



MEDICAL SCHOOL HOTLINE

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Student Profile: Class of 2009 John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM)

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Dr. Anthony A.S. Guerrero, principle speaker at the White Coat Ceremony¹ on August 5, 2005, advised the incoming medical students, "Humanism, as ancient as it may be in our tradition, is the greatest of all technological advances in medicine. With the white cloaks of compassion to remind you of the role as healers, strive—in these next four years—to develop the highest level of humanism towards parents, patients' families, and colleagues to heal effectively human sufferings in all of its forms and wherever it may be encountered, and so that working among colleagues, you will achieve the highest level of excellence and perfection in medicine."² With these words, 60 students were inducted into the Class of 2009.

The class was selected from 1,348 total applicants, 1,131 non-resident and 217 resident applicants. Applications were submitted on line, through the American Medical College Admission Service (MCAS). To qualify as resident, applicants must have at least 3 of the following criteria related to Hawaii: legal residence, birthplace,

parent's residence, high school, and college or professional school attended.

One hundred thirty-six non-residents and 152 residents were interviewed. Of these numbers, five non-residents, 2 from Guam and 3 from California, and 55 Hawaii residents were admitted. The candidates selected for interviews qualified through an academic screen that consisted of undergraduate Grade Point Averages (cumulative and science), scores on the subtests of the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), honor awards, participation in extracurricular activities, and employment in health, medicine, and any human services. A total of 22 points can be achieved. To qualify to be interviewed, a Hawaii resident must achieve a minimum total score of 7 points on the screen and a non-resident, 14, in order to proceed in the process.

Two interviewers and the Chair of the Admissions Committee met individually with all qualified applicants. There are 70 interviewers

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who are regular, clinical faculty, and 4th year medical students. As the application of each candidate is completed through AMCAS and scored by the registrar, an interviewer is assigned. The interviews are provided with the names and addresses of the applicants and her/his three essays that are the personal statement submitted to AMCAS and two statements that “Describe succinctly the important experience(s) to your life which began the process that motivated you to enter the career of medicine” and “Explain why you are applying to the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine.” Interviewers were not provided numerical scores, letter grades, or letters of recommendations. Eight to ten applicants are assigned to each interviewer.

Completed applications include transcripts, MCAT scores, and personal statements and data, two interviewers reports, essays written for JABSOM, and letters of recommendations (at least 2). These documents are submitted to the Admissions Committee.

The eleven-member Admissions Committee was composed of 6 women and 5 men, among whom were 8 physicians from various clinical areas, 2 basic and one social scientist. They represented Hawaii’s major ethnic groups and various age levels. The folders were distributed randomly to committee members who reported individually to the committee, as a whole. At the conclusion of deliberating on each candidate, an applicant was rated (1-10) by each committee member. The ratings were not discussed and submitted to the registrar who averaged the ratings. In May, after all applicants were rated, the ratings were ranked. The top 60 were invited into the Class of 2009. Of the total, nine students were from the Imi Ho’ola class who completed successfully the one-year post baccalaureate program.

The median scores of the entering class were: cumulative GPA 3.51; Science GPA, 3.39; MCAT total, 29; Verbal Reasoning, 9; Physical Sciences 10; Writing Sample, R; Biological Sciences, 10. JABSOM remains the most ethnically diverse school of medicine in the United States with 16 Whites, 10 Japanese, 9 Mixed Asians, 6 Chinese, 5 Filipinos, 3 Guamanians or Chamorros, 3 Japanese, Whites, 3 Native Hawaiians, Other, 2 Vietnamese, Chinese, 1 Asian Indians, White, 1 Black or African American, 1 Korean, and 1 Korean, White.

Sixteen are graduates from colleges in Hawaii--12 University of Hawaii, 2 Hawaii Pacific University, 1 Brigham Young, and 1 Chaminade; 16 from mainland colleges, one University of Guam, and 1 foreign college. Mainland colleges are represented by: University of Southern California, Stanford University, University of California-Santa Barbara, Berkeley, Irvine and Los Angeles, Northwestern University, Occidental Colleges, Pacific University, Brigham Young University (Hawaii and Utah), California Polytechnic State Univ.-San Luis Obispo, California State Polytechnic University-Pomona, Colorado State University, Creighton University, Dartmouth College, Fordham University, Georgetown University, Johns Hopkins University, Mills College, Santa Clara University, Tufts University, University of Notre Dame, University of Pennsylvania, University of Rochester, University of Victoria, University of Washington, and Whitman College.

All students have baccalaureate degrees, and eleven also possess master degrees. College majors include the following: Biology, Psychology, Chemistry, Human Biology, Biochemistry, Kinesiology, Aquatic Biology, Biochemistry and Molecular Cell Biology, Business, Communications, English, Food Science & Human Nutrition, Japanese, Kinesiology/Public Health, Microbiology/Immunology/Molecular Genetics, Molecular Biology/Public Health, Music Performance/Public Health, Physiological Sciences, Pre-Medical Studies, Science-computing, Secondary Music Education/Music, Education, and Spanish.

Thirty-two women and twenty-eight men, ages 20-51, median of 23, began their journey to becoming physicians on July 25, 2005. As Dr. Guerrero aptly said, “Those entering medical schools are fortunate for the opportunity to study medicine at a time when technology has enabled humans to live longer and healthier than ever before in evolutionary history.”²

References

1. The Arnold P. Gold Foundation, Inc. 619 Palisade Ave., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632
2. Guerrero, Anthony P.S. “Humanism: the Greatest Technological Advance in Medicine” in the Hawaii Medical Journal, Vol. 64, September 2005

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