The “Big Brothers/Big Sisters” Mentoring Group under the guidance of Dr. Sade Kosoko-Lasaki is up and running for the new academic year. The first meeting took place on Monday, September 30, with a whopping turnout of over 50 people. The potential mentors consisted of CU faculty from the schools of Dental, Pharmacy, Medicine, Medical ethics, Physical Therapy, and Occupational Therapy. Other student mentor volunteers came forward from many professional schools and undergraduate school. The idea of the program is for faculty to mentor professional students who in turn mentor undergraduates. These undergraduate students will then mentor HCOP or HPPI high school students. After hearing about the philosophy and positive aspects of the mentoring process, testimonials were heard regarding what a great experience last year’s mentor/mentee pairs have had. After getting to hear stories, everyone got so excited we even had parents of high school students offer to mentor! The mentor match-ups will be selected this week, and those signing up will hear who their new mentor or mentee will be very soon.

The new faculty/staff mentors this year are: Dr. Alaba Ogunbadeniyi, Pharmacy; Dr. Francis Ndemo, Pharmacy; Dr. Millicent Palmer, Ophthalmology; Susan Orr Cameron, HS-MACA, and Mrs. Shirley Spain, VPHS Administration. We welcome you and invite any other faculty or staff to join us in mentoring our young people.

With the new year off to a good start, hopes are high for another successful year of mentoring. If you are interested in becoming a mentor or mentee, please call or email any member of the HS-MACA staff.
Uncommon Journey
Creighton University School of Medicine by Kim Corral M1

Each day begins the same for me as a first-year medical student at Creighton University. I roll out of bed with six hours of sleep, check e-mail, then get ready for school. In morning traffic, I envision my 12-year-old son making his frosty morning walk to the school bus. I think about last night’s long phone call with my husband of nearly 20 years, and how strange it will be to spend our upcoming wedding anniversary apart while he willingly shoulders family responsibilities with me far away at school. And I remember my daughter, now 19, who first put me on the southbound plane to attend CU’s Premedical Post-Baccalaureate Program last year. “Mom,” she said through her tears, “this should be the other way around.”

As a nontraditional student, my return to school at age 40 would not be easy, especially while my family remains 3,000 miles away. As a Mexican-American student, I knew about the medical school statistics—sadly, there would likely be only a few of us enrolled here. Yet, everyone at CU’s office for Health Sciences Multicultural and Community Affairs provided the program support to help me and other minority students attain recent matriculation into the CUSM Class of 2008. While no substitute exists for doing the hard work required for school success, opportunities provided by HS-MACA have allowed me to balance my studies with new friendships, minority student networks, and community service projects for the medically underserved.

The diverse lifetime experiences for most minority medical students are by definition nontraditional against most admission standards. In my case, for example, how does one go from being a high school dropout at age 16 to a medical student later in life? My journey began with no road map, no designated path, no signposts. Desire served as my navigator, but the knowledge base and confidence were lacking. Somewhere between raising a family, completing college and gathering some professional experiences as both a teacher and writer, I managed to gain academic ground toward fulfilling admission requirements. My experiences with the staff and students at HS-MACA helped to reframe my entire applicant profile into a competitive package worthy for review by any medical school.

Now that I am “in,” I can concentrate exclusively on succeeding in school and developing my vision for practicing medicine. You can bet that vision will continue to guide me along the road less traveled, though by no means unpopulated, to serve those whose access to health care is limited by proximity, perception, price, and other perpetually blocking circumstances.

Medicine is about making real differences for people. With the support of my family, and friends at HS-MACA, I now have that chance.

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STUDENT’S ORGANIZATION

Minority Health Science Student Association, (MHSSA)

Congratulation to the new officers of MHSSA (Minority Health Science Student Association) for the 2002-2003 academic year. President, Carla R. Hardy, Pharmacy
Vice President, Dawn Williams, Occupational Therapy
Vice President, Olufunke Oshunleti, Medicine
Secretary, Mariam Garuba, Medicine
Treasurer, Katie Omiyi, Medicine
Public Relations, Cheng (Oliver) Lee—Medical Post-bac
Community Service, Harriet Banda—Medical Post-bac

MHSSA is an organization dedicated to building and maintaining a supportive community among diverse groups of the students, faculty and administration of the Health Sciences division at Creighton University. This organization is dedicated to promoting the needs and interests of students representing different ethnic and cultural groups in the schools of Pharmacy and Health Professions, Nursing, Medicine, and Dentistry.

Come out and be a part of this growing organization. Our meetings are scheduled the first Wednesday of every month. Look for our postings in the Criss and Boyne buildings for exact location of meetings.

MHSSA FOOD SALE
THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 7th
CRISS II BASEMENT
11:00—1:00PM

October 18, Latino Youth Conference: 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. Students from Dental, Pharmacy, OT, PT, and Medicine will be presenting to Latino students from area high schools.

October 21, Youth Science Enrichment at Jesuit Middle School 1:00- 2:00pm, presented by SNMA, 7th and 8th graders will participate in a one hour anatomy experience featuring sheep brains, cow eyes, sheep hearts and lots of scary bones!!

October 21, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. HCOP/HPII monthly meeting is featuring Crystal Simpson presenting a study skills and time management workshop. It will be held in Room 406A of the Criss Building. Halloween treats will be provided.