REACHING NEW ALTITUDES

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Also commonly known as American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month, let’s use this month to acknowledge our Native community’s important contributions to healthcare!

Only 3,400 of the 5.2 million working physicians in America are American Indians and Alaska Natives. It is important that we are able to increase this proportion by continuing to provide inclusive and accessible professional and educational opportunities for American Indians and Alaska Natives. We are on the path to creating a more diverse and inclusive healthcare industry!
STAYING SAFE FROM THE FLU

FLU

The FLU is a contagious respiratory illness that is caused by a contagious influenza virus that infects the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. It affects about 8% of Americans during flu season.

SYMPTOMS

- Fever or feeling chill
- Cough
- Sore Throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue

HOW TO PREVENT

The flu mainly spreads by tiny droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze, or talk.

Ways to limit the spread of the flu:
- Avoid close contact
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your mouth and nose
- Clean your hands
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Practice other good health habits
- Getting vaccinated

MYTHS ABOUT THE FLU

- Flu shots can give you the flu (false)
  - It takes 7-14 days for the vaccine to work
- Healthy people don't need a flu shot (false)
  - The CDC recommends flu shots for every person over the age of 6 months
- If I get the flu, I can just take antibiotics (false)
  - Antibiotics treat bacterial issues, but the flu is a viral infection
- The flu is just a really bad cold (false)
  - In 2018 more than 36,000 people died from the flu
- I had the flu shot last year, I'm all set
  - Unlike some vaccines the flu shot must be given annually to be effective. The virus changes each year and new strains require a new vaccine
How To Get Into Medical School

EXTRACURRICULARS

Volunteering
Examples: hospital, hospice, food banks, animal shelters, nursing homes, local clinics, etc.
Aim for 100+ hours.

Shadowing
Reach out to doctors of your interested careers. Most undergraduates have 50+ hours of shadowing in their undergraduate career.

Clinical Jobs
Examples: Emergency Medical Technician, Certified Nursing Assistant, Scribe, Medical Assistant, Phlebotomist, Hospice Care Assistant

Leadership
Hold formal leadership positions in clubs, student organizations, research labs, volunteer groups, and/or classrooms.

Research
Complete independent research outside of the classroom by reaching out to professors. Aim for over one year of research.

Hobbies
Highlight non-medical activities to showcase personal skills and your personality.
According to the Mayo clinic, "Epilepsy is a central nervous system (neurological) disorder in which brain activity becomes abnormal, causing seizures or periods of unusual behavior, sensations and sometimes loss of awareness."

CAUSES:
- Genetic Influence
- Head Trauma
- Brain Abnormalities
- Prenatal Injury

SYMPTOMS
- Confusion
- Loss of Awareness
- Stiff Muscles
- Anxiety

Featured in the picture above is Cristal. She is 15 years old and has lived with epilepsy nearly her whole life. Symptoms started since she was 6 months old. After brain surgery she is having less seizures but continues to struggle. According to her mother Cris, "She has the mind of an 8 year old and lacks a chromosome. It has definitely been a struggle having to lose my jobs and having daycares reject her because of this illness." Help spread awareness today by posting on social media and wearing purple. You can also donate and register for a walk to END EPILEPSY.
**ALZHEIMER'S AWARENESS MONTH**

Alzheimer’s is known to be the most common type of dementia. It involves parts of the brain that control memory, thought, and language. It can hurt someone by mild memory loss to interacting with each other and the environment. In 2020 alone there over 5 million people with Alzheimer’s. Some signs consist of memory loss and repeating questions, trouble handling and grabbing things, change in mood/personality, poor judgement, etc. There are no cures for this disease but it can be treated by helping delay the spread and by maintaining good brain health. To spread awareness you can fundraise, volunteer at your local Alzheimer’s Association, and more!

**DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH**

Diabetes is an illness that affects how energy is dispersed within the body. There are 3 different types (1,2 and gestational). Symptoms include: Peeing frequently, thirst, fatigue, blurry vision, numbness on extremities, etc. Around 12% of the US population has diabetes. Living a healthy lifestyle is most recommended.

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https://www.cdc.gov/aging/aginginfo/alzheimers.htm
All physicians since the time of ancient Greeks have taken the Hippocratic oath, or the oath where physicians promise to give all people, no matter their ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or culture the utmost medical care. Yet, in the United States not everyone feels that physicians understand their unique needs.

Cultural competency is the ability to understand and respect the beliefs, values, and histories of individuals of all cultural backgrounds. For all medical professionals, being culturally competent is essential for providing the best care possible to all patients. Dr. Luz Maria Garcini told medical News Today, “Cultural competence improves interpersonal interactions, helps to build trust, conveys respect, reduces biases that may lead to inaccurate diagnoses and treatments, and increases the chances that patients may be more compliant with the medical recommendations given.” It’s clear that cultural competency is extremely important to the adequate care of patients, likewise many medical schools and universities have began diversifying their student body and teaching up and coming medical professionals how to better their cultural competencies, as well as how to identify their own biases. With these improvements more doctors than ever will be delivering the best care to their patients.

A Stanford study found that black men were more likely to talk about their health concerns with a black provider. Another study found that Hispanic people in the US delay going to the doctor because they do not understand the healthcare system. More and more cultural competency has become more important in medicine, but what is it?

Sources: https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/why-do-we-procrastinate-experts-explain-the-science#procrastination-a-mental-health-issue
Fun Fact:
A human year is equal to 25 hamster years!

Signs your animal may be sick:
- Not making noises like normal
- Not doing normal activities (running on a wheel, playing with toys, etc.)
- Unusual smell
- Not spending as much time outside where they sleep

October's featured disease: Pneumonia in Guinea Pigs

Pneumonia is a very prevalent disease in Guinea Pigs. It is caused by a bacteria like Bordetella. These bacteria are naturally found in guinea pigs and can be dormant till the guinea pig is weak or susceptible to disease. It is more likely to occur if the animal is stressed, pregnant or experiencing another illness. It can spread between guinea pigs through food, and eye or nose discharge. It can be treated with antibiotics.
Self Care

Self-care focuses on building up resilience, and the ability to thrive and move forward. Self-care involves changing habits, which may not feel comfortable in the moment.

Examples
- Meditation
- Journal
- Yoga
- Go on a walk

Self Soothing

Self-soothing focuses on back-up skills for use within a crisis or when needing support to resist some type of negative urge.

Examples
- Naps
- Skin picking
- Squeezing a stress ball
- Fidgeting