medical education?

The Drew/UCLA program is my avenue to achieve my mission in life. Drew has a mission statement, and I have my own mission statement, which Drew embraced—namely geared towards African American males in athletics. In my situation, I was an athlete and spent much more time on the playing field than in any classroom. Some of my peers are the same—but they did not get into college—and now they’re in jail, or they’re selling drugs. That’s because they did not develop their other skill, or try anything else.

For example, my best friend who is the same size as me, is in prison for 21 years; so I’m thankful for the opportunities I have had in life.

Yet, that’s not enough. I have to go back to the African American and Latino males in the athletic world and tell them that they may have been pushed into the athletic world because of their size or parents, but that it is not the end of the world. You have to explore your options, because only one in a million make it in the NBA. Don’t be the one without a backup plan. Have a plan B, and maybe a C and D as well.

How do you feel your experiences in PREP either changed or further enforced your perspective of medicine and impending application at the time?

Before PREP, I wasn’t convinced that I could make it. Prior to the program, I had not met an African American and Latino males in the athletic world and tell them that they may have been pushed into the athletic world because of their size or parents, but that it is not the end of the world. You have to explore your options, because only one in a million make it in the NBA. Don’t be the one without a backup plan. Have a plan B, and maybe a C and D as well.
American doctor. I had been at a hospital many times, and had not met a single black physician. At this point, I was 23 years old and had not seen anyone that looked like me. PREP was a world changing experience for me. Everyday in PREP, you’re surrounded by a closely knit group of people who come from similar situations, telling you that there is light at the end of the tunnel. Even after the program, we have PREP ’05 alumni dinners that we organize. It’s a network. I’m in, but from now on, I want to bring everyone else in as well. This is not something that I have ever been around outside of an athletic team.

In fact, after the program, I told Elizabeth Guerrero, Director of PREP, that I would have paid twice the stipend I was given to participate in PREP just be able to be a part of the program, because it gives you so much.

You’re a first year medical student, Drew Class of 2010 President, and an involved member of the community—how do you balance it all?

I do it the same way I did when I was coming into Drew. I was working three jobs and still applying to medical school. I use the same work ethic that one can apply to athletics and apply it to medical school. If my classmates—many of them come from well to do homes with mom or dad as a physician—can get it done, why can’t I do it? I used to work 60 hours/wk, so this is more like a step down than what I’m used to. I have more than enough time now.

What’s the best part about being in medical school?

Figuring it all out. When they give you a clinical case, it’s like a murder mystery and I want to figure it out using the tools given to me. Once you have down that, you have to see if it works. So, that’s the main drive for me in medical school.

The second best part about the experience is the early patient interaction.

What do you feel is your biggest accomplishment?

I would say it’s stepping out of the stigma and stereotypes associated with the African American male—and making it happen. That, more than anything—any trophy or award I could have won—is important to me.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

I see myself either at Drew, somewhere in south central Los Angeles, or perhaps in San Francisco. These are people I grew up with, and I feel obligated to go back to take care of these people. You see, I don’t have to go far. My entire extended family is diabetic and they all have hypertension. Moreover, my family is not just going to listen to anyone; they’re going to listen to someone they can trust. Someone who looks like them. So, it takes someone who looks like me to go back and talk to them about these issues.

I like the idea of surgery, but I feel that I could perhaps better serve my purpose through primary care. I’m not so sure right now on how I’m going to achieve my mission. Aside from clinic work, I want to get an MPH after my 3rd year and MBA perhaps as well, so I can work in policy. I feel that these policymakers can’t relate to us, they don’t look like us, and they don’t know where we live.

I also love to teach, and do so on Saturdays at Drew. I teach the high school class so I can talk to them about why they are in school and where they’re going with this information.
It was recently announced that U.S. healthcare spending hit 2 trillion dollars, and in less than a decade, it is projected to double to 4 trillion dollars, fueled by higher drug prices, Medicare spending, and other healthcare expenses. If you could solve America’s healthcare crisis, what would you do?

I wish it were simple. I would identify a list of why healthcare is so expensive here, and not much better than countries where it is free. I believe pharmaceutical companies are at the top of the list. I don’t think you can blame physicians, because they’re not even making half of what they used to. So, who’s driving these prices? We have to identify them, and stop them. We have to have more people with our concerns in mind making these decisions, rather than people who have a financial interest in these corporations.

What advice or words of wisdom do you have for students who are either contemplating a career in medicine, are in the application cycle, or reapplying to medical school?

I’m deaf to excuses. If your studies are not where you want them to be, there is a reason. You have to realize that you have zero control over everyone else, but 100% control over whatever it is you do. If you’re in a bad situation, you’re the problem because you’re still there. If you don’t have the money for applying, go work and make it, and then apply. There’s nothing going to stop you—but you.

The Similarities & Differences Between a D.O. and M.D. Degree
By Gonzalo Saavedra & Ali Shefizadeh

In medical practice, D.O.’s are in all respects equal to M.D.’s, with all the same rights and privileges. D.O. physicians are found in all specialties, especially within the primary care field, and practice medicine throughout the entire United States.

To become a D.O. one must follow the same premedical pathways available to those who aspire to become an M.D. In addition, applicants to both D.O. and M.D. schools typically have a four-year undergraduate degree, have taken the MCAT, completed the science prerequisites, and have graduated from a four year institution.

Both osteopathic (D.O.) and allopathic (M.D.) medical schools consist of a 4-year basic medical education curriculum. Admission to osteopathic medical schools is competitive, especially for schools like Western University of Health Sciences in Pomona, California.

What distinguishes osteopathic medical schools slightly from allopathic medical schools is the osteopathic philosophy or approach to medicine. They view the patient as a “whole person” and focus on a holistic approach to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment for disease, illness and injury.

Besides the normal basic science and clinical curriculum, D.O. students also learn osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM). Osteopathic manipulative medicine is a method of diagnosis and treatment that involves using your hands to feel the body for misalignments of the musculoskeletal system, therefore diagnosing the patient for injury and/or illness. Manipulations improve circulation, which in turn, creates a normal nerve and blood supply, enabling the body to heal itself.

For licensure, D.O. students take the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Exam (COMLEX), however if the student plans on applying for an M.D. residency program, they must also take the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE).
Healthcare in America:  
An Overview of the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science  
By David Tran & Gonzalo Saavedra

Health professionals, elected officials and community groups banded together to create the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science as a response to the lack of access to health care and inadequate medical facilities in the Watts-Willowbrook area of South Los Angeles. The Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science offers tremendous resources to the communities as a teaching hospital, whose main goal is to train medical students, physicians and allied health professionals to provide care to underserved communities in the hopes of alleviating health disparities. The University is named after Dr. Charles R. Drew for his outstanding and inspirational contributions to the medical field in the area of blood preservation. Dr. Drew was the first African American surgeon to have served as an examiner on the American Board of Surgery.

Since its establishment in 1966, the University has helped to address the chronic health conditions, or health disparities, that disproportionately impact underserved communities. The university focuses on training students to become health professionals that provide health care services to underserved communities. Indeed, this goal has been achieved. Every year, 24 students are selected out of an approximate pool of 1,700 applicants interested in completing a degree in medicine. Every year, 24 students graduate and enter into prestigious residency programs throughout the nation, and studies show that over 80% of students who graduate from the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science intend to practice medicine in an underserved community.

The four-year medical school program at Charles R. Drew University is quite different from other medical schools. During the first two years, students complete their basic science coursework at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. In the last two years, students complete their clinical rotations in health care facilities that provide care to a significant proportion of underserved populations. In the past, the students completed their clinical rotations in Watts, to work with doctors and other medical students at the Martin Luther King Jr./Drew Hospital. However, recently there has been a change due to the closure of various units within the MLK/Drew Hospital, recently renamed as the MLK/Harbor Hospital. Now, students complete their clinical rotations at hospitals in other underserved communities, such as the Harbor/UCLA and Olive View/UCLA Hospitals.

The university does not only focus on graduate students; it also focuses on students as early as middle school, with the goal of facilitating the recruitment and retention of disadvantaged students into the health pipeline and pathway programs. The university also offers many programs to undergraduates, ranging from MCAT preparation classes to a post-baccalaureate program for re-applicants, which are both funded by federal grants.

Up until the start of this academic year, Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science received money through a Title VII federal grant, which provides funding for programs such as the Health Career Opportunity Program (HCOP) and the Center of Excellence (COE). Unfortunately in June of 2006, Congress eliminated funding for all HCOP and COE programs throughout the country. This was indeed a blow to Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, since programs such as HCOP and COE were important factors in helping the University carry out its mission statement. For over 20 years HCOP and COE programs had supported activities to identify, support, recruit, admit, retain, train and graduate under-represented minority and disadvantaged students in medicine and other health professions.
For example, the MCAT Preparation Program was offered twice a year and consisted of workshops that focused on the development of critical and analytical reasoning skills required for success on the exam. The workshops were conducted by world-renowned test taking and learning skills specialist Dr. Hy Doyle, as well as academic instructors Cathy Jalali and Dr. Cecilia Duenas. Other programs that had been offered by COE included the Saturday Asthma Program and the SAT Preparation Program at the Charles R. Drew campus. These amazing programs offer great opportunities and resources to elementary, middle and high school students, as well as provide support and encouragement to students along their educational journey.

Fortunately, after talking to Cathy Jalali, a learning skills counselor at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science and at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, she commented on the fact that there is still hope to ensure that the HCOP and COE programs are funded once again. She stated, “It requires everyone who knows about the situation to take action and to do something about it. It can be as simple as e-mailing your state senator and bringing them your concern for what has happened to HCOP and how important it is to keep the program running.” Not only will this simple action help change the lives of students, but it will have a huge impact on the communities where help is needed most.

In the next issue of IMPACT, we will be covering a short history of the David Geffen School of Medicine, and opportunities and resources available here for students who wish to pursue careers dedicated towards expanding access to care, as well as service to underserved communities both here and abroad.

UCLA’s Undiscovered Hotspots
By Ali Shefizadeh

In the last issue of IMPACT, we reviewed UCLA’s “undiscovered libraries,” and as promised, we attempt to identify the best—most accessible and user friendly—computer labs in this issue. Of course, with the proliferation of technology, most of you already have a laptop at your fingertips. Yet, for those of us that don’t, or who no longer have access to some computer labs (read: you have already graduated), here is a list that may prove helpful. In the meantime, if you have any reviews of your own, don’t hesitate to email us:

Science Learning Center
Review: Everyone in PREP & RAP (that has already graduated but is) taking science classes at UCLA or UCLA Extension can use this facility—best place if you need a computer during morning hours. If you are a previous UCLA student, just use your previous ID and password. If not, I asked the office and they said to bring proof of enrollment in a science class at UCLA Extension, and come in-person to see lab attendant in Young Hall 4335; they will create an account for you. Perks include cheap printing (5 cents/page), memory space on the computers (if you need to install/store anything), and much quieter study environment than CLICC. Ackerman union is nearby if you want to grab a bite to eat and there are a ton of vending machines on the basement floor of the Chemistry building as well.

Hours: 8 AM-10 PM Monday-Thursday, 8 AM-5 PM Friday, 9-5 Saturday, and 1-9 PM Sunday.

CLICC in Powell Library & Laptop Lending Sites
Review: Centrally located on campus, convenient, and excellent place to use a computer if you continue to have your BOL ID from your undergraduate years. If you want to use a laptop, you can borrow a laptop for 4 hours and renew it periodically as well. Laptops are also available... Continues on page 9
PREP Dental Alumni Spotlight: An Interview with Alfredo Paredes

By Habiba Ismail

Alfredo Paredes was born in Mexico, in the city of Celaya within the state of Guanajuato. His father immigrated to the US in the 1980s, and it was not until 1997 when he was able to re-unite with his family in the US. Upon arriving to the US, Alfredo was only interested in going to school; however, he had no financial means to do so. He also could not speak a word of English.

However, Alfredo overcame these hurdles and in the spring of 1998, he enrolled in Riverside Community College and paid his way through college. It was at Riverside Community College that he learned English and proceeded to take lower division classes. In the summer of 2001, he transferred to UCLA and in 2004, he graduated with a bachelor’s degree in Chemistry. In that same year, he was accepted to the UCLA School of Dentistry, where he is currently a third year dental student. His energy and enthusiasm for dentistry is infectious and certainly refreshing.

What role did PREP play in shaping your career in dentistry?

Before going into PREP, I never knew anything about dentistry. Growing up in Mexico, dental care was a privilege and thus I was never exposed to dentistry. As a matter of fact, I went into PREP as a pre-med student. While in PREP, I met Dr. Sanders (Assistant Dean of Outreach and Diversity) and a dental student, who gave a lecture about dentistry. I remember them looking very excited about dentistry, which is what first peaked my interest in dentistry. Prior to that, I always thought that a dentist pulled out teeth all day. Shortly after PREP ended, I contacted Dr. Sanders, and he introduced me to various specialties within dentistry. Through PREP, I was also fortunate to join study groups with post-baccalaureate students who were studying for the DAT. Occasionally when my schedule permitted, I was fortunate to sit in on some of their DAT review sessions. It was because of my participation in PREP that I was exposed to the field of dentistry, and was able to meet mentors like Dr. Sanders.

Why did you change from Pre-Med to Pre-Dent?

In dentistry, I love that you can combine a sense of artistry with science. The work produced by a dentist has to be both functional and aesthetically pleasing; it is a combination of medicine and craftsmanship. In elementary school, I loved arts and crafts. I also worked as a construction worker and grew accustomed to using my hands. Thus, many of the principles in construction are similar to the ones I employ in dentistry. When I started to learn about dentistry, it felt like a familiar field in that sense, since I could draw a similarity between my interest in arts and crafts, my experience in construction, and my passion for the sciences.

Can you please elaborate more on the principles of construction that you believe to be similar to those in dentistry?

In dentistry, you drill, and use cements and posts to build up broken teeth. You also use crowns to restore teeth and their function, as well as adapt wires for orthodontic pur-
poses. This is similar to the field of construction, particularly around building the foundations for a home, as well as other construction work.

**What is your favorite class in dental school? Why?**

My favorite class, so far, has been one on fixed prosthodontics. I am currently the President of the Esthetics Study Club here at UCLA, so it is natural that I like this class since we learn to do a lot of esthetic restorations and complex restorative dentistry. This is also the class where we learn to work on crowns, veneers, and smile design.

**What is your schedule as a 3rd year dental student?**

My schedule varies every quarter. This quarter, my schedule includes the following:

**Lecture:**
- Monday: 8 am to 5 pm
- Friday: 8 am to 2 pm

**Clinical (where I see patients):**
- Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday: All day

**How did you prepare for the DAT?**

I studied from a few books, such as Kaplan. I also bought a DVD from the American Dental Association (ADA), which contained a full-length sample exam. Also, Dr. Sanders was kind enough to let me approach Raquel Ulma, a tutor for the post-baccalaureate program. I took advantage of that opportunity and would often ask her questions related to the DAT. She was very helpful and went out of her way to make sure I understood the material.

**What advice would you give to pre-dental and pre-medical students?**

Keep an open mind. Be open to new options. I feel like many PREP students tend to be obsessed with the idea of becoming a doctor. They may miss an opportunity to discover another health-related field that may be better suited for them. Dentistry is a great profession and I think many people do not know much about it. I would also advise them to immerse themselves in the field by participating in clinical volunteer opportunities in dental offices, clinics, or hospitals.

**What is one quality that has helped you to succeed in dental school?**

Motivation and excitement. When you are motivated, it definitely helps to overcome the challenges of dental school because you enjoy what you do.
**What’s Bruin?**

Compiled by: Angela Echiverri

**UC Post-baccalaureate Programs** are now accepting applications:
https://meded-postbac.ucsd.edu. Upcoming deadlines are listed below:
UCLA: May 31, 2007
UC-Davis: May 18, 2007
UCSD: June 1, 2007

**7th Annual Old Premeds Conference**

The Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel
Thursday, June 7th through Saturday, June 9th with a farewell breakfast on Sunday, June 10th. Hear presentations and speakers on how non-traditional students, from the very early pre-med through medical students and residency, can become a physician. For more information, please visit: http://www.oldpremeds.org/newsletter/register.pdf

**Feria Del Libro: A Family Book Fair**

South Steps of the Los Angeles City Hall, on Main Street
Saturday, June 2nd 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

The feria is a city-wide event that celebrates and promotes a culture of reading at home and at school as well as provides access to culturally-relevant books to our expected 25,000 attendees.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Carolina Hernandez via email at chernandez@familiesinschools.org or by phone at (213) 484-2870 ext. 256 as soon as possible.

**UCLA’s Undiscovered Hotspots (cont.)**

for checkout at the following locations:
http://www.clicc.ucla.edu/pdf/map_09_05_pods.pdf

Hours: 7:30 AM-2:00 AM 1st 2 weeks of the quarter and 24-hours on weekdays 3rd-10th week.

**Academic Advancement Program Computer Lab**

Review: Located on the basement floor of Campbell Hall, this lab uses the same login you use for CLICC for students who are current/former AAP students. Perks include cheap printing and flexible hours.
Every month, recommendations that PREP and RAP students makes about a great book they have read in the past month makes it into IMPACT’s Book Club. Of course, this is not Oprah’s Book Club, but these books are awesome—so have fun reading:

Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World

By Tracy Kidder

Mountains Beyond Mountains follows the life and career of Dr. Paul Farmer – a man who became a doctor, Harvard professor, renowned infectious disease specialist, anthropologist, recipient of a MacArthur “genius” grant, and a world class Robin Hood. Follow Dr. Paul Farmer in his quest to diagnose and cure infectious diseases by bringing the life-saving tools of modern medicine to those who need them most.
**Want to Contribute?**

IMPACT is a newsletter by students, for students.

The Editorial Board meets on the first Thursday of every month at 5:00 PM in the Center for Health Sciences (CHS):

The next meeting will be on Thursday, May 3rd in CHS 43-105

Last meeting of this academic year will be on Thursday, June 7th in CHS 23-105

All are welcome to attend.

To contribute to IMPACT or to join the Editorial Board, please contact Ali Shefizadeh at shefizadeh@yahoo.com. We welcome your contributions.

**Resources**

The Resources column is a forum intended for the sharing of research and information relevant to premedical students gathered by PREP & RAP Alumni. If you have any interesting websites you like to share, please let us know:

**MCAT Information**
Sign up for this year’s MCAT or get answers to FAQs, at aamc.org/students/mcat/start.htm

**The Next Generation**: An Introduction to Medicine www.nextgenmd.org

**National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions** www.naahp.org

**AAMC’s Aspiring Doctors Website** www.aspiringdocs.com

**Association of American Medical Colleges**
Essential basic information about applying to medical school www.aamc.org

**American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine**
www.aacom.org

**Premedical Discussion Forums**
www.studentdoctor.net

**MCAT Mnemonics**
http://www.geocities.com/CollegePark/Union/5092/mnemMCAT.html

**MDapplicants.com**
A collaborative site created by the online community to serve as a guide to premedical students.