"No More Hidden Figures - Continuing to Honor and Recognize The Sheroes Among Us"
Program

Welcome
Chancellor’s Remarks
Student Performance
Keynote Speaker Introduction
Keynote Speaker
Introduction of Pinning Ceremony
Recognition of Unsung Sheroes

Student Performance
Chancellor Nancy Cantor, Rutgers University- Newark
Jamisha Montague ’22 SASN, HLLC Scholar and Poet
Ginny Caputo, 2021 WHM Committee Co-Chair
Dr. Maria Soto-Greene, Executive Vice Dean Rutgers University-New Jersey Medical School
Elsa Alves, 2021 WHM Committee Co-Chair
Pinning Video Montage

Student Performance Introduction
Lavern Agyei ‘24 SASN and Poet paying Tribute to Posthumous Honoree Henrietta Lacks
Elsa Alves, 2021 WHM Committee Co-Chair
Magna Gopal, Coach, Speaker, Dancer, and Artist
Jamie Hendrix, 2021 WHM Committee Co-Chair
Dr. Sangeeta Lamba, RBHS Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion
Salma Harfouche SASN ’22 and Honors College

Panelists

- Dr. Chris T. Pernell, Chief Strategic Integration and Health Equity Officer- University Hospital in Newark
- Simona Badger, Clinical Social Work/Therapist, LCSW
- Dr. Karma Warren, Emergency Medicine Physician- University Hospital and Assistant Professor Rutgers University Medical School

Pinning Video Montage

- Student
  - Ihsan Al-Zoubabi (Ph. D Student)
- Faculty-Staff
  - Roxanne R. Hall (Interim Co-Director RU Ready For Work Program)
  - Kim Ramsey (Rutgers University- Newark Staff Nurse)
- Community
  - Sha’Suliman Al-Hadi Khalif (Administrator/ Board Member)
  - Wilma Oddetta Lambert (Academic Enrichment Supervisor)
Dr. Maria L. Soto-Greene is a tenured Professor and Executive Vice Dean at Rutgers University New Jersey Medical School (NJMS). She has amassed over 35 years of experience in all aspects of medical education. As a clinician-educator, her administrative portfolio has evolved from the Director of the Medical Intensive Care Units, Associate Dean for Special Programs, Senior Associate Dean for Education, Vice Dean, to her current position. Initially, Dr. Soto-Greene focused on the care of the critically ill patient, honing in on the significance of the physician/patient communication, and the impact on vulnerable patients and their loved ones. In her current role, she oversees all aspects of undergraduate medical education (admissions, student affairs, education), faculty affairs, professional development, accreditation, and diversity affairs.

Dr. Soto-Greene is committed to advancing the school’s health equity and social justice education, and community service. She has been funded by federal and private agencies since the early 1990s and has passionately worked to create unparalleled opportunities for thousands of individuals underrepresented in medicine and science. These programs support students at the pre-college level through medical school faculty, contributing to career advancement and cultivating the next generation of social justice champions. Equity, diversity, and inclusion are threaded into everything that she does.

Dr. Soto-Greene continues to serve as an active mentor to many. She has developed, implemented, and led a number of individualized and group faculty development activities. Equally important, Dr. Soto-Greene has been a leader in disseminating best practices to other medical schools. In her role, she chaired the Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS) Committee on the Best Practices for the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Faculty, and all of the recommendations were adopted. For a decade, she has collaborated and led the Centers of Excellence Consortium on minority faculty development with other medical schools. Dr. Soto-Greene is a past Chair for the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Group on Diversity and Inclusion and a past President of the Hispanic-Serving Health Professions Schools. She currently serves on the AAMC Minority Faculty Education Advisory Committee and Mid Career Minority Faculty Development Advisory Committee. As part of the AAMC Medical Education Senior Leaders.
Panelists

Dr. Chris T. Pernell, University Hospital Chief Strategic Integration and Equity Officer

Dr. Chris T. Pernell is a dynamic physician leader and social change agent. In her public health practice, her focus is health justice, community-based advocacy, and population-wide health promotion and disease prevention. Recently, she joined University Hospital in Newark, New Jersey as the first Chief Strategic Integration and Health Equity Officer. Dr. Pernell oversees a portfolio which includes Population Health, Strategic Planning, Community Affairs, and the Human Experience. Her office is responsible for health equity strategy development and integrating equity and inclusion within University Hospital system and across all operations. Prior to joining University Hospital, she led the 1199SEIU/League Labor Management Initiatives (LMI) Workplace and Community Health Program. Working with leaders and frontline workers of 1199 SEIU, and partners across NYC healthcare institutions, her efforts centered on workplace health strategies, worker empowerment, health equity, and health system transformation.

Ms. Simona Badger, LCSW - S. Badger Empowerment and Consulting Services LLC

Simona Badger, LCSW provides comprehensive support, prevention, and education services to women, men, families, children and adolescents, and under-served populations affected by health disparities, trauma, self-identity issues, and poverty. She is a compassionate, professional, and culturally competent therapist providing a strengths-based perspective to therapy. Ms. Badger believes working together through a trusting collaborative relationship, one can gain support to alleviate emotional pain and begin the journey of self-acceptance. Her extensive experience includes: helping clients with divorce, relationship problems, sleep problems, grief, work-related stress, family stress, and immigration concerns.

Dr. Karma Warren, University Hospital Emergency Medicine Physician

Dr. Karma Warren is a clinical Emergency Medicine physician serving at University Hospital in Newark, New Jersey. She also serves as an Assistant Professor at Rutgers University New Jersey Medical School. Dr. Warren continues her mission of service beyond the walls of medical facilities and academia through various community service efforts. She is the current president of the Essex County Chapter of Links Inc. Dr. Warren is also a member of the New Jersey Department of Health COVID-19 Professional Advisory Committee and a COVID-19 survivor.
Moderators

Dr. Sangeeta Lambda - RBHS Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion

Dr. Lamba is the Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion at Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences. She most recently served as the Associate Dean of Education at New Jersey Medical School and for the last 25 years has been serving the Newark community as an attending physician in the emergency department at University Hospital. She is passionate about patient care, mentoring, and diversity, equity, and inclusion and has established multiple programs and initiatives for the advancement of women and underrepresented groups in medicine at RBHS. She launched the Group on Women in Medicine and Science at New Jersey Medical School that served to meet the mentoring, networking, and leadership needs of women faculty and recently also established the Women and Gender Equity Faculty Council at RBHS. Dr. Lamba holds regional and national empowerment workshops on mitigating bias, addressing microaggressions, and active bystander training aimed at fostering a culture of allyship and respect for all.

Salma Harfouche - School of Arts and Sciences Class of 2022

Ms. Harcoufe is a William F. Singletary Scholarship recipient. She currently dually majors in Chemistry and Applied Mathematics. Her career goal is to become a Cancer Research immunologist. Salma is a cancer survivor who volunteers at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, where she recently underwent treatment.
Henrietta Lacks was an African-American woman whose cancer cells are the source of the HeLa cell line, the first immortalized human cell line and one of the most important cell lines in medical research. In 1951, Ms. Lacks underwent treatment for cervical cancer at Johns Hopkins Hospital. In addition to providing her with medical care, Henrietta’s doctor removed some of her cancerous cells to use in research without acquiring her consent; a routine practice at the time.
Posthumous Honor: Henrietta Lacks

Ms. Lacks ultimately succumbed to this cancer at the age of 31. Henrietta’s extracted cells known as the “HeLa” from the first two letters of her first and last names continued to reproduce in the laboratory well beyond her death. This was the first time in history that a human cell line was able to be reproduced in a laboratory setting. The HeLa cell line continues to be a source of invaluable medical data to this day and is used in a wide range of biomedical studies allowing researchers experimentation on cultures rather than on humans. Because of their unique ability to reproduce indefinitely, HeLa cells have been instrumental in the development of the polio vaccine, cancer treatment protocols, AIDS research, gene mapping as well as to test the effects of radiation and toxic substances. HeLa cells are also used to test human sensitivity to tape, glue, cosmetics, and irritants.

Without the benefit of access to this line of human cells, one of the most important tools in medical research would not exist. Medical research and findings has been most impactful in the areas related to women’s health, especially breast and cervical cancer. Moreover, the cells led to important medical and scientific advances including cloning and in vitro fertilization.

Despite accessible information regarding the origins of HeLa’s immortalized cell lines, the Lacks family was not formally notified of the line’s existence until 1975. With knowledge of the cell line’s genetic origin becoming public, its use for medical research and commercial purposes continues to raise concerns about privacy and patients’ rights.

In the 21st century, Henrietta’s case was an important component in the debate surrounding informed consent from patients for the extraction and use of cells in research. In 2013 the National Institutes of Health (NIH) granted the Lacks family control over how data on the HeLa cell genome would be used.

The immortal contribution of Henrietta Lacks provided the field of science with an extraordinarily powerful tool and a prolific lesson regarding the importance of ethics in biomedical research.
Congratulations 2021 Honorees!

Student Shero

Ihsan Al-Zoubabi
Ph. D Student

Community Sheroes

Sha'Suliman Al-Hadi Khalif
Administrator/ Board Member

Wilma Oddetta Lambert
Academic Enrichment Coordinator
Congratulations 2021 Honorees!

Faculty - Staff Sheroes

Roxanne R. Hall
Interim Co-Director RU Ready For Work Program

Kim Ramsey
Staff Nurse

"No More Hidden Figures - Continuing to Honor and Recognize The Sheroes Among Us"
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