

TOURO LINKS

DIVISION OF GRADUATE STUDIES • FALL 2017

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

ALUMS FIND UNIQUE WAYS
TO SERVE THE PUBLIC *p. 23*





TOURO COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Where Knowledge and Values Meet

Touro is a system of non-profit institutions of higher and professional education. Touro College was chartered in 1970 primarily to enrich the Jewish heritage, and to serve the larger American and global community. Approximately 18,000 students are currently enrolled in its various schools and divisions. Touro College has 29 branch campuses, locations and instructional sites in the New York area, as well as branch campuses and programs in Berlin, Jerusalem and Moscow. New York Medical College; Touro University California and its Nevada branch campus; Touro University Worldwide and its Touro College Los Angeles division; as well as Hebrew Theological College in Skokie, Illinois. are separately accredited institutions within the Touro College and University System. For further information on Touro College, visit www.touro.edu/news.



Our Message to You

Dear Alumni,

When I think of our outstanding graduates and alumni, what comes to mind is an overarching Touro value of service to others. There is an ancient phrase from Rabbi Hillel that encompasses this concept. "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if I am concerned only with myself, what am I?" While our students pursue advanced academic degrees to secure rewarding careers, each of you has asked yourself this question at some point during your education. I know that your experience at Touro has opened your eyes to see beyond yourselves and your own personal gain to become contributors to the betterment of society and the world.

When you read through these pages, you will see stories of exciting research initiatives that will help Parkinson's patients manage pain, of teachers who are nationally recognized for classroom innovation and those who are committed to delivering the highest quality education in the inner cities despite great odds. Touro health care professionals are

saving lives in the emergency room and pursuing advanced medical specialization so they can better serve their patients in a variety of settings. From women's health to caring for the elderly and children with autism, Touro graduates are working to improve lives of people of all ages with varying needs every single day.

I'm proud of the commitment our alumni have made to achieving excellence in their fields—education, medicine and health, Jewish studies, business, technology, pharmacy, social work—and I'm even prouder of their dedication to serving individuals and communities who truly need their professional expertise. I am sure you will share my sentiment as you read these stories and learn about the achievements of the students and alumni of Touro's Graduate and Professional Divisions.

Best,



Dr. Nadja Graff,
Vice President,
Division of
Graduate Studies



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TOURO LINKS

DIVISION OF GRADUATE STUDIES
FALL 2017

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Could marijuana help people with Parkinson's disease? See page 17 for more

www.touro.edu



Kowshik Sen works as a mentor to students both in the lab and in their lives.



Rabbi Zev Fuchs helps students move into the digital age.

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ON THE COVER

*Physician Assistant alumna
Jennifer Spisak at work at NYU
Langone Emergency Room.
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What's New



TOURO OPENS NEW DENTAL SCHOOL

For the first time in nearly 50 years, a new dental school has opened its doors in New York State. Touro College of Dental Medicine, located on Touro's New York Medical College campus in Westchester, welcomed its inaugural class of 110 students in July 2016. The school is expected to train much needed specialists and help open new avenues of access to oral health care, particularly in underserved and rural communities in the region. The state-of-the-art facilities provide dental students with the most advanced dentistry technologies, including Cone Beam CT x-ray imaging systems, digital intra-oral scanners, and advanced implant systems. Students at the school are receiving training in the most innovative approaches to dental care via simulation lab work, pediatric dentistry and oral and maxillofacial surgery clinics, workrooms, and clinical practice units. "Oral health is critical to good health," says Alan Kadish, M.D., president of Touro College and University System. "The opening of this dental school not only contributes to the collaborative and synergistic community of students on the New York Medical College campus, it also strengthens New York State's regional healthcare system."

PLANE Z: 'Z SYSTEM SPECIALISTS

Touro College Graduate School of Technology is offering a new course in DB2, a database management system that organizations utilizing "big data" use to store, analyze, and retrieve information. With approximately 55,000 job openings nationwide for qualified individuals with mainframe administrative skills, the course will help educate tomorrow's mainframe database administrators. "Many corporations and institutions need people to manage and service their state-of-the-art core processing programs that are already in place," says Robert Grosberg, Director of Career Services at Touro College's Graduate School of Technology. Initially, the course is being offered to both graduate and non-matriculated students and may be offered to undergraduates, as well, in the future.

Oral health is critical to good health.

ALAN KADISH, M.D., PRESIDENT, TOURO COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY SYSTEM ON TOURO'S NEW DENTAL SCHOOL.



A PERFECT SCORE

In November 2016, Touro Graduate Program in Speech-Language Pathology at the School of Health Sciences received a standing ovation at the Annual American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) conference for its perfect reaccreditation score. Before the applause of 10,000 conference attendees, this national professional, scientific, and credentialing association recognized Touro for this impressive achievement. As the only school in the tri-state area to have a perfect score during this accreditation cycle, this prestigious honor conferred upon Touro is the result of the enormous enthusiasm Touro students expressed for the Speech-Language Pathology Program, its professors and administration, particularly the School of Health Sciences' Dean Louis Primavera.

Says Hindy Lubinsky, MS, Department Chair, Program Director, Speech-Language Pathology and Associate Professor, "Earning a perfect score has always been a dream of mine. This brings enormous prestige to the school and our curriculum, faculty and students, and raises our visibility within the academic and speech-language community significantly."

Get Touro Links on your mobile devices.

Visit www.touro.edu/news/publications to read past issues of the newsletter, or find them on your iPad, iPhone, Kindle Fire, NOOK tablet or Android devices.

*Earning a perfect score
has always been a
dream of mine.*

HINDY LUBINSKY ON TOURO'S PERFECT ASHA REACCREDITATION SCORE.



What's New

**MEET HARRY BALLAN,
NEW DEAN OF TOURO
COLLEGE JACOB D.
FUCHSBERG LAW CENTER**

With more than 30 years of experience in higher education, including teaching at Yale University, New York University, Yeshiva University and Brooklyn Law School, and 25 years serving as a partner at the international law firm, Davis, Polk & Wardwell LLP, Dean Ballan brings a range of skills and talent to his new position as law school dean. As legal institutions nationwide work to develop best practices for training tomorrow's legal minds, Dean Ballan's rich experience as an educator, attorney, and leader will help bring about meaningful curricular and educational modifications to the Law Center. Under Dean Ballan's direction, these modifications will focus on formative assessment and experiential learning, including simulation, field placement and clinics with the goal of graduating lawyers who will be prepared to practice law in an increasingly complex and changing world.



**NEW CERTIFICATION TO WORK WITH PEOPLE
WITH AUTISM**

One in 68 children in the United States has some form of autism. To help meet the demand for skilled and licensed experts, the Department of Behavioral Science at the Touro School of Health Sciences is offering a new advanced certificate program in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). The program will provide instruction in theory, training, evaluation, and supervision through ABA for people with autism and autism spectrum disorder. Licensed behavior analysts work with individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder using techniques and principles to bring about meaningful and positive change in behavioral action and skills. Successful completion of the 27-credit program will enable ABA professionals to work with individuals in a variety of public and private settings including schools, homes, day programs, community centers, residential and vocational training settings, businesses, and related social service agencies.

*One in 68 children in the United States
has some form of autism.*

OFF THE SHELF

In keeping with Touro's mission, the Touro College Press publishes a range of scholarly works covering liberal arts and sciences, with a special focus on Jewish history and literature. Recent publications include:

The Unique Judicial Vision of Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk - Selected Discourses in Meshekh Hokhmah and Or Sameah; by Yitshak Cohen. This text examines the exceptional normative impact of R. Meir Simcha Hacohen's Biblical commentary, Meshekh Hokhmah, and his halakhic commentary, Or Sameah.

Contention, Controversy, and Change - Evolutions and Revolutions in the Jewish Experience (Volume I & II); by Simcha Fishbane & Eric Levine. This collection presents the work of a distinguished group of scholars exploring the themes of social, political, religious, intellectual, and institutional movements and change in Jewish history.

Intellectual Journeys of Recent, Mostly "Defunct" Economists; by Michael Szenberg and Lall Ramrattan. The creative minds of some recent, mostly "defunct," economists, among them Samuelson, Friedman, Galbraith, and Heilbroner, and Nobel Prize winners Modigliani, Debreu, Becker, Aumann, and Allais are presented in this text.

Paleontology and Geology of the Martinsburg, Shawangunk, Onondaga, and Hornerstown Formations (North-eastern United States) with Some Field Guides; by Howard R. Feldman. This book covers the paleontology and geology of some important rock formations (Paleozoic and Paleogene) in the northeastern United States, lower mid-Hudson Valley, the southwest of Pennsylvania, Port Jervis, Albany, and Buffalo.

The Touro College Press publishes a range of scholarly works covering liberal arts and sciences, with a special focus on Jewish history and literature.

2.5 MILLION FOR GSSW STUDENTS IN NEED

In August 2016, Touro Graduate School of Social Work received a \$2.5 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, to assist disadvantaged graduate students in social work. A total of \$42,000 of scholarship support (\$21,000 per year, per student) is contributed to students in need over a two-year period, provided certain economic and educational eligibility criteria are met, including maintaining a 3.1 cumulative GPA. This prestigious federal grant extends through the year 2020. "Facilitating educational opportunities and career paths to those who have been overlooked and underserved, who have the drive and potential to succeed, has always been part of the Touro mission," says Dr. Steven Huberman, dean of GSSW. "Our goal is to prepare culturally competent professionals who can meet the complex needs of our cities' diverse populations. This grant will help us to continue our mission."





WELL READ

Mission: Literacy

Three teachers P.U.S.H. until their students succeed.



ERIN JARET

*Second grade
reading specialist
at a New York
public school*

As a college student, Erin Jaret had two passions: animals and children. “Since I couldn’t handle blood and needles, veterinary school was out. I decided to focus my studies so that I could have a job working with kids, instead,” says Erin. As we speak from her second grade classroom at a public school in the Bronx, she sits at a low table surrounded by walls bright with posters, pictures, and alphabets. “Being with kids has always really touched me. I think it brings out my ‘inner child.’”

Erin developed her knowledge and skills in education and completed her degree in teaching. After several jobs in elementary schools, she returned to school where she earned a graduate certificate in literacy at Touro Graduate School of Education. “I felt the additional training in reading instruction would make me a stronger classroom teacher,” she explains.

With her new knowledge and skills, Erin aimed for a teaching position where she could really make a difference and landed a spot as a sec-

ond-grade reading specialist at an elementary school known to be one of New York State’s worst performing schools, particularly in reading.

“It was a challenge, but I like challenges,” explains Erin. Only a third of her second graders had their own parents looking after them. Some were in foster care, others lived in homeless shelters or had guardians. When they weren’t in school, they coped with life in the projects, the welfare system, or what shelter their family would be sleeping in that evening. “My presence in their classroom every day meant a lot to them. Some of these kids never had anything steady in their lives.”

P.U.S.H.: PERSEVERING UNTIL SUCCESS HAPPENS

Since arriving at the school two years ago, Erin began implementing teaching strategies, many of which she learned at Touro Graduate School of Education, to help her students succeed in reading. In addition, she

provided the children with extra instruction during an afterschool program called P.U.S.H. (Persevere Until Success Happens). “We worked in small groups and did individualized instruction to support students at their reading levels.” As a result, in just one year, her second graders moved from underperforming students to ones who were reading at their grade level. Explains Erin, “The professors at Touro always talked about making sure that anything a teacher says should come out clearly and be easy to understand. I always tried to incorporate this philosophy into my teaching.” Soon the school recognized Erin’s accomplishment and presented her with an award for her efforts and success, citing Erin’s, “diligence and great efforts in promoting student achievement in reading.”

The school continues to benefit from Erin’s dedication as well as the efforts of two other Touro Graduate School of Education graduates/students. Amanda Wrenn, who

Erin Jaret and Amanda Wrenn use their free time prepping materials that will make the biggest difference in the literacy rates of their students.

“They move from learning to read, to reading to learn.”

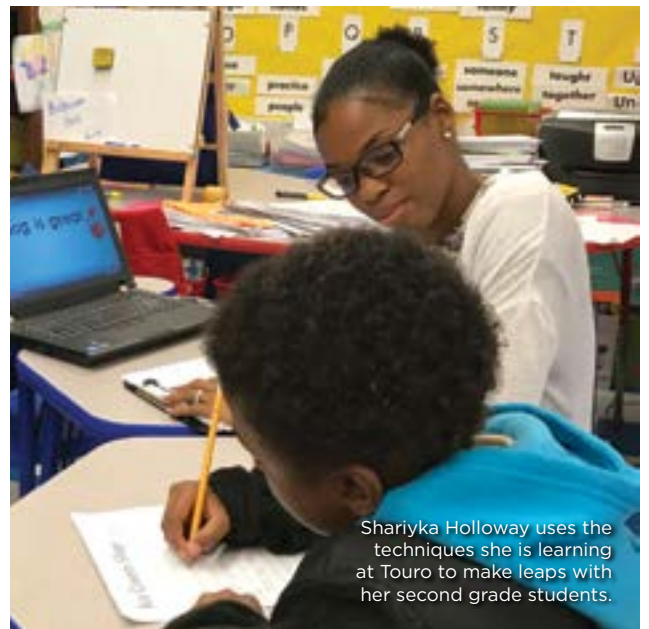


expects to finish her graduate degree in literacy at Touro later this year, has been teaching at the school so successfully that she was asked to stay with her third grade this year as they moved on to the fourth grade. She now serves as their reading and social studies teacher and both Amanda and her students are thrilled. “It’s been a gift to be their teacher again for another year,” she says.

Shariyka Holloway, a second-grade teacher, who is working towards her graduate degree from Touro this spring, is using many of the techniques in her classroom

that she’s learned in her graduate work. “A key part of improving students reading and writing begins with their self-confidence,” Shariyka explains. “I try to build up their self-esteem by showing them their progress,” she says.

Although the demands of the job are high, Erin, Amanda and Shariyka love their work. “Having a chance to unlock reading for my students is so rewarding,” says Erin. “Once my students get the tools to read, they continue to improve and in doing so, they feel better about themselves, too. They move from learning to read, to reading to learn.” ■



Shariyka Holloway uses the techniques she is learning at Touro to make leaps with her second grade students.

OLD MEETS NEW

The Tech-Savvy Rabbi

Where Torah and Technology Meet.

Tech-savvy and Yeshiva don't often show up in the same sentence. But Rabbi Zev Fuchs, Assistant Principal of Yeshivas Ohr Reuven (YOR) in Monsey, New York and 2012 alumnus of Touro's Graduate School of Jewish Studies, has successfully merged the two. His work developing technology-based learning in this K-12 school of 350 students has earned him national acclaim.

Last winter, through a selection process spanning thousands of educators from coast to coast, Rabbi Fuchs was nominated as a PBS Learning Media Digital Innovator for integrating technology into his school's curriculum, specifically mathematics.

WEB-BASED SCHOOLING

"Technology has definitely arrived in the Yeshiva system," says Rabbi Fuchs, who, as a result of this honor, is now part of an elite community of educators who share a passion for technology-based learning. This recognition marks the culmination of several years of planning and work. In 2012, newly charged with the school's General Studies program, Rabbi Fuchs found himself midway through the school year without a ninth-grade teacher. He knew

that it would take time to fill the position and he also knew how much the students responded to technology. That's when inspiration struck. "The school had a need and I pursued a technology-based solution," explains Rabbi Fuchs, who credits his Touro professors for giving him the confidence to try new things and pursue out-of-the-box ideas. Having heard about computer-based learning programs Rabbi Fuchs decided to try one for teaching math. The kids loved it and they were learning. The program, which differentiated instruction based on student ability and learning styles, actually improved their standardized test scores. Soon the program was incorporated into the rest of the high school and eventually all of YOR.

The program consists of a combination of frontal, in-person teaching, along with web-based schooling. The online tutoring program adjusts instruction to students' specific learning styles, allowing them to progress at their own pace. Students now spend part of their school day mastering both basic and more advanced math concepts and skills with the swipe of a finger.

"Digital Innovators are not defined by the gadgets they use, but by the unique way they approach education."

The initial results of this new approach were impressive. A full 10% of the students completed math coursework in time for January Regents and achieved excellent scores. The PBS selection committee took notice. "Digital Innovators set the bar for thoughtful tech integration in the classroom," they said.



RABBI ZEV FUCHS

Assistant Principal at Yeshivas Ohr Reuven (YOR) in Monsey, New York

Rabbi Fuchs at work in his computer-packed classroom.



Students find pride in helping one another with their math homework.



“Digital innovators set the bar for thoughtful tech integration in the classroom.”

“These nominees are not defined by the gadgets they use, but by the unique way they approach education. Their bold and enthusiastic perspective sets them apart as changemakers, and unlocks new worlds for their students.”

A GOOD START

Rabbi Fuchs, a graduate of both Lander College for Men and Touro Graduate School of Jewish Studies (GSJS) with a concentration in Jewish education, feels he is where he is today because of the education and support he received

from his Touro professors and administrators. “I felt that the professors and administrators were directly involved with our progress and success,” explains Rabbi Fuchs. Michael A. Shmidman, Ph.D., dean of the Graduate School of Jewish Studies was a mentor to Rabbi Fuchs. “Dean Shmidman guided me through the graduate school process and is the one who convinced me to attend in the first place. He devoted many, many hours to me for independent study. I think he is partly the reason that I was drawn to education and here at YOR doing what I love.” ■



WANT TO KNOW HOW THE JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM IS PROPELLING TORAH INTO THE FUTURE? GO TO GSJS.TOURO.EDU TO FIND OUT.



CHECK OUT OUR MBA
PROGRAM AND MORE OF
TOURO'S BUSINESS OFFERINGS
AT GSB.TOURO.EDU.



Three Continents, Two Languages, One Passion

Julia Simm traveled the world following her dreams, with a resulting career she loves every day.



JULIA SIMM

*Human Resources
Specialist, Rabobank
North America*

For most people, college, career and possibly graduate school are usually a straightforward process. For Julia Simm, her education took her to three continents and required multiple languages and disciplines. Curiosity and a love of the English language (learned as a high school exchange student in Texas) took her from her native Germany to Sydney, Australia for college where she earned a degree in psychology. After working several years in Australia, Julia believed obtaining advanced training in the field of human resources via a business degree would utilize her psychology training while expanding her skills and improving her prospects.

During a stay in New York City, she began exploring options and learned that Touro Graduate School of Business

offered an Advanced Certificate in Human Resources (HR). "I liked the school and its offerings, plus Touro had rolling admission," she recalls. "Immediately, I enrolled."

RETURNING TO SCHOOL

At first, Julia was concerned about returning to school. After all, it had been several years since she'd sat in lectures, written papers and taken exams. "Right away, I loved it," she says. "And I did extremely well. Much better than I imagined I would." In fact, Julia found the school so engaging and inspiring that she matriculated into a Master of Science in Human Resource Management program. "I think I did well because it was something I really liked," says Julia.

Julia felt inspired as she

studied subjects such as change management and employment law. "My classes were taught by people working in the business world," she says. For my courses in HR, the professors were executives of staffing firms or involved in other areas of the field. In their classes, they talked about real workplace situations."

NETWORKING

Before moving from Sydney to New York, many people advised Julia about the American job market. "Everyone told me that in the U.S. you have to network and so that's what I did," explains Julia. She became involved in the Touro Graduate School of Business Career Center, where students and alumni have access to resources, services and op-

portunities that will sharpen their professional skills and place them in direct contact with hiring employers. There, Julia helped students with resume writing, mock interviews, and building their social media profiles. Through this work and her classes, Julia became known to her professors.

INTERNSHIP TURNS INTO CAREER

“I had some great mentors,” recalls Julia. “Professors James Vac-

“When you are passionate about what you are doing, work doesn’t feel like work.”

carino, Charles J. Priolo and Barry Liebling were enormously supportive.” Through her work with Professor Vaccarino in the College Career Center, she landed an internship with one of his staffing firm’s clients, the Dutch bank Rabobank North America Wholesale, the business-to-business arm of a global financial services organization for the food and agriculture industry.

At the bank, Julia became such a valued member of the team that when her internship ended, she was offered a permanent position on the organization’s staff as a Human Resources Specialist and Learning and Development Professional. As an HR contact for bank employees, every day is different for Julia. She interfaces with the HR team to help answer employee questions related to learning and employee development, helps employees understand medical and 401K benefits as well as maintains and updates all employee information.



“When you are passionate about what you are doing, work doesn’t feel like work,” says Julia. “I am thrilled to be here in New York City, doing something I love.” ■

REVIEWING LIFE

Difficult Conversations

Touro teaches students to usher families through grief and bereavement with grace.

“Whether working in private practice, a mental health clinic, or a pastoral setting, social workers will at some point find themselves sitting across from a client with a terminal illness or at the end of their life. For many, it is a difficult conversation to initiate and brings up an array of emotions for patient, families, physicians and social worker,” explains Touro Professor Allison Bobick, a professional in the areas of health care, trauma and bereavement.

Seventy million aging Baby Boomers are intensifying the need for social workers skilled in helping patients and their families facing issues of life-limiting illness, dying, death, grief and bereavement. Touro Graduate School of Social Work (GSSW) has responded to this need with a special course focusing on the social worker in ethical decision-making in end-of-life care.

SOCIAL WORKER'S IMPORTANT ROLE

Touro's Graduate School of Social Work students and alumni pursuing advanced training are learning useful strategies, theory and the ethical principles that surround end-of-life care and the

integral role the social worker plays in helping patients and their families through this process. “How and when to initiate end-of-life conversations with patients and families as well as key social work tasks and interventions in preparing clients for end-of-life are some of the topics that we cover,” explains Professor Bobick.

“One of the most important roles for a social worker is to remain in tune when working with a client at the end-of-life,” explains Professor Bobick. “Although the client is living, death is looming before them. A social worker can be enormously helpful in assisting a patient through this process. It is a significant time in a person's life where one has the opportunity, through self-reflection and life review, to gain insight into and understanding of the meaning and purpose of one's life. And, ultimately, acceptance of one's eventual passing.”

The school also teaches the doctor's perspective and the importance of doctor/social worker collaboration in end-of-life situations. “A physician can determine a patient's prognosis and understand the risks and benefits of various kinds of interventions,” says

Dr. Harvey Gross, Chief Physician in the Department of Family Practice at Englewood Hospital in New Jersey, an active member of the GSSW Professional Advisory Committee and a recent presenter at an end-of-life class held at the school. “With the terminally ill, interventions can have consequences that don't reflect a patient's wishes. For instance, a respirator may keep a patient from dying but if we are unable to wean a patient off it, is this treatment in keeping with a patient's desires? A social worker can be enormously helpful helping patients and families with these decisions.”

GSSW also teaches students to collaborate with medical professionals when working out the best approach to care. According to Dr. Gross, although doctors can determine a patient's health and acuity, it is the social worker who is relied upon to answer questions related to cultural background, living situation and finances. “When a patient is looked at as an entire person, from medical prognosis, to acuity, to cultural background, to living situation and finances,” explains Dr. Gross, “the patient and families always benefit.” ■



ALLISON BOBICK

Professor at Touro College's Graduate School of Social Work, specializing in health care, trauma and bereavement

WANT TO SEE MORE OF HOW TOURO'S GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK IS HELPING THOSE IN NEED? GO TO [GSSW.TOURO.EDU](https://gssw.touro.edu).



“With 70 million aging baby boomers in the U.S., we must help people face illness and death...Touro’s response is a special social work course on end-of-life care.”



As early as 2737 B.C., the mystical Emperor Shen Neng of China was prescribing marijuana tea for the treatment of gout, rheumatism, malaria and, oddly enough, poor memory.

These same doctors also warned against overuse of marijuana, believing that too much consumption caused impotence, blindness and "seeing devils."

In the Americas, cannabis extract was a popular medicinal drug in the 1800s. But in the 1900s, the tide began to turn against the drug, and by the '30s, marijuana was banned in 24 states.

For the first time in 1914, drug use was defined as a crime under the Harrison Act.

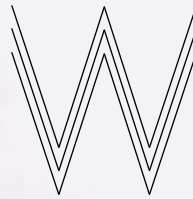
In 1937, the Federal Government passed the Marihuana Tax Act, which made nonmedical use of marijuana illegal. Only the birdseed industry, which argued that hemp seeds gave birds' feathers a particularly shiny gloss, was exempted.

California became the first state to legalize medical marijuana in 1996.

Twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia have legalized medical marijuana.

FLYING HIGH

TOURO COLLEGE OF PHARMACY IS THINKING OUT OF THE BOX IN ITS **MEDICAL MARIJUANA RESEARCH LAB.**



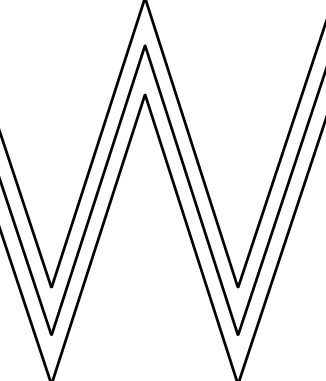
WHILE THE LONG-TERM FUTURE OF THE LEGAL MARIJUANA INDUSTRY IS STILL UP IN THE AIR, IN THE SHORT-TERM IT WILL STAY PROTECTED THANKS TO A NEW AMENDMENT IN THE SPENDING BILL. SO FAR THE BUDGET CUTS PROPOSED BY THE PRESIDENT HAVEN'T TOUCHED ON MARIJUANA, AND WITH INCREASINGLY HIGH APPROVAL MARGINS FOR THE MEASURE SINCE 2014, MANY LAWMAKERS ARE CONFIDENT THAT MARIJUANA PROTECTIONS COULD STAY STRONG, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE BROADER PROTECTIONS FOR ALL MARIJUANA LAWS AT THE STATE LEVEL.

NEW YORK STATE LAWMAKERS ARE GAINING MOMENTUM IN A MEASURE TO EXPAND MEDICAL MARIJUANA COVERAGE TO THOSE WHO SUFFER FROM POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER. CURRENTLY, MEDICAL MARIJUANA IN NEW YORK CAN ONLY BE USED TO TREAT SERIOUS ILLNESSES SUCH AS CANCER AND LOU GEHRIG'S DISEASE. RESEARCHERS AT TOURO COLLEGE OF PHARMACY ARE HOPING THAT THAT LIST WILL EXPAND VERY SOON, PUTTING THE FRUITS OF THEIR RESEARCH INTO THE HANDS OF DOCTORS WHO TREAT PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM PARKINSON'S.



SEE MORE OF HOW TOURO COLLEGE OF PHARMACY'S RESEARCH IS MAKING A WORLDWIDE IMPACT AT TCOP.TOURO.EDU.

See the whole story on the next page —✦



E LIKE TO THINK OUT OF THE BOX HERE,” SAYS ZVI LOEWY, PhD, Professor and Chair, Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Sciences, at Touro College of Pharmacy. Recently, he and faculty members Mariana Babayeva, MD, PhD, Haregewein Assefa, PhD, and Paramita Basu, PhD did just that when they collaborated on a research project investigating possible therapeutic benefits of marijuana for Parkinson’s disease.

Marijuana, also known as cannabis, is now approved for medical use in 29 states and is believed to have therapeutic effects for chemotherapy-related nausea and vomiting, decreased appetite due to HIV/AIDS, chronic pain and muscle spasms.

The Touro research lab, with its focus on natural products for medical purposes, specifically to enhance the quality of life, hoped to identify a condition where marijuana’s therapeutic effect might have a positive impact. As part of their research, the team considered difficult-to-treat disease states, among them, Parkinson’s disease. A progressive disorder of the nervous system impacting the motor system, Parkinson’s is the second most common neurological illness in the United States after Alzheimer’s disease, impacting one million Americans and over 50 million people worldwide.

**THE TOURO RESEARCH LAB,
WITH ITS FOCUS ON NATURAL
PRODUCTS FOR MEDICAL
PURPOSES, SPECIFICALLY TO
ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF
LIFE, HOPED TO IDENTIFY A
CONDITION WHERE MARIJUANA’S
THERAPEUTIC EFFECT MIGHT
HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT.**

An examination of over 300 scientific papers on marijuana from all over the world uncovered evidence that marijuana not only reduces tremors caused by Parkinson’s disease, but that it may also help with other debilitating symptoms including insomnia, pain, and depression. In

addition, Touro researchers also found preliminary evidence that marijuana has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties that could potentially slow the progression of the disease. Their findings were published last winter in the peer-reviewed journal, *Parkinson’s Disease*.

“People often have a mindset that something is taboo. For instance, tobacco is associated with causing certain diseases such as lung cancers. But within tobacco, there are good components too. In pharmacology, you can take something that can kill you, like snake venom, and use it in therapeutic ways,” explains Dr. Loewy.

The research team, which has worked together for many years at Touro, both as teaching colleagues and on collaborative research efforts, were excited by their findings. “We discovered that the chemical complexity of marijuana provides multiple benefits for Parkinson’s that affect different symptoms of the disease,” explains Dr. Babayeva. “Marijuana has been found to relieve pain in other diseases and should be studied for Parkinson’s” says Dr. Basu.

In this progressive disease, a person’s brain slowly stops producing dopamine, a neurotransmitter that plays an important role in movement and many other physical, cognitive, and physiological functions. Current medications target motor symptoms, but have limitations and haven’t shown to slow the progression of the disease.

“Compounds in marijuana bind to dopamine receptors and help to reduce the effects of the dwindling dopamine. Essentially the compounds replace the normal compounds that are adversely affected by Parkinson’s,” explains Dr. Assefa. “In addition, we found laboratory evidence showing that marijuana has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects that may prevent neuron damage.”

For Dr. Loewy and his fellow researchers, marijuana’s therapeutic effects seem promising. “Cannabis may provide a viable alternative or addition to the current Parkinson’s treatments. More research is needed to provide data on the efficacy and safety and its molecular components.” ■

Previous spread: Intro Sources: www.seattlepi.com/local/marijuana/article/Here-s-how-the-spending-bill-protects-medical-1118807.php; www.nydaily.com/2015/03/24/science/seeking-the-facts-on-medical-marijuana.html?_r=0; www.nytimes.com/2015/03/24/science/seeking-the-facts-on-medical-marijuana.html?_r=0; www.nytimes.com/2015/03/24/science/seeking-the-facts-on-medical-marijuana.html?_r=0; www.livescience.com/24559-marijuana-facts-cannabis.html; www.content.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,193124700,html. This page: Photo: Bottom, Esteban Lopez/Unsplash.com; Bottom Right, Get Budding/Unsplash.com



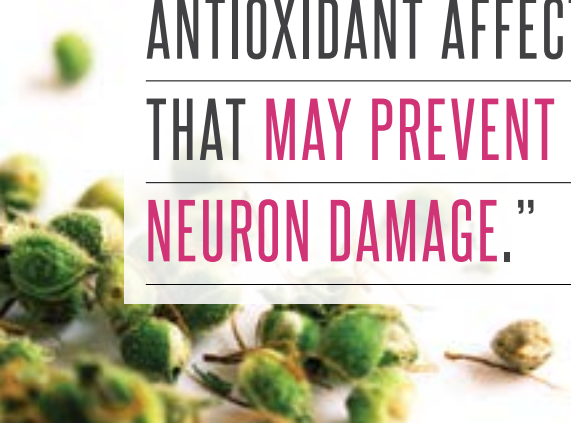


Dr. Zvi Loewy, Chair of Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Sciences at Touro College of Pharmacy with associate professors, Dr. Mariana Babayeva and Dr. Haregewein Assefa in the lab.

“WE FOUND
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Dr. Zvi Loewy is Chair of the Department of Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Sciences.





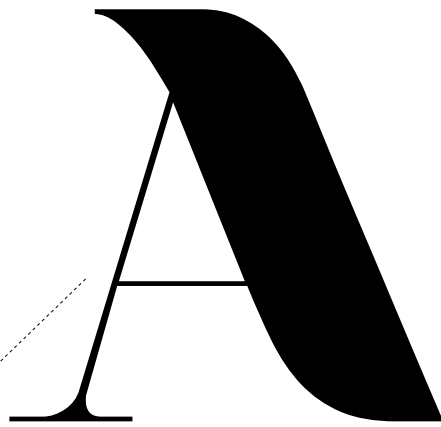
TO SEE WHAT STUDENTS ARE DOING WITH A COURTROOM EDUCATION, GO TO WWW.TOUROLAW.EDU

THE COURTHOUSE AS CLASSROOM

Touro Law Center students find home in the place where they will one day work:
The Courtroom.

Jessica Vogele

*Jessica Vogele, third-year law student
in the Honors Program at Touro College
Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center*



A group of first year law students stand in the courtroom, raise their hands, and take the student attorney oath before New York State Supreme Court Judge Arlen Spinner. This isn't a school field trip. This courthouse is a Touro Law Center classroom.

Welcome to experiential learning, the process by which students develop knowledge and skills from hands-on experience in simulation, field placements and clinics. For Touro Law Center, this is easily accomplished. The school's Central Islip location, adjacent to federal and state courthouses, allows learning at Touro Law to meld classroom learning with courtroom experience. Students see and experience a key institution of the legal system - the courts - from the moment they set foot on campus.

LAW COMES TO LIFE

First year students visit state and federal courts to observe proceedings, listen to oral arguments of a bench trial, see judges implement the law, and attorneys practice from pretrial, through to post trial. They also have a chance to meet with judges, attorneys, and other court personnel. Students then return to the law school to discuss what they have observed with a faculty member.

Explains Myra Berman, Associate Dean for Experiential Learning and Associate Professor of Law, "We are bridging the gap between learning the law (doctrine) and applying it. Our courses integrate court proceedings and other experiences (simulations, externships and clinics) into the classroom. **Our teaching utilizes collaborative relationships with judges, attorneys, and court personnel, some of whom are adjunct professors at the school.**" At Touro,

students in constitutional law read cases that are being currently decided in the courts. Experts from the community who are involved in the legal world teach a range of classes. A police commissioner visits a classroom to discuss aspects of police procedure. Says Associate Dean Berman, "We are utilizing students' outside experiences in the classroom, and we look at them with reflection, critical analysis and synthesis."

LEARNING THROUGH SIMULATION

An important component of the experiential classroom is simulation, a powerful teaching tool for students preparing to practice law and a key component in the Touro Law curriculum. Students develop their skills via role-playing, acting out real courtroom and law firm scenarios, arguing cases, performing direct and cross examinations, and drafting and negotiating contracts. Often, they do this before practicing attorneys and sitting judges.

Touro students also participate in the Center's robust internship and externship programs as well as clinics that are housed within the Law Center and cover areas such as bankruptcy, criminal defense, disaster relief, elder law, immigration law, and others. These clinics, with the supervision of a faculty member, provide opportunities for students to gain real legal work experience and practice the law with real clients who come to the clinics for help. Reflects

Dean Harry Ballan, "While teaching and learning legal doctrine will always be our first priority, the opportunities that we offer to supplement doctrinal learning with experiential courses (simulation, field placements and clinics) are unique and uniquely important to the educational experience of our students."

Jessica Vogele, third-year law student at Touro College Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center said, "Touro provided me opportunities for hands-on legal experience in both the classroom and through internships and externships. In my second year, my favorite class was Honors Trusts & Estates because I learned how to interview and counsel clients and draft wills, advance directives and client letters. That same semester, I also worked for Touro's Elder Law Clinic, which allowed me to directly apply what I learned in Trusts & Estates while working on real cases. Based partly on these practical experiences and the extraordinary efforts of Touro's Office of Career and Professional Development, I was fortunate enough to extern with Judge Joseph F. Bianco at the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of N.Y. I also recently accepted a post-graduate position on the Central Legal Research Staff for the N.Y. Court of Appeals. I stood out from the crowd of students from other law schools because I had so much practical experience before I even graduated from law school. Touro helped me get my foot in the door." ■



EMERGENCY



ALUMNA OF TOURO'S
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT
PROGRAM, JENNIFER SPISAK.



STORIES FROM THE FIELD

THREE SCHOOL OF HEALTH
SCIENCES ALUMNI FIND
UNIQUE WAYS TO SERVE
THE PUBLIC.

JENNIFER SPISAK

ADVANCED PA TRAINING, A GROWING TREND

For as long as Jennifer Spisak can remember, she's been interested in medicine. After graduating from Purdue University, she spent some time researching possible careers and shadowed both a doctor and a physician assistant (PA). To her surprise, although she'd always thought she'd one day attend medical school and become a doctor, she discovered that she preferred the day-to-day experience of a PA. "As a PA, you have more patient contact. A doctor may be overseeing an entire unit of patients, but a PA sees about 10 and has the opportunity for deeper involvement with each case," explains Jennifer, who eventually entered the Physician Assistant Program at Touro's School of Health Sciences.

The moment she set foot into an emergency room as part of her PA training at Touro, Jennifer knew that this was where she wanted to be. "In the E.R. a PA speaks to the patient first and also oversees imaging and lab work." Not only did Jennifer enjoy the patient contact, she also liked the feel of the emergency room. "I think there's an E.R. personality," she says. "It's someone who likes to live on the edge, handle the unpredictable and who is good at multitasking."



JENNIFER SPISAK OUTSIDE OF NYU HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM, WHERE SHE WAS HIRED AFTER HER PROGRAM.

Upon graduating from Touro, Jennifer decided to obtain additional PA training in Emergency Medicine at a local medical center. A growing trend in PA education, such programs, which usually run 12-18 months, provide focused learning and training in a medical specialty to advance a PA's skills and knowledge through instruction and clinical experience. When she completed her fellowship, she was hired as a PA in Emergency Medicine at NYU Langone Medical Center.

During her NYU interview, Jennifer was asked where she saw herself in five years. "I told them that I planned to have a leadership position in a PA fellowship program," said Jennifer, who had entered the PA field with the goal of creating a career path where there would

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be room to grow and expand. About a year later, Jennifer's department head approached her about helping to start a post-graduate PA training program at NYU.

"I was eager to become involved," recalls Jennifer.

These days, Jennifer is working four 12-hour shifts in the E.R. treating patients and spending her days off serving as Program Director for the planned fellowship program. She is currently securing clinical rotation sites, overseeing the creation of advertising, and scheduling school visits. In September 2017, the first class of E.R. Fellows will begin at NYU. "It's exciting to be part of something that is just beginning. I hope to continue my work in this area of postgraduate PA training and grow along with it."



MATTHEW ALPERT

COMING IN HANDY: OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST, SPECIALIZING IN HAND THERAPY

Matthew Alpert thought his life was set. He'd landed a job as a telecom development engineer on Long Island with one of the largest electronics companies in the world - Samsung. But then in 2008, the economy fell apart and Matthew was out of a job.

"I began considering alternatives," said Matthew. "Something that would be steady no matter what," he said. Matthew had always been interested in the sciences, and thought that a career in healthcare might be a smart choice for him. He entered Touro's School of Health Sciences, began taking courses and figured he'd find his niche.

"I had been leaning toward physical therapy, but then a guy I met at the health club where I work out told me he was an occupational therapist (OT). He said he loved his work and that it was a field populated predominantly by women. They were eager to attract male OTs."

At about the same time, Matthew's mother, who had undergone a stem cell transplant, had been struggling with mobility. "One day an OT came into her room, gave her a thirty-minute consult to show her how to navigate her bedroom and get around the house," recalls Matthew. In no time, his mother was functioning more independently.

"I was impressed by how in thirty minutes you could totally change a person's life," recalls Matthew. "My mom went from dependent to independent in one session. It was amazing."

Immediately, Matthew switched his focus to OT.

Since graduation, Matthew has been working in outpatient rehabilitation assisting patients with upper extremity limitations. "Fifty percent of my time is educating patients how to improve their function." In addition to his job as a therapist, Matthew is pursuing his certification in hand therapy (CHT), which he expects to receive this year. "For me, hand therapy is the most intriguing and complex area of rehab and one of the most rewarding," he explains. "As a hand therapist, you need to think about how hands biomechanically function and at the same time what is impeding that function. It's very abstract thinking." Working as an OT with a specialization in hand and upper extremity suits Matthew. "It is very exciting to help patients find a way to have the highest possible function, whether it's discovering a better way to pull on a shirt, or hold a cup, or finding ways to do things that are meaningful and purposeful to them. It can be as simple as finally being able to brush their teeth or eat a meal with a fork and knife."

TZIONA SCHMELL

HELPING WOMEN THROUGH PHYSICAL THERAPY

"Pregnancy and birth is a trauma to the body" says Tziona Schmell. "The problem is that there's not much awareness of this."

Tziona works in a whole new area of physical therapy (PT) that focuses on musculoskeletal issues pertaining to women's health, particularly pelvic floor disorders that can appear following pregnancy and birth. For many of Tziona's patients, the incontinence or pelvic pain they have been experiencing, sometimes for years, can often be traced back to pregnancy and childbirth, or a childhood fall on the sacrum or coccyx. Pelvic floor dysfunction is a tightness and instability of the muscles, ligaments, and connective tissues (fascia) that span the area underneath the pelvis, and causes irritation, sensitivity and pain. A recent National Institutes Health study reports that pelvic floor disorders affect more than 40 percent of women from the ages of 60 to 79.

Tziona was introduced to this area of physical therapy completely by chance. After completing her graduate degree at Touro School of Health Sciences' Physical Therapy Program, she landed a job at a clinic in Brooklyn and was treating patients when the head of the center asked her if she wanted to develop an expertise in women's health. "I had always been interested in women's issues and so I jumped at the chance," recalls Tziona. She attended the training program and began learning how women could be suffering needlessly with pelvic trauma and injury. Immediately, a whole new world opened to her.

"It's a sensitive area. Nobody sits down at lunch and tells their friends that they are incontinent," says Tziona. Treatment for sufferers involves a series of soft tissue mobilizations and massage, along with at-home program of strengthening exercises.

"I work with women who have been dealing with pain for years. Once we get the pelvic floor working again, they come in and tell me there's no more discomfort and that the treatment has totally changed their lives. That's extremely rewarding." ■

I WAS IMPRESSED HOW IN THIRTY MINUTES YOU COULD TOTALLY CHANGE A PERSON'S LIFE.





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LIFT ME HIGHER

Devin Howell gives students the lift they need
to succeed in the field of medicine.

Devin Howell, a second-year student at the Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine (TouroCOM) in Middletown, New York, expected to uncover new things about himself as he tackled the rigorous work of anatomy, biochemistry, immunology, and pathology. But learning how much he loved sharing this knowledge with the 45 teens who were participating in TouroCOM's MedAchieve program, was what really surprised him. "It turns out that I love teaching," he explains. "It's a great feeling--like I'm making an impact on the lives of students by introducing them to science and medicine and, hopefully, helping to spark a passion in them."

As one of the Chairs of MedAchieve, a two-year, after school medical education program for local high school students, which is offered at both the Middletown and Harlem campuses of TouroCOM, Devin and his co-chair in Middletown, Archana Patel, work together facilitating the program. This involves promoting it to local high school students and administrators, arranging guest presenters, planning the weekly curriculum and managing the day-to-day, with the goal of developing a new generation of scientists and, possibly, doctors of Osteopathic Medicine.

Each MedAchieve participant is paired with a TouroCOM student who helps guide their partner through weekly lectures and demonstrations. Students have a chance to participate in hands-on learning in medical skills such as suturing as well the supervised use of TouroCOM facilities including the 3-D anatomy, plastination, and physical exam labs. "Our goal is to ignite enthusiasm in medical science and an interest in pursuing science in college," says Devin. "We also want to introduce these students to the world of osteopathic medicine." In fact, participation in MedAchieve guarantees an interview at TouroCOM following college, if a student meets certain academic requirements. "Already, I see that many MedAchieve students are applying to colleges and universities with this goal in mind," says Devin.

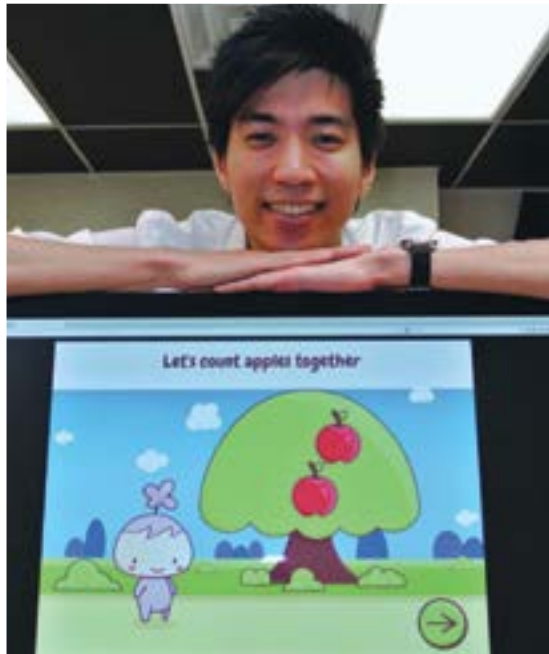
A PERFECT FIT

Jordan McDonald, 17 year-old senior at A Philip Randolph High School in Harlem, who participated in the TouroCOM Harlem MedAchieve program during his sophomore and junior years, was inspired by his mentor Kowshik Sen, and the hands-on curriculum the MedAchieve program offers. Now as he applies to colleges, he's chosen ones with strong premedical curricula. "After participating in MedAchieve, I knew I wanted to be a surgeon," he explains. Jordan, whose family immigrated from Jamaica and whose mother works as a nurse in a nursing home, became fascinated with neurosurgery during his two years in the program. "The brain is the most important and interesting part of the body," he says.

Jordan's mentor, Kowshik Sen, who arrived in the States at the age of ten from Australia, became involved in the MedAchieve program to help students like Jordan. "There wasn't this kind of program available when I was applying to college and I feel like I would have benefited from it," he explains. "Working with Jordan for two straight years, I regained much of my curiosity. Jordan had a unique perspective on many aspects of medicine and science and he helped challenge what I already knew and to look at things in a new way. To instill passion, you have to love it yourself. While he was learning, I was learning too." ■



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