Welcome, Freshmen!
Welcome From Your Co-Presidents

Hello!

To all first year PLMEs, congratulations and welcome to Brown! As your PLME Senate Co-Presidents this year, we (Michael Danielewicz ‘14 and Alexander Tran ‘15) are committed to making your PLME undergraduate experience the best it possibly can be!

So, you may be wondering, “What exactly is PLME Senate?” PLME Senate is the student government branch of the Program in Liberal and Medical Education. Each year, we carry out various educational and social events in order to not only form a more united PLME student body, but also to bridge the gap between PLME undergraduate years and medical school years.

PLME Senate offers events catered to a wide variety of interests! While our Whole Patient Program stresses the importance of the doctor-patient relationship by bringing in both physicians and their patients to share their experiences, our Whole Physician Program provides a more in-depth view of medicine through lectures and panels. Various community service endeavors are also made available throughout the year, in addition to social events such as the annual PLME Wars and PLME Formal in order to foster a stronger undergraduate student community.

Above all, we are devoted to providing you with the best possible undergraduate experience. We encourage you to be involved in PLME Senate through running for positions on the Senate itself (no experience required!) or by simply attending events! Check back here at Vital Signs, the official PLME Senate newsletter, for updates on upcoming events and announcements!

Again, welcome to the PLME Senate! We look forward to a most eventful and fun year!

Michael Danielewicz ’14 & Alexander Tran ‘15
About PLME Senate

PLME Senate is our student-run governing body. Below are all the committees

Whole Patient Program:
This program emphasizes the significance of the doctor-patient relationship, and attempts to demonstrate to students the importance of treating the patient’s illness as opposed to treating the disease. Twice each semester, the Whole Patient Program brings in a physician and a patient to discuss the medical encounter. We stress the role of empathic understanding in the practice of medicine, hopefully establishing precedent for students’ future clinical practice.

Whole Physician Program:
This program focuses on life as a medical student and physician. It attempts to show students that life at Alpert Medical School (yes, it does exist!) is manageable by connecting undergraduates with medical students. We further hope to show students that there is life after medical school by inviting physician alumni to describe the varied paths that each took to become a physician. The Whole Physician Program also organizes lectures and panels on topics ranging from international health to business and medicine, and everything in between.

The Treasury/The Fed:
The Treasury, also known as The Fed handles the Senate’s monetary dealings. Part of the Fed’s work involves sales of PLME apparel, care packages, and other Senate-sponsored items. It is also in charge of record-keeping and reporting.

Social Committee:
The Social Committee creates programs that connect PLMEs with both other PLMEs and the Brown community at-large. This past year, we organized events like PLME Wars – which pits advising teams against each other in games of skill – and PLME Formal: Casino Royale, an end of the year semiformal dance and casino night.

Media/Outreach Committee:
The Media/Outreach Committee handles publicity for all Senate events and manages the Vital Signs newsletter. We are constantly seeking to increase PLME involvement in our events and develop new programs and ideas for promotion of the Senate’s offerings.

Community Service Committee:
The purpose of the Community Service Committee is to provide opportunities to PLME and non-PLME students to support PLME-based philanthropy and perform community service through various programs.
Tips From Your Meiks

Here’s a list of advice gathered from your PLME Meiklejohns.

We hope this helps you navigate the waters of Brunonia and the PLME!

On Coursework: Create a balanced schedule!

“Balance your course load with both science and humanities courses. Don’t load up on all science or all humanities!”

“First-year seminars and other discussion-based courses offer a great opportunity for you to get to know your professor and other students who have similar interests as you!”

“Carry around your PIN number and laptop during shopping period, just in case that one seat opens up in a lab or section.”

“When it comes to Biology classes, talk to your advisors before you finally decide.”

“For Organic Chemistry, it’s okay not to take it during your freshman spring. Many a student has taken it their sophomore year, so ask around!”

“Check out thecriticalreview.org and read up on what Brown students have to say about courses, exams, professors, etc!”

“Be sure to cross-check the syllabi of the classes you’re shopping to avoid having midterms or final exams on the same date.”

“Since Banner will not allow you to register for more than 5 courses, make sure you have a maximum of 5 courses in your cart.”

“Don’t forget to sign up for the “conference” components of chemistry courses.”

“Be conscientious of writing requirements!”

“Take the opportunity to branch into subjects you know absolutely nothing about and that are outside your comfort zone! Put the liberal in PLME!”

On Advising: Your advisors are here to help you, so be sure to communicate with them regularly. We don’t bite, we promise!

“Communicate with the PLME deans and other advisors: don’t wait until the very last minute to ask for help.”

“Feel free to contact your Meiklejohn whenever you find yourself needing help or a second opinion. We love to hear from you!”

“Make note of all the resources available for help (e.g. advisors, professors office hours, TA office hours, Math and Science Resource Centers, tutoring, Deans, Meiklejohns). We all want you to succeed!”

“Transitioning to college life is tough and the courses can be difficult. There are lots of resources available to help you adjust and succeed. The sooner you ask for help, the better!”

On Extracurricular Activities: Want to get involved in some of Brown’s many clubs? Here’s how!

“Go to the activities fair and see what catches your interest. But beware of the listservs (the e-mail sign-up lists for clubs)—you may find your inbox overflowing with e-mails from every club on campus! Instead, go to the activities fair every semester and sign up for a couple of new things you find interesting.”

“See what your friends and hall-mates are doing, and if any of their activities sound interesting, join them!”

“Be sure to glance over Brown Morning Mail for upcoming events and guest speakers (from ambassadors and professionals to authors and professors).”

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On Daily Brunonia: College is hard enough with the academics. But the independence can be difficult at times too. Here’s some information to make your life easier!

“Be very careful of your snacking routines—they keep you awake at 2 am when you have more reading to do, but that’s how the ‘freshman fifteen’ creep up on you! Reach for an apple over that Blue Room muffin.”

“The ‘freshman fifteen’ according to PHP 0320, have been found to be an average of 7.5 pounds, not the previously thought fifteen. So about that Blue Room muffin…”

“Avoid the gym on Friday afternoons since they can be very crowded. Unless you find that social atmosphere vital for motivation…”

“The main gyms on campus are usually fairly empty at 10PM and in the early afternoon.”

“There are tons of hidden study places in the most random buildings on campus, so be on the lookout!”

“Be sure to take breaks—snack breaks, workout breaks, hanging-out-with-friends breaks. It’ll help maintain your sanity for those long problem sessions and late-night studying rampages.”

“If you find that your focus fades after an hour or so, try planning out each day (maybe the night before) and block off your free time to devote to specific things. For example, if you have 5 hours, block it into 1-hour sections for different subjects or activities.”

“If you’re hoping to grab a breakfast snack on-the-go, keep in mind that the Blue Room is busiest in the ten minutes between classes (9:50-10:00am, 10:50-11:00am, 11:50am-noon).”

“Make sure to always lock your door, especially at night. It might seem like silly advice, but too many laptops are stolen out of dorm rooms!”

“Back-up the files on your laptop/computer regularly. You don’t want to lose your class notes, essays, and lab reports.”

“If you’re having roommate troubles, try talking to your Residential Advisor (RA) or Meiklejohns—they’re here to help you!”

On Getting to Know Providence: As a PLME, you’ll be in Providence for a while. Take advantage of the many fun things the city has to offer…while you can!

“Federal Hill is full of incredible bakeries. Make sure to try the cannoli!”

“Be sure to check out Waterfire, Providence’s legendary Saturday arts event through the fall and spring.”

“Geoff’s Sandwiches on Benefit Street has a two-for-one deal on Tuesdays (called two-for-Tuesdays)!”

“Check out Prospect Park on a fall day/night as well!”

“Walk around downtown and explore places like the RISD library (you can get in with your Brown ID). Also walk down Wickenden Street and window-shop in Wayland Square. And of course, there’s always Thayer Street!”

Good luck! :)
Groups and Service Opportunities
Listed are some health-related groups and service opportunities to give you an idea of what is on campus. Do not limit yourselves to these groups, though; there are all sorts out there, medical and not, and a niche for everyone. This is your freshman year, take this chance to explore! A list of all the student groups can be found on www.brown.edu by searching “Brown University Organizations” (first link). For more information about these opportunities and direct communication/signup, please visit the Activities Fair, to be held on September 10 from 7 to 10 pm in the OMAC.

PLME
• PLME Senate- The official representative body of PLME undergraduate students. Objectives include integrating all 8 years of medical education, representing undergraduate students before the university administration, organizing events aimed at exposing PLME undergraduate students to aspects of the medical profession, designing social events appealing to PLME undergraduates and the Brown community at large, promoting community service activities, and monitoring and distributing funds for the said objectives.
• Community Health Advocacy Program (CHAP)- Works cooperatively with various Providence populations to promote the physical, mental, and emotional health of individuals and the community as a whole.
• Medicine in Action Program- Shadow physicians, go on rounds with medical teams, explore various clinical settings, connect with Medical School faculty and alumni. Visit here for specific participation instructions.

Department Undergraduate Groups (DUGs)
Each concentration has its own DUG, a group of concentrators who meet and plan activities to create a sense of Community within an academic department. DUGs help students connect with other concentrators, professors, and alumni. They help students explore and familiarize with concentrations and enable them to explore potential career opportunities related to their disciplines. More information can be found here.

Academic and Professional Groups
• Brown Biotechnology Investment Group- Brings students interested in biotechnology together to analyze and invest in biotechnology companies
• Catalyst- Science magazine, aims to bridge sciences and humanities through art and literature, Triple Helix, etc.
• Triple Helix- Bridge gap between humanities and sciences. Primary work is through journal “The Science and Society Review,” which features student articles and is published once a semester

Emergency Medical Services
Brown EMS is a volunteer service that provides pre-hospital care to the Brown community. Become licensed in CPR and train to become student EMTs. Brown EMS provides a unique training ground for students interested in pursuing medical careers or providing a unique community service. More information can be found here.

Research
Research opportunities are bountiful at Brown, whether it be with a professor in the department you are interested in or with a professional in the community, for example at Rhode Island Hospital. Normally, we recommend that first-years consult with their PLME advisor before attempting to obtain research positions, especially in their first semester.
• Summer Research Assistantships (SRAs) in Biomedical Sciences or in Emergency Medicine are annually available opportunities awarded to PLME students selected through a competitive process. The research project will be under the guidance of a Brown faculty member. More information found here.

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Service Opportunities

**Service, Political, And Social Action**

- **Active Minds** - Mental health advocacy, education, and awareness organization. Work to educate students about mental illness in order to overcome barriers of stigma and make mental health treatment accessible to all.
- **The Adolescent Leadership Council (TALC)** - Student who have had significant experiences with chronic illness assume both mentor and non-mentor roles holding discussions and activities focusing on topics such as friends, families, transitions, and how they relate to chronic illnesses such as asthma, diabetes, inflammatory bowel disease, cancer, sickle cell disease, and many others.
- **Alzheimer’s Activists, Brown** - Work to educate those on campus about Alzheimer’s, participate in fundraising and volunteer in the community to help those with Alzheimer’s.
- **Brown University Interpreter’s Aide Program (Brown IAP)** - Based at Rhode Island Hospital, trains and provides student medical interpreters for local hospitals and physicians.
- **Brown University Relaxation Project (BURP)** - Group dedicated to promoting stress relief and relaxation to the Brown community. Have been trained by a licensed massage therapist to give stress-relieving shoulder rubs.
- **Brown Vision Initiative** - Members gain exposure to ophthalmology. Provide free vision and glaucoma screenings twice a month at RIFC. Fundraise for organizations that improve eye care access and blindness prevention. Contact michael_danielewicz@brown.edu for more information.
- **CareFree Clinic (CareFree)** - Expand access to primary healthcare to the uninsured, as well as to improve the overall health of the poor and/or uninsured. Contact sriya_muralidharan@brown.edu for more information.
- **Challah for Hunger** - Create a fun, social, and philanthropic community, baking challah bread weekly and selling it to raise funds for hunger relief efforts in Sudan and domestically.
- **China Care** - Works locally and in China to improve lives of Chinese orphans. Runs programs for adopted Chinese children and their families to learn about their heritage and the Chinese language. Fund surgeries for orphans in China.
- **Clinica Esperanza/Hope Clinic** - Free clinic that offers quality primary care and preventive health services to adults without health insurance in Rhode Island. Focuses on culturally and linguistically competent care for Rhode Island population with Spanish as their primary language. Volunteers can work on two roles: intake volunteers (take medical histories and vital signs) and medical interpreters.
- **Colleges against Cancer (Relay for Life)** - Works through American Cancer Society’s Colleges Against Cancer (CAC) program, have fun while making a difference in the lives of people facing cancer.
- **EcoReps** - Work to educate about environmental issues and work with students and Facilities.
- **emPOWER Brown** - Brown’s student environmental umbrella organization. Work on environmental campaigns, projects, and initiatives. Meet on Sunday evenings in Wilson Hall from 8-10 p.m. Work with management to help make Brown a greener campus.
- **Foundation for the International Medical Relief of Children, Brown University (Brown FIMRC)** - Provide access to medical care for underprivileged and medically underserved children around the world through fundraising, raising awareness, and traveling to clinics and FIMRC sites abroad.
- **Global Brigades, Brown Chapter** - Works with more than 300 other university groups around the world to deliver medical relief missions that benefit more than 130,000 Honduran and Panamanian community members annually.
- **GlobeMed** - Network of university students that partner with grassroots organizations around the world to improve the health of people living in poverty.
- **Habitat for Humanity** - Aid low income families to own homes. Students sent on builds Saturdays during the semester.
- **Health Leads** - Nonprofit organizations that works to transform how health care is delivered in the country. Work with families and their physicians to connect them to resources they need to be healthy.
Service Opportunities

Service, Political, And Social Action (cont’d)

- Korean Adoptee Mentoring Program- Help adopted Korean children and teens learn about their identities as Korean Americans. Share cultural and/or linguistic knowledge of Korea and build relationships. Introduce resources and social settings to illuminate cultural heritage.
- Mali Health Organizing Project- International 501(c)3 non-profit, enables slum neighborhoods in Mali to build their own health systems
- Mediation Project, Brown University (BUMP)- Trains members to mediation and facilitate in Brown and Providence community. Teach Conflict Resolution Skills workshops, facilitate campus dialogues, and provide open conflict coaching
- Medlife, Brown University Chapter of- National nonprofit, aims to provide healthcare to low-income areas in Central and South America. Help fundraise and volunteer on service trips to Panama, Peru, or Ecuador
- Nourish International- Movement to eradicate global poverty. Run “ventures” to raise money. Money goes to support sustainable development projects in third world countries over the summer
- Open Arms Initiative- Partners with the International Institute of Rhode Island to match students with adult refugees in the Providence area to serve as English tutors
- Operation Smile- Funds surgeries for children with cleft lip deformities, which are damaging to child’s physical and mental health
- Patient Advocacy Coordinating Council- Goal of promoting patient advocacy within the medical school and the community at large
- Project Eye-to-Eye- Mission to develop coalition of mentoring programs for labeled students with learning disabilities and to empower these individuals to celebrate their differences
- Rainwater for Humanity- Build rainwater harvesting structures and train women to be the entrepreneurs. Organization harvests rain to improve community health and empower women in the Kuttanad region of Kerala, India. www.rainwaterforhumanity.org
- Rhode Island Free Clinic- Free clinic started to provide free quality health care for the un-insured Rhode Island community. Work in four different clinic jobs: check-out, interpreting, student recorders, and patient assistance program
- Sexual Health Education and Empowerment Council- Council for promotion of sexual health and wellness
- Sexual Health Education and Empowerment- Sexual health education program. Teach weekly workshops to students at local Providence Middle Schools, giving them a safe space to discuss sexual health, relationships, body image, and other relevant topics
- Student Health Council - Promotes health functioning of Brown PLME and medical students within their professional communities. Comprised of 3-5 students selected from each medical school class
- Student Volunteers for the Samaritans of Rhode Island- Promote suicide awareness and prevention on campus and in the surrounding community. Volunteer at the hotline call center. Befriend callers who may be depressed, suicidal, or simply have no one to talk to
- Sustainable Food Initiative- Umbrella Organization for food related projects working toward more environmentally and socially sustainable food systems on campus, in the community, and the region
- Team HBV- Raise awareness about the dangers of hepatitis B. Support the global Jade Ribbon Campaign
- UNICEF United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund- Dedicated to discussing, promoting, and fundraising for the health, education, and safety of children
Upcoming PLME Events

Wed Sep 11, 2013
4:30pm - 7:45pm
Warren Alpert Medical School Tour (Whole Physician Program)
*Where:* Warren Alpert Medical School

Sun Sep 15, 2013
3pm - 5pm
PLME WARS!!!!!!!!!
*Where:* Pembroke Field

Wed Sep 18, 2013
5:30pm - 7pm
Whole Patient Program: Fadya El Rayess, MD, MPH, Family Medicine
*Where:* Faculty Club

Sun Sep 22, 2013
5pm - 6pm
Senate Meeting!
*Where:* MacMillan 115

Sun Oct 6, 2013
5pm - 6pm
Senate Meeting!
*Where:* MacMillan 115