

Columbia Medical Students Host Meeting to Empower Future Physicians

Nearly 100 medical students attended the Latino Medical Student Association's Fall House of Delegates.

January 5, 2024 By Laura Schmidt

Medical students at Columbia University Irving Medical Center hosted the Latino Medical Student Association's Fall House of Delegates to strengthen community ties and inspire the next generation of Black and Latino health care professionals, according to a [Columbia news release](#).

The [Black and Latino Student Organization](#) (BASLO) at the university's Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons (VP&S) hosted the event with the support of the Office of Student Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging. Almost 100 [medical students](#), including chapter representatives from more than 40 [medical schools](#) in the Northeast, attended.

BASLO, an active Columbia University chapter of the Student National Medical Association, offers medical students counseling and provides mentorship to premed undergrads as well as high school students who may want to pursue a career in medicine.

This year's theme, "Unidos, Empoderando la Comunidad" ("Together, Empowering the Community"), echoes the association's mission to empower local communities through policy change, research initiatives, nutrition as medicine and more.

The conference kicked off with a welcome from current medical students and 2023 LMSA president Melissa Hynds and featured speakers and workshops on issues migrants face and ways physicians could address them.

Speakers included Juan Emilio Carillo, MD, president and chief medical officer of the NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital Community Health Plan, who shared how in the 1980s he co-established the student group Boricua Health Organization, which later became the LMSA.

"Hearing Dr. Carillo speak and share his journey on advocating for Latino students and the Latino community was extremely inspiring," Maria Vera Alvarez, a medical student at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, said in the news release.

Hynds added: "We hope that all these future Latino physicians take what they learned here and

implement it in their own communities and throughout their careers to empower the people they are interacting with.”

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