

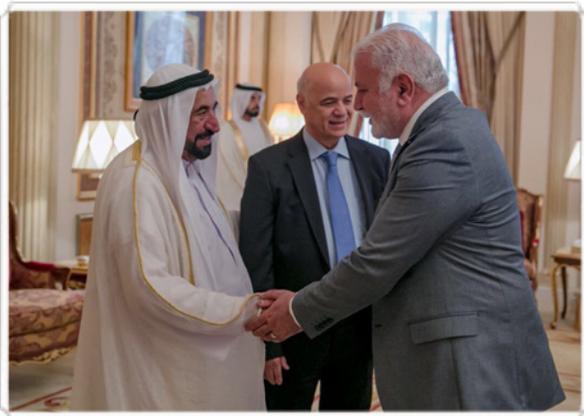


# NEWSLETTER

 COLLEGE NEWS	 STUDENTS' CORNER	 STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS	 MEDICAL MISHAPS	 RECOMMENDATIONS	 DOCTOR'S ORDERS		
<b>EDITOR-IN-CHIEF</b>		<b>FIRST EDITOR</b>		<b>CREATIVE DIRECTOR</b>		<b>EDITORIAL TEAM</b>	
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## DEAN'S MESSAGE OF THE MONTH

As we approach the end of this academic year, I would like to thank His Highness, Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, and the Chancellor, Prof. Hamid Al Nuaimy, for their continuous support. I would also like to congratulate, albeit virtually, our graduating batch of students, as well as their parents, on their efforts and achievements.



During times like this, things are changing every minute, and we are working as hard as we can to make the student learning process as smooth as possible. Online teaching will continue until the end of the academic year. Exams for pre-clinical years will take place in August; on campus if the situation has improved, otherwise online.

What we need from you, as students, is to keep yourselves engaged with the faculty, attend the online learning sessions and avoid falling into a state of malaise. Do not hesitate to contact the university hotlines for any concerns, whether they are related to the dormitories or any learning issues you are facing. The college offers online counseling to students; held by a psychologist as well as a psychiatrist, for those going through harsh times of stress and believe they require assistance.

My dear students, you are going to deal with medical disasters and the stress associated with them in your future medical careers – the college is investigating opportunities for our students to assist during this pandemic. I can reassure you from my experience, after having lived through many ups and downs in my life, that times like these will pass and things will eventually go back to normal.

I would like to thank the faculty and staff for their hard work during this turbulent period. I wish all students the best of luck on their examinations and I ask them all to look after themselves; sleep and eat well so that they are well-rested and in good health to take on the next few months. I hope to see everyone in person as soon as possible. Have a very blessed Ramadan. Stay safe; stay home; stay healthy!

## College of Medicine joins the fight against Covid-19



In these stressful times, the College and its faculty have diverted their attention to the most pressing matter at hand, Covid-19. In light of this, Sharjah TV recently arranged an interview with Prof. Qutayba Hamid, on which he spoke about the College's initiatives. Multiple teams of specialists have already been assembled and deployed from the Sharjah Institute of Medical Research to analyze and counteract the current pandemic. Additionally, the medical labs are able to extend the daily testing capacity of the country by an additional 400 tests. Finally, given the plethora of available tools and funds, Prof. Qutayba is hopeful that further serological and genetic testing can begin in the near future.

## COM Graduate Attains Award at Emirates Diabetes & Endocrinology Congress

The 10<sup>th</sup> Emirates Diabetes & Endocrinology Congress (EDEC) took place between the 27<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020 in The World Trade Center, Dubai, where experts in diabetes and endocrinology met from around the world to share the latest updates. After an intense selection process, only four abstracts were chosen for the oral presentations on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020, one of which was presented by Dr. Rahaf Wardeh (College of Medicine, Class of 2018), titled "Distinctive Effect of FTO Genotypes on Food Intake in Emirati Population".

She won the First Place Award in oral presentations on behalf of the following co-investigators: Dr. Maha Saber-Ayad, Dr. Shaista Manzoor, Dr. Hadia Radwan Dr. Sarah Hammoudeh, Dr. Ahmed Ashraf, Dr. Hussein Jabbar and Dr. Rifat Hamoudi. The study was published in PLOS ONE Journal in October 2019. [doi.org/10.1371/](https://doi.org/10.1371/)



## UOS-COM Graduates match in the US

Congratulations to our medical graduates who matched for residency programs in the United States.

- Dr. Mohammed Ali (Class of 2016)
- Dr. Majd Soudan (Class of 2017)
- Dr. Abdulla Asreb (Class of 2018)
- Dr. Mahmoud Ismayl (Class of 2019)
- Dr. Omar Shamaa (Class of 2019)
- Dr. Ahmed El Khapery (Class of 2019)



## Pink Caravan

Under the guidance of Dr. Khuloud Bajbouj, member of the Pink Caravan Campaign, students from Years 1 and 2 participated in the campaign from 26<sup>th</sup> February to 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020. They assisted clinics in offering examinations for early detection of breast cancer.

The campaign traverses the seven emirates, aiming to deliver educational sessions and lectures about the importance of early detection of breast cancer. It is joined annually by equine riders bringing together schools, universities, corporations, and Pink Caravan ambassadors all over the country.



## Sports Achievements



On the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2020, Mr. Nasser Zahra won first place in the Ras Al Khaimah half marathon after finishing in a total time of 1 hour 38 minutes and 27 seconds.

Mr. Nasser also participated in the 10K run, which took place in Muhaisnah's Road Run for Labour on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

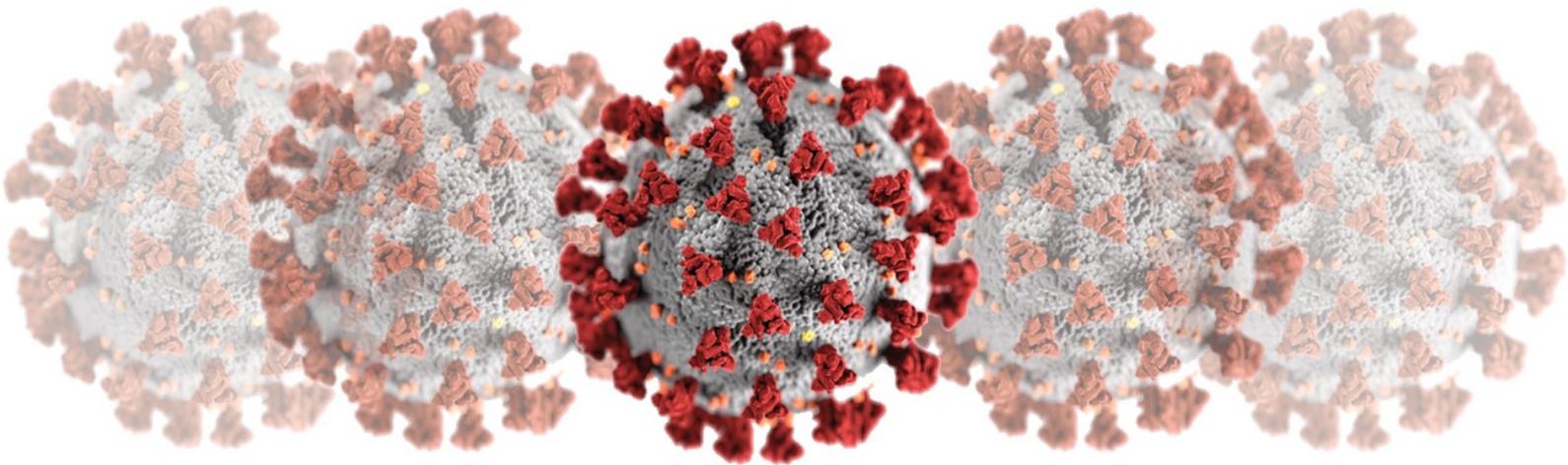
# VIRAL NEWS

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## Covid-19

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It doesn't get more viral.





# STUDENTS' CORNER

"لا مَلْجَأَ وَلَا مَنجَى مِنكَ إِلَّا إِلَيْكَ"

Deema AlHayali, Year 1

أَلَيْسَ مِنَ الْمَخْجَلِ  
أَنْ نَعُودَ إِلَى رَيْنَا ؛  
فَقَطُّ إِذَا ضَاقَتْ  
بِنَا الدُّنْيَا ؟



"فلا تَيْأَسُ بِصَيْصُ النور يَأْتِي، أَنْتَ لا تَعَجَلُ  
قَرِيبُ كُلِّ مَا نَرْجُو ، قَرِيبُ كُلِّ مَا نَأْمَلُ"

Aya Mahmoud Kadid, Year 1



"What we see is not what we see, but what we are."

Hajir Ahmed Saeed, Year 2

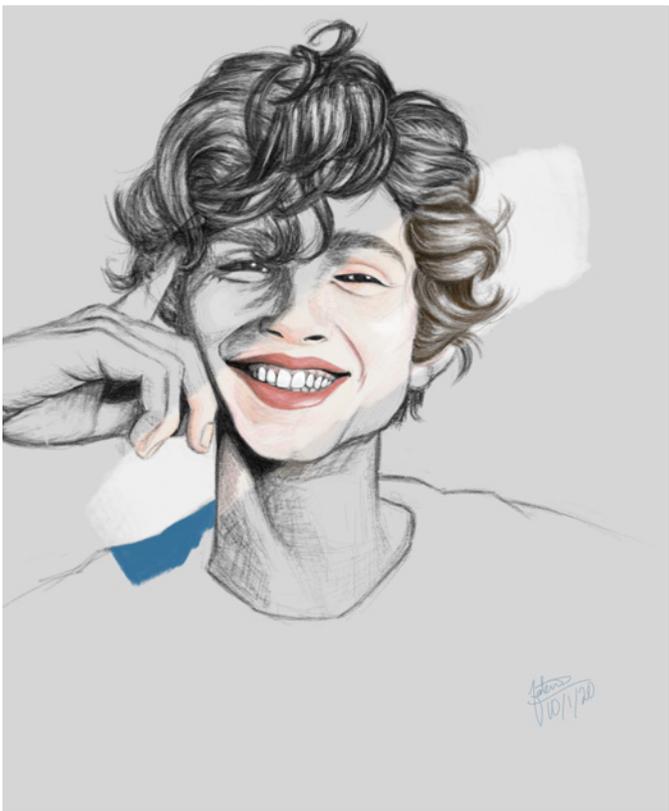
"Il n'y a pas plus sourd que celui qui ne veut pas entendre"

Shorouq Ali, Year 2



"Like the scented candle that burns in the  
chambers of my heart."

Afnan AlRawi, Year 3



"تَبَسُّمُكَ فِي وَجْهِ أَخِيكَ لَكَ صَدَقَةٌ"

Fatema Adel, Year 3



"وفيك من السلام هدوء أم"

لطفل نام بين الرضعتين"

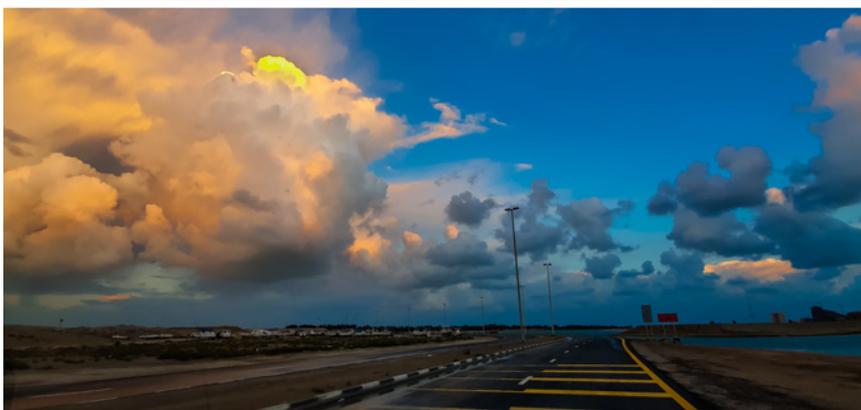
M. Beshar Adi, Year 4

"My best friend & my worst enemy"

Hammad Habib, Year 4

*My heart is my best friend  
And my worst enemy  
I find tranquility in the remembrance of my lord  
But my desires are silently torturing me  
The difficulty I face  
Trying to stay on this straight path that I follow  
While temptations follow me  
Prisoner on this earth  
With No chains but restrictions  
The laws of my creator are my restrictions  
But also my protection  
From the evil and temptations that surrounds me  
It's strange to feel like a stranger in this world that I call home  
I'm a traveler, traveling this earth seeking to find my true home  
If I meet my end, I will be happy because i will be meeting my merciful lord  
But whether or not I meet him on good terms is what I fear  
So I don't wish for death  
I still need time  
I still need my heart to become pure.*

-Hammad..H



"Shall we meet at the end of the road?"

Abdulla Nidal, Year 4

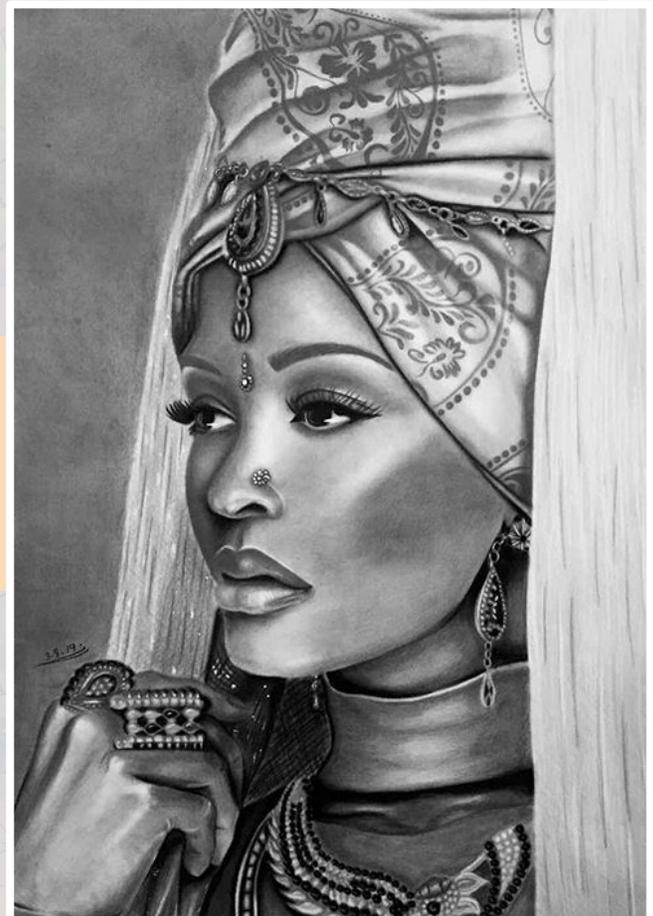


"رحمك يا رب"

Amna Al-Ani, Year 5

"I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,  
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.  
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear  
I rise."

Rana Salah, Year 5



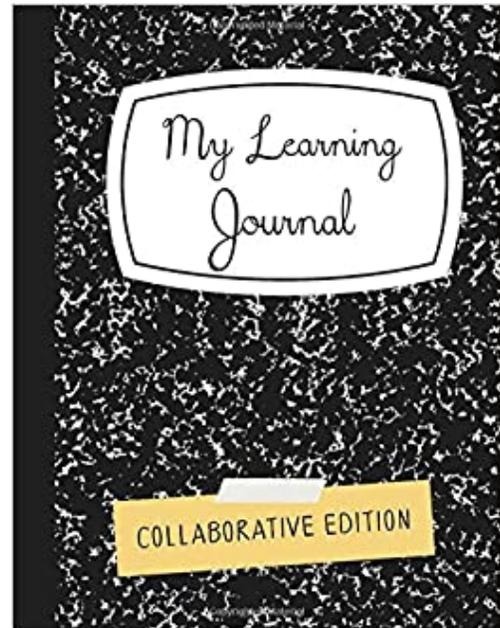
## Making the best out of distance learning

It is safe to say that most of us were in a complete state of shock receiving the news that we would be shifting to online learning. Not having any prior training or background information was probably the biggest reason many panicked. Here are some essential tips for you to make the most out of your distance learning experience.

◆ **Study Scheduling** - Although learning online means studying from the comfort of your home, it does come with a risk of losing track of time due to the increased distractions. Whether this may be using your phone, practicing your hobby or catching up on your favorite show, it is crucial to make sure you know what you need to accomplish in your studies. Having a prior study plan is the most effective way to do this. Wake up each morning and write out what you believe you should finish studying by the end of the day, or even by the end of the week.

◆ **Study Sanctuary** - Having a dedicated study space is also fundamental in ensuring an ideal, distraction-free study zone. This might not seem to be of great concern, but it is a major player in guaranteeing a better learning experience. Make sure your family respects your “study mode” and put away any distractions until your next study break.

◆ **Study Sessions** - Online learning should not always mean studying in isolation! Simply plan a time that you and your friends can log in to a video call application (such as Microsoft Teams, found on your university email account) to discuss your concerns and struggles in a certain topic. Needless to say, you should make sure to minimize side-talk throughout these group sessions.



Most importantly, you should have a positive view on this experience. Dreading and fearing this change will only make your distance learning more of a struggle, when it can instead be a retreat from our routine learning style.

Adapted from [elearningindustry.com](http://elearningindustry.com)

# Year 5: The One Where They Graduate



2020, a somewhat unique numerical combination, has come to have its fair share of associations to people. It is the perfect vision, the World Expo, the Tokyo Summer Olympics, the Australian fires, and most recently, the Covid-19 pandemic. But to you, it is the year you graduate from medical school.

As your final year comes to a close, we want you to think back over the past 6 years, remember your achievements, and cherish your memories, mischief and mishaps. Here's to all the lively outings, library campouts, adrenaline-fueled exam frenzies, on and off-campus events, and to a classroom-born camaraderie that will stay with you for life.

Here's to batch 2020; The One Where They Graduate.



Medicine was never an option for me, but I suddenly found myself in the College of Medicine struggling to pass in the first 2 years, then achieving high grades in the rest of the years. Endless lectures of Micro, Patho and Pharma with names that I couldn't and will never pronounce right; CBR, PBLs, hospital visits, Year 3 exit exam, portfolio submissions, Peds, OB-GYN, Family Medicine, Corona Virus and the MBBS exam. It started with me saying "where can I find room 199E please?" and now I scream "I can't go out; I have MBBS!". As if it was all yesterday. I met many people who helped me through those 6 years, and I am very thankful to all of them. But if I had to choose one person only to thank amongst them all, that person would definitely be Mustafa Heider, as he was with me from day 1 and helped me a whole lot. He is the one I would rush to text to ask about information that I could easily get from Google (even when checking this paragraph's grammar), yet he never complains or keeps me waiting for long and he is always happy to help. By the end of our journey as medical students, I wish him and all my colleagues a happy life full of achievements and many more years of success.

- Yasir Al-Humairi

## The One Where They Say Goodbye



On a Wednesday morning in **2014**, everything was so alien, so hostile, so utterly mysterious. I found myself in a new country, all alone in the College of Medicine, taking my first steps into pursuing my dream of becoming a doctor.

On another Wednesday morning in **2020**, everything was so alien, so hostile, so utterly mysterious. I found myself in the same country, all alone, quarantined in the dorms in the midst of a medical crisis, escaping the fact that I am now a doctor.

I believe that I was divinely chosen and guided into a path that statistically only 0.05% of the world's population pursues, and what a sweet burden. The past six years have molded, sculpted and shaped my thinking, and helped me form my own personal philosophy in life. In retrospect, I am extremely thankful to have invested my youth in the University of Sharjah. Through it, I learnt from and followed the leads of gifted doctors, built great links with kind, passionate colleagues, and blossomed in an engaging atmosphere. I learnt to seize every smidgen of chance to champion my highest potential and enjoy every day.

I cannot deny the periods of stagnation where the wheels weren't turning as fast as I wanted them to, but it is in these dark days that I reminded myself to judge the day by the seeds I plant rather than the harvest I reap. It's only through pain that we can find our true power and gain momentum to make a change. As a health care provider, I firmly believe we should arouse enthusiasm in everyone who crosses our path, always express gratitude and appreciation to our surroundings, and lastly bloom wherever we are planted.

Ps. I am glad we never had a farewell party because you are a family that I'll never want to ever part away from. I love you all, I swear.

- Ghida Samer



It seems like it was only yesterday when each of us took our first steps into the hallowed halls of the College of Medicine at the University of Sharjah. Our paths all began with the usual rites of passage; signing up for classes, getting our textbooks, and the most difficult one yet: medical education. However, I believe that medical education is where our journey towards becoming future physicians truly began. It was there that each of us got a little taste of what being a physician entails.

After foundation, we entered the Basic Sciences phase, where we truly got to know each other as a batch, eventually becoming a one of a kind family. It was during this phase that we learnt more about the miracles of the human body and how to properly treat any problems that might arise. We had our ups and downs during these 3 years; written exams, OSCEs, OSPEs, TBLs, and PBLs, but we got through them together; after all, the blood of the covenant is thicker than the water of the womb. When we finally got past our first exit exam, I couldn't help but feel a little melancholy. Yes, it was exhilarating to be more than halfway through medical school, but it was also a shock to my system; we were more than halfway done. Where did all the time go?

Soon we reached the next leg of our journey; the Clinical phase. We were all ecstatic to finally go to hospitals, to see their inner workings and to assist in treating actual patients. Within the next 2 years, we rotated in a variety of specialties, learning the ins and outs of each one, helping us decide which specialties were the right fit for each of us.

Now we're here, on the cusp of graduation, a mere 2 months away from swearing an oath to Do No Harm, when Covid-19 makes an appearance. This pandemic may have thrown a wrench in our plans, but I believe we will come out of this stronger than ever before.

I would like to take a moment to pay tribute to each and every one of you in this batch, who have made medical school a one of a kind experience. I would also like to pay tribute to all the faculty that have guided us along the way, for you have all had a hand in molding and shaping us into the people we are today. It's been such an honor to be a part of this family, the class of 2020. Growing with you, making memories together, these are the moments that I will cherish for the rest of my life. I hope you will all look back on our time at UOS fondly.

- Fatima Taha





Life in the time of corona has allowed us to see medicine through a new set of eyes.

Many years ago, we began our medical school journey with naïve aspirations of ambition. At the beginning we envisioned ourselves in lab coats and stethoscopes, and then we prematurely flaunted them when we passed foundation year and felt our dreams begin to take shape. Throughout the years at university, our impression on medicine began to metamorphose. It started off with nothing but a flowery dream of grandeur, of splendor, of the prestige that everyone attributes to physicians... But then the transformation began as we slowly realized what the profession is all about. Throughout the years, we took tons of courses on what it means to be a doctor, but coronavirus decided to give us the most practical of all lessons as a farewell course.

The time of coronavirus coincided with our graduating year, and while it has thrown a wrench into all our plans, it has also helped introduce us to what it means to be a physician; as demonstrated by doctors on the frontlines of a pandemic. It meant that while it served the world for everyone to stay home, physicians had to wear their protective gear like a second skin. It meant risking their lives and dealing with the unknown without the option of covering because if they didn't fight, we lose.

The time of coronavirus has prematurely removed us from the natural process of farewell that every graduating student goes through. The gradual course of the final year and its rotations, followed by the preparation for exams and finally graduation was put on an indefinite intermission as we scramble around trying to make sense of the situation at hand.

So while I now wish for the ordinary, to grab a coffee or a bite to eat at Muweileh and see my classmates for one last time, I am at least grateful that the aspirations that got me into med school those years ago have been revived by this pandemic. I have faith that we can make it through these trying times; we can get past the frenzy and the inner chaos. We can get through the exams and graduate and realize our true potentials as we forge our paths through our professional and personal lives.

- Najiba Saleh



As far back as my memory takes me, I've always been the inquisitive little explorer running in the garden exploring the miniscule wonders of nature, reading science books and making LEGO figurines and structures. Naturally as I grew older, I developed a strong predilection for science as a whole and would repeatedly ace its core subjects throughout high school. It's 2014 and the time to choose my major had arrived; I was set on bioengineering and chemical engineering. Fast forward 6 years; it's 2020; the worst pandemic in a century has hit humanity and I find myself on the doorstep of my MBBS final, soon to become a doctor.... Wait what?

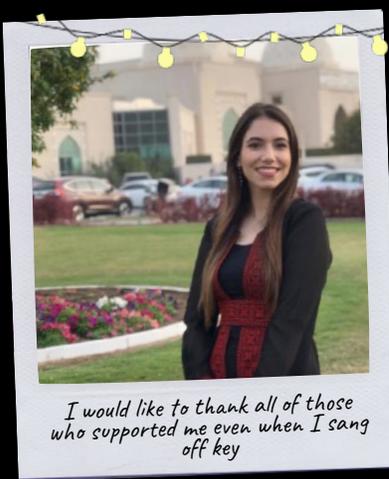
Due to unforeseen obstacles and to fulfil my parents' wishes, I found myself applying to medicine at UOS an hour before the deadline. I got accepted into the program and little did I know of the stress, depression and horrors awaiting me in the years to come... Alright alriiiiight it wasn't *thaaaat* melodramatic. I won't sugarcoat it and say this was the best journey of my life because it was anything but that, but I will say that the experiences and memories you will come across will be nothing short of life changing in countless ways.

All the way from basic years where you find yourself memorizing the bits and pieces that make up a cadaver to unpronounceable microorganisms and diseases. Clinical years arrive and now you're waking up at 7 AM, spending what seems to be an eternity at the hospital, often pretending to be an inanimate object and wandering amongst doctors like a lost traveler.

But it is also in that setting that you come across humans at their weakest, most vulnerable state. This miraculous vessel that we so often take for granted brought down to its heels. You truly begin to see how all the effort, sweat and tears you've shed staying up the nights before exams weave together to form the pinnacle of what it means to be a doctor ... a humble servant of humanity wielding the power of saving lives. But most importantly, the bonds you'll forge with some of your colleagues makes them akin to your brethren and sistren. It's these countless memories of you throughout the years in the lecture halls, laboratories, dorms, hospitals and through the exam times that you'll cherish for decades and decades to come.

- Mustafa Al- Shami





*Probably the only person willing to choose peditrics as a specialty after finishing its rotation*

*Spent the last 6 years fighting the security, known amongst them as the عايزة اكل، انا مش هخطفهم girl*

*when patients change their history in front of the doctor*

*I would like to thank all of those who supported me even when I sang off key*

# STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

## THANK YOU TO THE ONES WHO DREAM!

Year 2019-2020 was the year of excellence and optimism at the College of Medicine and its student organizations stood at the forefront upholding the values in spirit and execution - lending support, building innovation and infusing enthusiasm. So, here's to the teams that taught us how to dream and achieve – a big thank you!

Thank you, PAC. Without you, we wouldn't have mastered the strategies to cope with stressors of medical school. We wouldn't have learnt the high-yield concepts and we wouldn't have been able to identify the resources needed to approach external examinations like the USMLE. You taught us to use social media as a tool and not a weapon, gave us motivational insight and vloggers to turn to. You recognized that most of us need mental health support and offered your advice and time. Without you, we would have been the lost and confused medical students. Thank you for taking care of our academic lives.



Thank you, RnD Association. Without you, we wouldn't have opened our minds to the possibilities of research. We wouldn't have learnt the tips and tricks to nail a CV and interview. You taught us the importance of participating in research and gave us the opportunities to do so through MSRP. You recognized that career development starts with networking and listening to seniors who have gone

through similar struggles. Thank you for the workshops. Thank you for teaching us that success starts from mental health and personality development. Without you, we would have been the lazy, nose-in-the-book medical students. Thank you for igniting our ambition and inspiring us to reach for the heights.

Thank you, MSA. Without you, we wouldn't have understood that learning can be a fun experience. We wouldn't have appreciated that medical students are so much more than medicine. They're artists, writers, sportspeople, social workers and above all, curious scientists. You travelled with us to Zanzibar where we learnt what it takes to practice medicine outside the textbook, where we built friendships for life. You took us to humanitarian centers and taught us to open our hearts wider for the orphans and the determined children. You explored the extent of medicine in space and taught us that the universe is the limit. Thank you for the sports activities and social gatherings because they taught us to stand by one another and let loose every once in a while. Thank you for launching a Debate Society because we learnt to voice our thoughts and learn from each other. Without you, we would have been the stressed and boring medical students. Thank you for reminding us to have fun and to develop a love for things outside of medicine.

Thank you to the students, faculty, visitors and support staff that made the activities possible. Thank you to predecessors who laid the stepping-stone. Thank you to the successors who will take the mantle of responsibility forward towards greater projects.

To 2019-2020, we bid goodbye and here's to new adventures in 2020-2021!

# SWEET GOODBYES FROM THE MSA BOARD

– Hamam Aneis, President

2019-2020: The Year of Covid-19. I had a lovely time working with my team – the good, the bad, the ugly. You were my family and I will miss you. The Zanzibar trip was the activity closest to my heart because we got to help lots of people, and I spent some of the best days of my life there. Thank you to our students for your support and I truly hope you enjoyed the year. To my team, you will not be forgotten by the college and hopefully, this is the fingerprint you leave behind before graduation. All the best!



– Ahmed Sawan, Vice-President

Being able to lead as part of the MSA board was such a unique experience. I am proud of the things that we were able to achieve during our journey, as a team, which added a special unforgettable touch to my academic year and made me a better version of myself. I would like to take this opportunity to thank every member of the team and the doctors behind the scenes for their continuous support and guidance.

– Shamma Almheiri, Project Manager

Having been part of the MSA as a member, since my first year, I've always wanted to contribute in a larger manner. Being project manager for the year 2019-2020 felt like a dream. Initially, it was difficult because we were trying to find our groove as a team but eventually, we bonded to organize and conduct amazing activities for our colleagues. It was unfortunate that our journey was cut short due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and I hope that it resolves soon with great optimism of exciting activities in the coming year.

– Yahya Alassouli, Treasurer

Being the Treasurer of MSA 2019 was such a great honour. Bringing the right sponsors for the right event made me proud of myself. I learnt a lot while negotiating with the sponsors, most importantly persuasion skills and how to deal with people with higher authority. I also got the opportunity to build a network and make new friends. Being part of the board helped me enjoy my time and eliminate all negative pressure associated with studying medicine.

– Dana Hamadi, Secretary

I consider myself blessed to have been part of the MSA family from the beginning of the 2019-2020. I was assigned as the Secretary of the team, and I knew from the very beginning that being a leader meant dealing with many obstacles and challenges, and with great challenges comes great responsibility. It helped me grow and excel, both intellectually and mentally, and discover a wide range of new personality traits in me that I personally didn't notice from before. I got to meet a lot of new people, from different batches and backgrounds with unique personalities. Under the family of MSA, I found new friends and new stories.

– Ahmed Alhebshi, Media Director

While I felt estranged at the beginning of year, this team has really grown on me through this journey. I participated in every event not because I had to but because I really enjoyed being there. I'm glad this brought us all together and as brief as it felt, this journey marks some beautiful moments with each one of you that I will never forget. Working with the students was a pleasure and here's to more colourful projects at the College of Medicine.

## PAC BIDDING YOU FAREWELL



– Farah Soukieh, President.

Who would have thought that this eventful academic year would come to an abrupt, unexpected end, and we wouldn't get the chance to say goodbye and show appreciation to our members? Nevertheless, we're content with the progress we have made as a committee and hope that next year brings about more achievements. To me, PAC is more than just a committee, it is a family. It enabled me to get to know people I wouldn't have otherwise known. As my journey through medical school comes to an end, I am thankful for my experience as a member of the PAC committee. I can only hope that PAC has helped others as much as it helped me and wish that it continues to do so.

– Hazem Taifour, Vice President

It feels like yesterday when I applied to PAC and held the first orientation. I really enjoyed every year I spent in PAC, both as a member and as the Vice President, and it's one of the things I will miss the most about my experience in our college. This committee helped me in building my personality and in becoming the person I am right now. It enhanced my passion for helping others, and I got to meet people who became more than just friends to me. Once a PACer, always a PACer!

– Abdullah Malek

I want to take this opportunity to thank all the PAC members for their goodwill and constant efforts to improve students' life during their time in the university. Most importantly those that helped me throughout this journey, answered my queries and supported me when things got tough. With this year coming to an end, I can't help but realize the amount of challenges we have been through these years and how different things would've been without PAC. This year ended on a sudden note leaving us all in awe. Yet, we need to utilize this as another learning experience to understand that our plans will not always work the way we want them to. This crisis showed us the importance of our solidarity as a community which is exactly what PAC stands for. I wish you all the best in your future and hope that your remaining time in the university is filled with good memories, success and achievements.

# RND SAYS BYE

- Abdulla Nidal

I'm overwhelmed writing this, filled with a multitude of emotions, one is of fortune to have served in this position. Another, is of sorrow, that we did not get to take our plans to their full potential this year, but a promising consolation is that they're kept for next year to be The Year (or so everyone said). Last amongst many more is of pride in what we've accomplished this year (more like semester), the workshops, visits and most importantly, the website, may it continue to become your first reference as young researchers. Don't forget to be awesome.



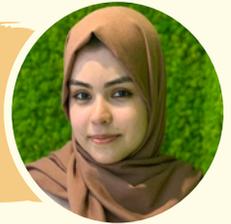
- Abdullah Malek

With this academic year coming to an end, we hope you had a good experience. The events towards the end took us all by surprise. Thank you all for your cooperation, we hope you benefited something this year from R&D and we hope for better events and workshops next year. Stay positive, this too shall pass.



- Huwaida Fazel

I regret the premature and abrupt end to our planned year, but I'm only hopeful that we come out of this pandemic with eyes set on higher ambitions. I pray you're well and safe, and always curious!



- Kamel Samara

Hello. I'm the guy that made the website. You might not know me but that's okay. People discover their kidneys only when they begin failing. Loved working with the team on it. Loved seeing you guys use and enjoy it. See you next year inshAllah!



- Duaa AlNusairat

This is most certainly not the end that I, or any of us, had in mind for RnD this year. In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, I am in an emotional turmoil; ending the self-development series, terminating the mobile clinic functions and the shocking short-cut to the end. Yet my heart finds a way to feel grateful to have had this experience with all of you and to believe next year holds greater things for RnD. Stay home and I pray that you are safe.



- Menna Emam

Creativity has always been a quality that I value, and this was the perfect opportunity for me to merge between my personal interest and a professional matter. This also proved to be an incredible chance to work with a great team that always ensured a fun yet productive environment.



- Drishti Kampani

Good communication starts with good language, and what a joyride it has been to help deliver the purpose and ideas of the RnD Association, in my capacity as the editor. It wasn't about battling apostrophe and semicolon wars, as much as it was about helping people join the journey of something this exciting. Cheers to the team and here's to more work together!



# MEDICAL MISHAPS

*By: Drishti Kampani*

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## THE COST OF BEING BRAVE: COVID-19 HEALTH WORKERS

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War, a word that is usually associated with the military, front-line battalions and arenas, today is associated with health workers, hospitals and social distancing.



With the global spread of SARS-CoV2 causing Covid-19, resulting in more than two million cases of infection within months, the definition of war has blurred. Make no mistake, we are in the midst of a war against an enemy smaller than a few nanometers but one that has incapacitated our infrastructure, economies and most importantly, healthcare. Hospitals are the new battlefields, with healthcare workers and other essential service providers being our frontline soldiers – stuck in the thick, witnessing the full impact, and who may soon be abandoned without adequate protection. They see death, sickness and all the horrible parts of society – violence, addiction, abuse – every day. They work tirelessly for long hours, until

exhaustion. We salute the courage and the work ethic required to make that choice daily. However, an important question to ask is, this bravery comes at what cost?

Due to the rapidly shifting situation, complete and accurate figures are impossible to ascertain at the point of publication. However, from what has been reported, China's National Health Commission claims that more than 3300 healthcare workers had been infected as of early March. 20% of responding health workers in Italy were infected and some have unfortunately passed away. In a recent preprint publication, nearly 1 in 3 licensed physicians in the United States are older than 60 years, placing them in the age range that is highly vulnerable to developing severe cases of Covid-19. The odds of infection and death are real and highly possible; yet scores of health workers report to duty, working 20-hour shifts to the point of exhaustion and there seems to be no respite in sight.

Health workers are scared, and they have every reason to be. If we look at the previous Ebola epidemic, health providers were up to 32 times more likely to be infected than the general population. Multiple studies following the SARS outbreak asked healthcare providers if they would choose to work during disaster scenarios – the answer was a decisive yes for earthquakes, floods and even war. Yet, for pandemics, a study in 2010 reported that 28% of hospital staff would not respond if asked, but not required. A similar German study reported 36% for the same outcome. Hospital staff stated that they were more likely to show up to work if they were confident about protective measures at work, if their family was safe and cared for, and if colleagues would also show up. Before the Covid-19 situation escalated as much as it did, news reports of doctors in Bulgaria and Pakistan handing in their resignations and protesting, made their rounds in the internet. Most of these were subject to derision and judgement by the general public. Why? Why are health workers not extended the same empathy that they are expected to show for their patients?

For those healthcare workers who manage to survive the risk of infection and death, there are other stressors to contend with. The increased working hours have led to physical and mental exhaustion coupled with the emotional pain of losing patients and colleagues. In countries like Iran and Italy where national hospitals are at peak capacity, triage decisions can be difficult – not every life can be saved. They need to socially distance from their own families, avoid touching their own partners and vulnerable family members. Not only are we sending our frontline soldiers to war without adequate protective gear, but also without the morale and mental fortitude needed to get by each day.

The Covid-19 pandemic is compounding another epidemic hidden in the shadows – physician burnout. In 2019, 40% of the physicians responded to a Medscape survey reporting burnout, with 24% admitting to suicidal ideation. Before the pandemic, the commonly attributed causes were bureaucratic responsibilities, excessive computerization and massive patient load. The consequences of this public health crisis are glaringly obvious – increased medical errors, elevated risk of malpractice, poor patient satisfaction, and worse patient outcomes.

In times of Covid-19, preventing physician burnout becomes even more important. The rate of infections and deaths are exponential but there are no ways by which governments can conjure extra health workers. Physicians take seven to twelve years of training after high school, nurses require a minimum of four, and hospital tech workers take months to years. WHO statistics show that 45% of the member states have lesser than 1 physician per 1000 of the population. If we lose our health workers to death, infection, quarantine, burnout or abandonment, we have no replacement. Zilch. No other service provider can be repurposed or trained to take over. This is all we have and it's not much.

Could this public health crisis have been prevented? Who is to blame? Healthcare organizations, governments, public policies, poor investments in healthcare infrastructure or the media? The list is endless and the answer unclear. Was a global pandemic predicted? Yes, and by multiple researchers. In 2007, researchers from the University of Hong Kong published a paper stating that the presence of many other SARS-CoV-like viruses in bats made this type of pathogen a “time bomb.” Multiple foreign governments

proposed major cuts to healthcare and social support funding in favour of increasing military operations. Taking the United States, for example, the administration prematurely terminated their national pandemic early-warning programme called PREDICT. PREDICT was aimed at identifying national microbial spillovers but also designed training modules for scientists and labs across the world, to detect and respond to threats like SARS-CoV2, including the lab in Wuhan which identified the virus.

The United Arab Emirates has been blessed with foresighted leaders who have been proactive and equipped to deal with an unwarranted situation such as this one. However, the same cannot be said for other less fortunate countries. Delays in instating curfews and lockdowns, ignored warnings of scientists, careless dismissal of urgent pleas from hospitals for increased personal protective equipment, refusal to fund increased screening programmes and the use of poor reporting systems have all propagated the exponential rise of the virus and have increased the burden multifold on our health workers. No war can be won without its soldiers and to emerge out of this pandemic as survivors, our health workers need to be treasured.

Albus Dumbledore, in the famed Harry Potter series, once said, “It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities.” It is time we make some choices for the greater good. To world leaders, the plea is simple. Please listen to your health workers - protect them and ensure their welfare. Make their work easier by supporting their institutions and investing in prevention. To the people, please respect your health workers. The next time, you choose to complain about being in social isolation or quarantine, remember that there are millions of essential workers who do not have that privilege. Show them your gratitude – not by clapping in the balcony of your homes – but by loosening your purse strings and by donating to healthcare and social relief funds of your choice. No amount is too little, and no prayer is too small. Protect them and they will protect you; together we all stand a chance at emerging as survivors.



## RECOMMENDATIONS: COVID-19 EDITION

By: Dua'a AlNusairat

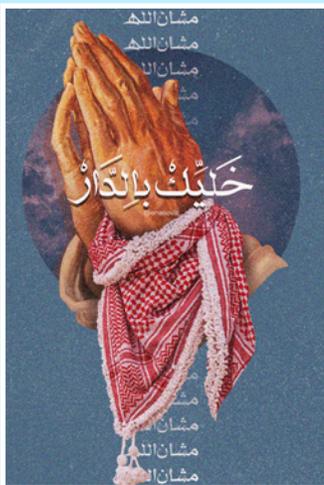
*A timely hadith in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. The pivotal role of social distancing in hindering disease spread implemented 1400 years ago.*

"إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ بِهِ بَأْرَضٍ ، فَلَا تَقْدُمُوا عَلَيْهِ ،  
وَإِذَا وَقَعَ بَأْرَضٌ وَأَنْتُمْ بِهَا فَلَا تَخْرُجُوا  
فِرَارًا مِنْهُ"

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**"If you get wind of the outbreak of plague in a land, do not enter it; and if it breaks out in a land in which you are, do not leave it."**

### Picture of the Month



By Enas Khazaleh @Enasioc

### Quote of the month: Now is a time to slow down

*"And the people stayed home. They read books, listened, rested, exercised, made art, played games, learned new ways of being and were still. They listened more deeply, they meditated, some prayed and others danced. Some met their shadows while others began to think differently. The people healed. In this absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless and heartless ways, the earth began to heal. And when the danger passed, the people joined together again, they grieved their losses and made new choices. Now they dreamed new dreams and created new ways to live in harmony and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed."*

-Kitty O'Meara



For any comments regarding this newsletter or suggestions for improvement, you can reach us at:  
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## DOCTOR'S ORDERS - DR. SARRA SHORBAGI

### CORONAVIRUS ANXIETY: TAKE CARE OF YOUR EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Along with the medical and economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, there's also its toll on emotional health. This stress stems from worry about one's own health and that of loved ones, and causes changes in sleeping or eating patterns, difficulty sleeping or concentrating, worsening of pre-existing health problems, and an increase in the use of tobacco or other drugs.

Here are some things you can do to support yourself:

- Stay informed, but limit how often you check for updates, and step away if you start feeling overwhelmed.
- Stick to trustworthy sources like the CDC, WHO, and your local public health authorities.
- Relax by taking deep breaths, stretching, meditating, or praying.
- Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- Eat healthy and well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid tobacco use.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
- When you feel yourself getting caught up in fear of what might happen, try to shift your focus to things you can control; you can't control the outbreak severity in your city, but you can take steps to reduce your own personal risk and follow health authority instructions.



Need help? Know someone who does?

- Call your healthcare provider if you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or you feel that your stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.

Reference:  
CDC. Stress and Coping retrieved from [shorturl.at/bcmZ6](https://shorturl.at/bcmZ6)  
Helpguide. Coronavirus Anxiety: Coping with Stress, Fear, and Uncertainty. retrieved from [shorturl.at/aggZ4](https://shorturl.at/aggZ4)



*The College of Medicine Newsletter Team is sad to say goodbye to one of their own- Abdullah Malek, who has been a member of this team since 2018. We wish him all the best in his upcoming MBBS exams and a successful career.*