



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

PROSE

*Humanism in Medicine:
Lessons From the Homeless*
Keila Rose López..... [1](#)

Seeing Patients
Henry Huson..... [6](#)

A Lesson in Compassion
Amanda Trippensee..... [8](#)

A Tale of Meetings
Thomas Shakar..... [10](#)

POETRY

Revelations of a Supermoon
Stefano Leitner..... [4](#)

ARTWORK

Fountains
Daniel Farinas Lugo..... [1](#)

Abandoned Living & Lucia
Raye Ng..... [3](#)

Generaciones
Ashley Kreher..... [4](#)

*Mae Haad Pier – Koh Tao,
Thailand & The Many Faces
of God*
Stefano Leitner..... [5](#)

Elevated & Following
Juno Lee [7](#)

Trails
Juno Lee [8](#)

Sunset
Dorty Morency [9](#)

*2016 Youth Health Equity
Art Exhibition*..... [11](#)

Na Pali Coast View
Shelbi Brown [13](#)

HEAL

Humanism Evolving through Arts and Literature



FOUNTAINS Daniel Farinas Lugo, Class of 2019

HUMANISM IN MEDICINE: LESSONS FROM THE HOMELESS

Keila Rose López, Class of 2019

From experience, I can say that the only way to birth passion in the soul of anyone is to interact and integrate oneself with the cause that ignites it. This was true for me when I entered as a volunteer into the Salvation Army Women’s and Children’s Shelter. When I first walked into the cafeteria I felt reserved, like a stranger entering a sacred and private world. However, as soon as I met the women and the many rambunctious, playful children living in the shelter, my inhibitions began to melt away.

I first sat down with a woman named Emily. As we began to talk, I asked, “Where are you from?” She began to recount her story of trying to make a better life in Florida after being kicked out of her home when she became pregnant. “I have a one-and-a-half-year-old

girl and I’m expecting a boy soon,” she said, with deep worry expressed on her face. She talked about her dreams of finishing school, attending college, and having her own home where she could care for her children. My eyes watered in disbelief when I heard that she was my age.

Over the months that followed, I listened to these women’s stories, from victims of heart breaking tales of abuse and sex trafficking, to women who had just fallen on hard times. I saw how tirelessly they worked to get back on their feet and how much they longed to be treated with validation. With fiery passion, I was determined to do something, to bring some joy to these needy women and their families in the shelter.

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HEAL is a place for medical students to share their growth and development, for faculty and staff to impart their knowledge gained from experience, and for members of the community to express how health and healing have impacted their lives.

We hope this work increases your appreciation for the art of medicine.

LESSONS FROM THE HOMELESS (CONTINUED)

I decided to create the Salvation Army Women's and Children's Shelter Spa Day. It was a day created for the sole purpose of pampering and showering the women of this shelter, and their children, with gifts, food, and love. I assembled a team of professional hairstylists, manicurists, and companies such as Body Shop, Disney, and Sephora, to donate their time and assets to these women in need. When I walked in with my team, gift baskets and toys in hand, the sheer joy on the women's faces left me breathless. They could barely contain their excitement as a line was assembled for haircuts, manicures, and pedicures.

The first woman to get a makeover was known for displaying a tough exterior, but when she saw her face in the mirror she burst into tears, saying, "This is the first time in my life I have ever felt beautiful!" Many women became emotional, embraced me, and some even danced across the room, loving their new fabulous personas. I was moved as I heard a woman saying, "Thank you for loving us." I wanted to do something for these women to show them that they were beautiful, to embrace their worth and meaning.

On every Spa Day, we shared laughter. Over the three years that I served at the shelter, I listened to stories of how the women became homeless, and observed the eclectic instant family that had formed in the inner workings of the shelter. Once, a woman shared with me, "Every time you do a spa day, you make me feel like I'm not living in a homeless shelter; you make me feel normal, like you're coming to visit me at my house." This statement truly solidified the importance of my work.

I truly feel that my experiences serving the women of the Salvation Army Women's and Children's Shelter has developed and influenced many of the qualities that I will carry with me in serving my patients as a physician. I had to demonstrate integrity in how I carried myself and in my interactions with the women. I

learned that integrity is the foundation of building trust and demonstrating this quality allowed the women to feel comfortable in sharing their own personal stories. Every time I planned an activity, I always made sure that every woman felt cared for and made certain every child received a toy, that everyone felt content.

As exhausting as these efforts were, I learned these women needed, deserved, and demanded every ounce of excellence that I possessed. I had to be a leader, a team player, and a servant all at the same time, and this allowed me to grow tremendously and understand that excellence was not just being outstanding for my own benefit, but being outstanding to bring something great to fruition for others.

Through my work I understood the reward of compassion, that it is not just a mere word, but an action that demonstrates love and serves to transform, break down barriers, and achieve mutual vulnerability. I understood altruism when the demands of exams and deadlines were pressing, yet the excitement of the women having something to look forward to, helped me push my needs aside. I learned in every conversation to demonstrate respect, to never treat the women I spoke to as beneath me because of their situation, their education, or their appearance. Rather, to admire them for their courage in overcoming insurmountable obstacles and their drive to better themselves. Empathy was a necessity in conversation, and I learned so much more when I just listened and looked beyond my personal biases to identify with and understand their struggles. I understood service with every nail painted, conversation had, or meal served. That service is demonstrated with humility and action with pure intentions. Ultimately, I took a valuable lesson away with me, that the values mentioned are attitudes and actions I must demonstrate in becoming the type of physician that can truly embrace the needs of my patients.



ABANDONED LIVING (TOP)
&
LUCIA (BOTTOM)
Raye Ng, Class of 2019

REVELATIONS OF A SUPERMOON

Stefano Leitner, Class of 2019

Many times we've met,
Now
Ever so close.
The seasons have passed,
Now
Winter approaches.
With first site I'm awed,
Like butterflies just hatched.
The times before,
Why ever look back?
And as a young man, I've traveled,
I've seen you before.
What is your purpose today?
My heart believes it's more
Than just a time for attention.
My arms stretch out for your affection.
The answer is in your reflection:
Rays of hope shine through the darkness of night.
Without a word you teach
The secrets of life:
Yet the soul, it weeps.
Discomfort despised.
Love thyself.
But how?
Attempts pile on, seasons pass by.
The mystery you keep
Forever guessing.
Is this the right path? A curse
Or a blessing?
Acceptance the theme of each chapter written.
The truth so simple,
As experience strengthens my vision.
Forgive thyself and allow them to be forgiven.
This visit, so close, I will always remember.
The day I let go,
On that cold November.



GENERACIONES

Ashley Kreher,
Class of 2019



**HAE HAAD PIER-KOH TAO, THAILAND (ABOVE)
&
THE MANY FACES OF GOD (BELOW)**
Stefano Leitner, Class of 2019

I batted away the images that filled my head and set my bones ablaze. I waited for the fear to subside.

SEEING PATIENTS

Henry Huson, Class of 2017

I remember that sound. It's one of those things you can never forget, a sound of complete fear, a scream that could pierce the sky like a beacon calling out for help. It rattled me inside. It shook the confidence that I had built since starting medical school, seeing patients week after week. There I stood, facing a closed door with a simple peek of light escaping through the jamb. I wanted to turn around in retreat from the patient on the other side. I took a moment to breathe. Filling my lungs with the cool air in the office, I tried not to imagine all of the pain, destruction, sorrow and misery that awaited me. I batted away the images that filled my head and set my bones ablaze. I waited for the fear to subside. Gathering my spirits off of the floor, I placed my hand on the knob and stepped in.

I had spent the past week seeing child after child with a wide range of ailments, but this child was different. This wasn't a child in pain. This didn't involve blood, or vomit, or sickness. This was panic. As this child flailed wildly around the room with tears slipping down her cheeks and onto the paper on the exam table, I had missed it. We are all taught the importance of that first observation, to glance at our patients and try to grasp the situation. My observation had failed me. While I saw the tears and movement, I missed her eyes, eyes searching for the world but failing to find resolution. I had met my first blind patient, all of 6 years in this world, never knowing its beauty, and my fear returned.

As I opened my mouth and waited for the words to slip past my teeth, her mother interjected. It was an apology. The last thing I would have ever imagined. She stood before me grasping at her daughter, trying to hold her close and comfort her, while throwing "sorry" my way like darts at a board. My tongue twisted and turned and found itself tied, leaving me speechless and standing there alone. While the screaming was loud, my own silence was deafening. I was left frozen, pondering my next move and needing a moment to myself. I took the time to process, not only the scene around me, but also my own fear, my own urge to escape. Taking this time, I was able to refocus and began to listen.

The mother began the story as if opening up the book that encompassed her daughter's life. While routinely visiting the office for her annual checkup and vaccinations, there was always a difficulty. This little girl enjoyed every moment she spent with

her mother, hanging on her leg, a pillar keeping her upright in the world. Yet when the door of the home opened, everything changed. As the outside environment beeped, honked and whistled, this little girl found herself alone, not knowing what awaited her with each step forward. She hated each time she had to visit the doctor, hearing new voices surround her but always feeling isolated. While we all grew up learning faces—reading these masks that we wear to display our emotion and intentions—she lived in a world of absence.

That was when I felt it, a clarity that washed over me like sunlight. I inched closer, monitoring each step with the trepidation that one can only feel when walking on embers. When I found myself in front of her, I reached out. Feeling the abyss as my hands passed through, I found hers. In a swift motion, I brought them to rest upon my face. The screaming stopped. The tears were suddenly held behind the floodgates of her eyes. She played. Combing her hands through my beard and along the nooks and crannies of my features, she became an artist painting a portrait with her fingers. While she may never see it with her eyes, she had found my face, a face she could attach to a voice that was new to her and initially scary. This face lifted that fear, and with it, brought out the playful little girl her mother was the only witness to. While she relaxed upon finding my face, my own tension subsided when I found her smile.

As a medical student passes through the training and the lectures, we are taught about 'the laying on of hands,' the original tool wielded by every physician across every generation and age. A tenet within medicine, it is one of the more powerful instruments we have at our disposal. It holds such high esteem and importance in the field of medicine, yet the concept is difficult for an early student to grasp. I had always understood what the words represented, but it was still just an idea, shrouded in fog and buried away for a later date. That day had finally come. I had stepped into a child's shoes and assumed their role if only for a moment, but that was all that was needed. I found the comfort and support that a human touch can bring not only for a patient but also for a physician. At the end of the visit, her mother thanked me. But I knew it was I who should be thanking them. This small, vibrant little girl had taught me a lesson no book ever could – that the art of medicine is not practiced by the 'white coat,' but by the human that lies beneath.



**ELEVATED
(ABOVE)
&
FOLLOWING
(BELOW)**

Juno Lee, Class of 2018

A LESSON IN COMPASSION

Amanda Trippensee, Class of 2018

During one of my afternoons in clinic, I was greeted by my attending who already had a patient in the exam room.

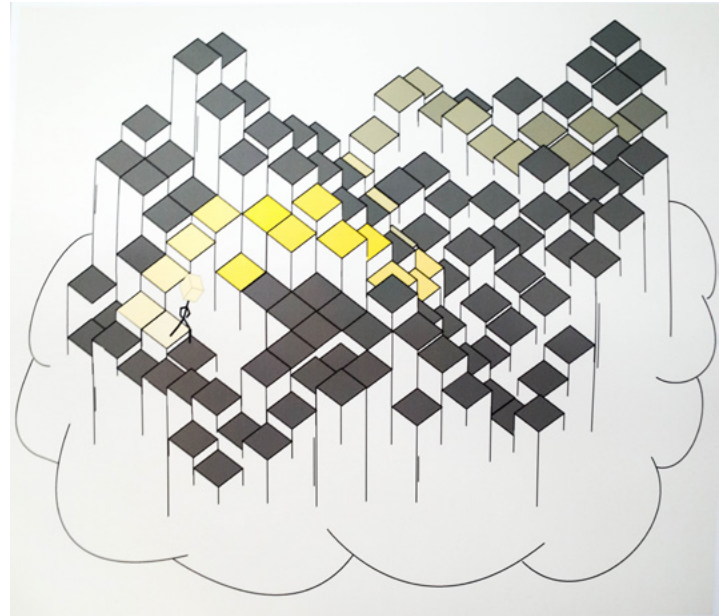
“Now this is a sensitive case: a 19 year-old female with a presenting complaint of burning and itching in her vulvovaginal area. You should know that she just found out last night that her boyfriend, whom she had moved to Tampa to be with, had been cheating on her with prostitutes. One of them called her last night to let her know, and she immediately left him and drove back here. She is exhausted and upset, and what’s more, the last time she was here she was tested for herpes and her test was positive. I just told her the news and she is pretty upset, but I still need to perform a pelvic exam. Are you ready?”

Am I?

As we walked into the exam room, I could see a young woman crying uncontrollably; it was the sort of cry that usually only a mirror gets to see, but now I, too, was a witness. My heart immediately went out to her and my first thought was, “She’s just a kid...she reminds me of my younger sister.” My sister is also 19, and I briefly wondered what I would do if my sister found herself in a similar situation.

Snapping back to the present, my attending and I both proceeded to console her and explain that we needed to perform the pelvic exam in order to understand what was going on now. My attending gave her a big hug and told her that she was brave for coming in today and that we would take care of her. Through sobbing tears and choking heaves, she said it would be okay to do the exam. I asked if I could take her hand, she nodded her head yes, and I spent the rest of the exam by her side, coaching her through the rest. I told her that it was okay to cry and that we would be there for her every step of the way. I can only imagine that the worst possible scenarios were filling her with dread, as she asked over and over again if she would be okay.

After the exam was finished, she squeezed my hand and let go and



TRAILS

Juno Lee, Class of 2018

continued to wipe her eyes with a tissue. We told her that we would be back as we left the room to perform tests. As the door clicked shut behind us, I felt the tidal wave of emotion overwhelm me as I noticed staff members weaving in and out of rooms with other patients as if it was a normal afternoon in a clinic. And I suppose it was, but I felt moved and shaken. There was so much I wanted to do for the sobbing girl in the room behind me, but my first step was to switch to the part of my brain that was analytical. What was causing her pain? On this microscopic slide, do I see clue cells? Is there a possibility of a protozoan infection?

We determined that she currently had a case of bacterial vaginosis (BV), which is one of the most common gynecological diagnoses in young women, and that we would treat her with two medications: one for her BV and one for her latent infection of herpes. Although stigmatized, herpes is also very common and very treatable. She would need to be tested for HIV, and she would need her results back from her swab for STDs, but for the moment, she was going to be okay.

When we came back in to present the news, she wanted to know if

My heart immediately went out to her and my first thought was, “She’s just a kid...she reminds me of my younger sister.”

A LESSON IN COMPASSION (CONTINUED)

her dad could be there with her. At the time I thought it was odd that she wanted her dad, but when he was in the room he was both supportive and very concerned. I had wondered if he was the only person she had in the world. Later, I found out in her chart that she had had an abortion previously and her mother had not wanted her to do it.

We explained to her that herpes is both common and manageable, explained how to manage it, and provided sexual education on using condoms.

She asked us, “Is anything bad going to happen to me?”

At the time, we answered that other than sporadic outbreaks that could be managed with the medication and consistent condom use, she should have no other problems, and the bacterial vaginosis

should be cleared up within a week. In looking back, I do wonder what happened to her because I felt that afternoon was about more than just pelvic pain.

Humanity can be very complex, or it can be very simple. I would say that humanism is treating people the way that you would want to be treated; it's also about taking the time to be fully present in every encounter. On any other afternoon, I could have easily disregarded her pain or blamed her for her life, chalking her up to a stereotypical young adult. Instead, watching my attending handle the situation so calmly, and with deep understanding, was invaluable to witness and experience. We were this patient's advocate and caregiver. My lesson that day reminded me of the reason why I chose to come to medical school: to become a compassionate and competent physician.



SUNSET

Dorty Morency, Class of 2017

A TALE OF MEETINGS

Thomas Shakar, Class of 2017

The first time we met, I did not know. There is no question as to why you were so anxious; it was obvious you had never seen a patient like me. Yet, you would get to know me very well. God did not intend for man to witness such things, yet everyone was given a choice and everyone chose to stay. I lay there while you acted like things were “par for the course,” but I was an “albatross.” That was the beginning of a formidable journey; I was never going to be the same.

I met you again, this time I was aware. You seemed so out of place next to the mature healer who has seen it all. Even he would learn something from me in the time to come. Moving from bed to floor and from floor to window, my goal was to get back to a normal life. You came to understand my world when you met my wife, my sister, my nephew, and my daughter—occupying her became something of a game. We all played and it kept spirits up. I was nearly there, as if the seasons changing in the window was a foreshadowing for my imminent discharge. Then, seemingly in an instant, I found myself moving from the window to the bed. I already knew by looking at his face; I could see what was coming next. Your face was neutral because you did not know.

We met again without me knowing. It did not seem much different from the first time. I am sure you were probably thinking, “It couldn’t get any worse.” I already explained this: “You have never seen a patient like me.” His experienced hands worked magic again although things were not perfect. This time, there was a different room with a different window. What had been “goals,” changed to “hopes” and “prayers.” I was no longer focused on the window; I just hoped that I did not have to leave the room again. You came to say “goodbye” every night and I prayed I would live to see the morning. The most advanced contraption on the planet and I will be damned

if a little fluid is going to take it down – “over my dead body!” The events to come would put this to the test. You were not there this time. What happened to me does not seem possible; what a story this will be! I just have to get out of this bed first.

You made your first of multiple visits for the day. It had been many weeks since we first met and you were different. You did not flinch when you saw what they had done. Though you would say later, “Something like that should not exist outside of the operating room. I cannot believe it.” He would tell you, “Bottom line, this doesn’t happen every day.” We hoped something would change, but it did not.

I remember thinking, “Please tell me this is the last time we will meet like this.” If there was any reason to hope, it was lost on me. At least this one was quick. Gas exchange is important to keep things in balance, especially in such an advanced piece of machinery like this. It seems odd that this little piece of plastic is all I needed. There was improvement, but something was still missing. In my core, it felt as if there was a gaping void that would never close. There were other machines to fix that.

The sun feels so good. I have not seen it since before we first met. It is hard to explain my appreciation for this bright heat. Though, I gather that after such an ordeal, my appreciation for many things will be difficult to explain. You have changed and so have I, so has my entire world. I am on the other side of the window now, but I will have to return to my room. I am sure I will see you one last time. You have undoubtedly learned something from me; that is my gift to you. God, if I did not learn how lucky I am to be alive.

I am sure I will see you one last time.

You have undoubtedly learned something from me;
that is my gift to you.

THE 2016 YOUTH HEALTH EQUITY ART EXHIBIT

The Youth Health Equity Art Exhibit occurred on the first day of the 2016 Maternal and Child Health Equity (MCHE) Conference. The goal was to engage youth and their families in education and leadership related to health equity. The Maternal and Child Health Equity Conference Goals for 2016 were:

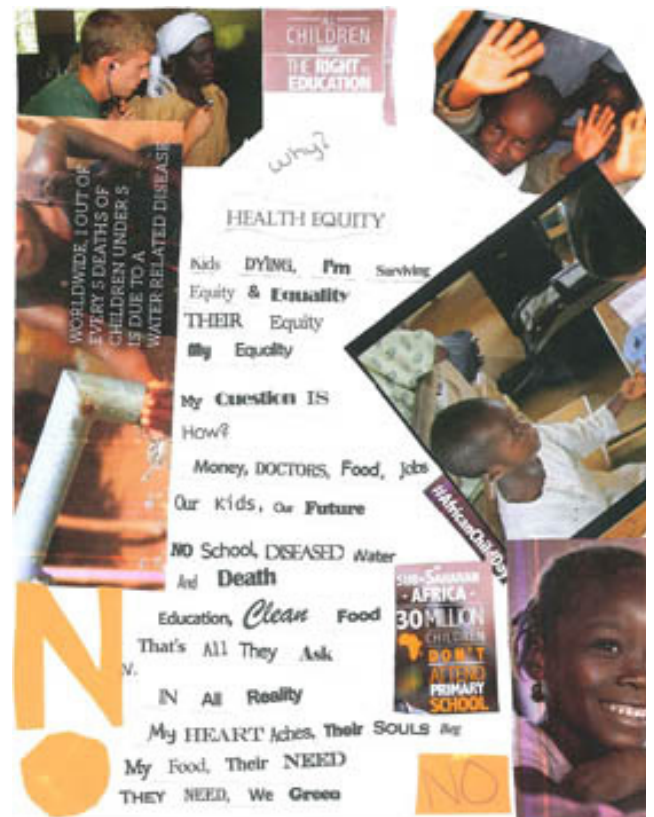
1. To discuss advocacy, education, and policy strategies to address the inequity in maternal child health for the black community through the integration of diverse community and professional perspectives.
2. To identify priorities for the elimination of maternal child health disparities and the promotion of health equity using a life course perspective.
3. To describe culturally responsive mechanisms useful for providers to address maternal child health equity.

Students were challenged to create a collage that spoke to a topic related to health equity. The students were successful in their endeavors through the support of our host, the Gadsden Arts Center and Museum, as well as faculty and staff at the FSU College of Medicine and the MCHE Collaborative (<http://www.mchecollaborative.com>). Close to 40 local area students submitted, and the top 20 were chosen and displayed in the Gadsden Arts Center and Museum. The top 6 winners are presented here.



DANA PAOLA LASSO NINO

First place, Havana Magnet School, 8th Grade



KIMBERLY MORENO

First Place, Havana Magnet School, 8th Grade

THE 2016 YOUTH HEALTH EQUITY ART EXHIBIT

(continued)



ALZA HUTLEY

Second Place, Havana Magnet School, 8th Grade



JANIYA DANIELS

Second Place, East Gadsden High School, 11th Grade



ALIYA HUTLEY

Third Place, Havana Magnet School, 8th Grade



RONTAVIOUS THOMAS

Third Place, Havana Magnet School, 8th Grade

Funding for this conference was made possible (in part) by R13MD011260-01 from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities and several sponsors: The Tallahassee Chapter of the LINKS, Inc., Florida A&M University College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Florida Department of Health, Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare-Women's Pavilion, Florida State University Center on Better Health and Life of Underserved Populations on behalf of HERI (Health Equity Research Institute of Florida) and Florida State University College of Medicine. The views expressed in written conference materials or publications and by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services; nor does mention by trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.



NA PALI COAST VIEW
Shelbi Brown, Class of 2019

JUNO LEE 4TH ANNUAL HEAL COVER ART CONTEST WINNER!

Juno's artwork, *Affective Effects*, will be featured on the cover of HEAL Volume 8, arriving Match Day 2017.

Congratulations, Juno!

All of our fantastic entries will be included in the upcoming Volume 8, March 20th, 2017!

