

# ALUMNI NEWS

SUMMER 2020



## CDU's Inaugural Virtual Graduate Celebration

As the unprecedented events of 2020 changed the course of our reality and ultimately, has become the year of "the new normal", the University was able to adapt to uncharted territory and implement a virtual celebration webpage for the Class of 2020. The webpage features remarks from Dr. David Carlisle, President and CEO, Arthur J. Ochoa, JD, Chair, Board of Trustees, Sylvia Drew Ivie, JD, Special Assistant to the President for Community Relations, and Dr. Steve Michael, Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost. Other messages included remarks from Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith, Dean, College of Medicine, Dr. Diane Breckenridge, Dean, School of Nursing, Dr. Hector Balcazar, Dean, College of Science and Health and a special message from Lewis Williams, President, CDU Student Government.

The sentiments from University representatives specifically from Dr. Carlisle highlighting the qualities of the Class of 2020 included "... class strength, determination, resilience and achievement." This year's class not only made history globally but marked the highest number of degrees conferred in the history of the University. There were 399 degrees and certificates among all three colleges.

The celebration webpage featured a video presentation slideshow of all of the graduates with the traditional commencement "Pomp and Circumstance" symbolizing

the ending of a chapter and celebration into a new journey. To view the celebration webpage and other features on the site, including the official 2020 Commencement e-book and graduate awards, click here:

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## Fall 2020 Transition Amid COVID-19

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the University plans to transition class to a hybrid model for this Fall. After campus closure in March due to the pandemic, the University transitioned faculty and students to online instruction. Other measures CDU has implemented include but are not limited to canceling all non-essential travel and canceling University on and off-site events including Jazz At Drew.

Dr. David Carlisle states, "Things will likely get worse before they get better, but there is no reason to think that - provided we continue successfully practicing good public health measures - we can't control the current novel coronavirus and COVID-19 pandemic as well. Working together, we can win the fight against this pandemic."



## Class of 2020: Alumni Spotlight



“Charles R. Drew /UCLA Medical Education program was the only program I applied to outside of the east coast for my medical school training. I applied solely on the fact that the school’s mission resonated with my own personal mission so much that a young man from Greensboro, NC moved across country to learn more about systemic health care disparities. I immediately was immersed in a familial environment rooted in the rich history of South Los Angeles.

I am currently starting my intern year in the UCLA Family Medicine Program. I would like to focus my training on how to empower my patients, combat obesity as a public health crisis, and cultivate my skills for caring for the elderly. CDU provided me my medical education but the people, vision, and atmosphere of the school allowed to me grow tremendously as an individual throughout this process. Despite the hardest times in life, I persevered in honor of those that came before me and to help inspire those coming after me because of the role models I met through CDU. My experience at Drew changed my life forever and I am deeply grateful to the institution.”



“My experience in the Masters in Public Health program was nothing short of life changing. The faculty and staff were extremely supportive and I learned so much in my time here at Drew.

I was involved in the **Urban Health Institute** SOAR Health Student Association and also had an opportunity to join the mentorship program.

I am pursuing a career in nursing after graduation and will carry what I have learned and gained at CDU into my dream profession. I look forward to crossing paths with my peers and other alums in the future. In the midst of the pandemic, I could not be more thankful for the education and training I received to be a public health professional.”



“My nursing career started while I was in high school twenty-eight years ago. Currently, I am an ER Nurse with over sixteen years of experience. I choose to return to school to advance in my career with the goal to be able to provide the highest quality of care possible for my patients.

After completing the MSN-FNP degree, my next journey is to obtain a PhD. I know there is low percentage of minority nurses with a PhD. I also want to teach Acute Care Nursing for the future MSN-FNP students. I need to share all my knowledge with the younger generation of nurses.

I am absolutely grateful to have been given the opportunity to complete two different programs at CDU. The professors on campus and all the staff are supportive and understanding; they provide the resources needed to be successful and guide you to finish your career goals every step of the way. This is what makes CDU so endearing to me. I will carry on the mission and vision of the University with pride; I am excited to be among the prestigious alumni that serve in our communities providing excellent patient care.”

## CDU Alumni Association Wins Global Award for the Alumni Mentorship Program

The Alumni Relations Unit of the Office of Strategic Advancement is pleased to announce winning the Gold Award for the 2020 Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) "Circle of Excellence" Award for Alumni Engagement. The project proposal and Alumni Relations Unit was led by Brittney Miller, Alumni Relations and Corporate Giving Manager.

The program was developed to engage and re-engage alumni while providing a resource for current CDU students to explore their career objectives. The Alumni Mentorship Program is a six-month commitment which allows alumni to give back to the university while providing current university students resources outside of their core curriculum creating a holistic academic experience. This groundbreaking program features seventeen alumni from all facets of the healthcare field and research and 23 students from undergraduate and graduate programs.

**Comments from CASE Judges:** *The thinking and research invested to fill revenue and volunteer gaps by identifying outside resources to balance their internal capabilities is brilliant. The program maximized campus partnerships as a means to provide tangible assistance through shadow experiences and mentoring through collaboration with career services and student affairs.*

Full article: <https://www.case.org/awards/circle-excellence/2020/live-broadly-and-deeply-cdu-alumni-association-mentorship-program>



Alumni Mentorship Program Inaugural Cohort

# GIVING CAMPAIGN



The 2019-2020 Alumni Campaign has raised over \$26,000. We are continuing this campaign to reach a goal of \$50,000 by December 2020 in order to provide immensely more to student needs and resources. As CDU continues to grow and impact our community, we appreciate the support and commitment of our alumni to the mission and vision of the University- we cannot do this without out the alumni community!

## College of Medicine- 3 Ways to Give #100for100

### Support the Four-Year Medical School

Your support of \$100 or more will provide the advancement toward building CDU's own four-year medical degree program at CDU.

### Residency Program Development

Your support of \$100 or more will enable us to seed training in Surgery, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, and Obstetrics and Gynecology.

### Student Scholarships

Your support of \$100 or more will provide students and residents from the College of Medicine financial support and bridge the gap of student expenses. Gifts will be matched one to one up to \$250,000 to endow scholarships.

## College of Science and Health- 3 Ways to Give #100for100

### Support the Cynthia Davis Learning Institute

Your support of \$100 or more will provide opportunities for students to learn and acquire learning skills that are life changing like social justice, cultural diversity, and experiential education in the community.

### Support Services

Your support of \$100 or more will provide support for students in the form of textbooks, professional development, poster presentations and other student needs.

### Student Organizations

Your support of \$100 or more will enable us to seed support to student organizations such as CDU Student Government, Lambda Nu Honor Society, MPH Student Government and many others.

## School of Nursing - 3 Ways to Give #100for100

### Support the Simulation Center

Your support of \$100 or more will provide support to our simulation center and increase cutting edge clinical equipment for all of our students to use.

### Global Health Mission Trips

Your support of \$100 or more will provide support for students to continue to provide medical support for countries such as Ghana, Angola, Cuba and the Philippines.

### Mentorship Support

Your support of \$100 or more will enable us to seed support to CDU's Alumni Association Mentorship Program. This program allows our students job shadowing and professional networking opportunities.

## HOW CAN I GIVE A GIFT?

Text: COM100 to 44321

COSH100 to 44321

SON100 to 44321

Online: [www.cdrewu.edu/alumni](http://www.cdrewu.edu/alumni)

Check payable to: Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science

Telephone: Please call us at (323) 357-3669 for assistance in making your gift.

Mail: Office of Strategic Advancement  
Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science  
1731 E. 120<sup>th</sup> Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90059

[Click Here to Give a Gift Today!](#)

# Mervyn M. Dymally School of Nursing Celebrates Ten Years

After graduating over 1,300 nursing professionals since it opened in Fall 2010, the Mervyn M. Dymally School of Nursing at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science kicked off this year's Nurses Week, which took place from May 6 – May 12, 2020, by celebrating its ten-year anniversary.

The school was named after the legendary Los Angeles legislator Mervyn M. Dymally, who served in the California assembly and senate, as well as serving as the state's Lt. Governor. He capped his career with over 20 years in the U.S. House of Representatives. Dymally was a long-time supporter of CDU and highly instrumental in securing funding for the University as it grew over the years. "The school being named after Congressman Dymally is a fitting testament to his legacy and steadfast advocacy for improving access to both healthcare and education for under-resourced communities of color," said CDU President and CEO Dr. David M. Carlisle.



Dr. Dymally's (center) surprise naming ceremony for the nursing school took place during the 17th annual Jazz at Drew festival in 2007. "For the first time in my political career, my staff kept a secret from me," he remarked. "I am truly humbled by the Board of Trustees' decision to name this school in my honor."

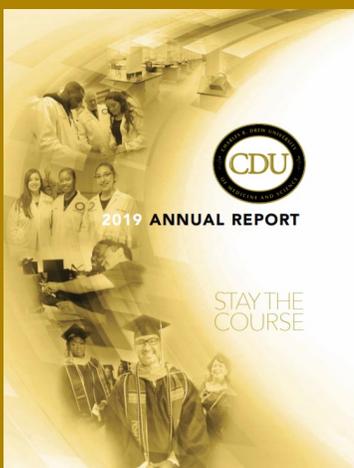
From 2010, when the first cohort of students matriculated into the newly-opened Life Sciences Research and Nursing Education building, to 2012, when the first class graduated 91 nursing students, to this year's commencement, when the school will confer 231 graduate and undergraduate nursing degrees, the Mervyn M. Dymally School of Nursing has grown steadily and continues to add new programs.

"MMDSON continues to expand and introduce new graduate and certificate programs, and we have plans to develop an undergraduate prelicensure nursing program predominately for high school students, licensed vocational nurses and veterans pursuing their goal to be Registered Nurses. In addition, plans are underway to open a Doctorate in Nursing Practice in Fall 2021. Most important, the focus will continue to be to serve the underserved, the mission of CDU that makes me very proud," said MMDSON Dean, Dr. Diane Breckenridge.



MMDSON, which is housed in the Life Sciences Research and Nursing Education Building, was California's first comprehensive nursing program to open in 25 years.

"In a recent survey of our nursing graduates, 41% of the respondents indicated that they are employed within a 10-mile radius of the University. This is a significant impact and contribution to the city of Los Angeles," said CDU Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Dr. Steve O. Michael. "As the University embarks on a second five-year strategic plan, we have a renewed commitment to growth and to cultivating diverse health professional leaders to serve in the under-resourced communities."



## 2019 Annual Report Now Available

Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science is pleased to announce the publication of the 2019FY Annual Report.

This year's report celebrates student and faculty accomplishments and offers a glance into CDU's future as we continue to educate and empower impactful, compassionate and exemplary future healthcare professionals.

You can access an electronic copy of the 2019 FY Annual Report [here](#).



## CDU on the Frontlines



In April 2020, Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas launched the COVID-19 mobile testing site at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science (CDU) to serve residents in Willowbrook, South Los Angeles, and surrounding neighborhoods managed by Dr. Sheila Young, Director, Pre-Medical Academy and Enhanced Post Baccalaureate Program, College of Medicine.

**“It is heartening to know that residents of South LA and the surrounding areas will now have a convenient place to get tested,”** Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said. “It is imperative, now more than ever, to ensure that we are continuing our work against longstanding health disparities by ensuring greater equity and access to resources in our communities.”

**“As the statistics are now showing, under-resourced communities of color are being disproportionately affected by the novel coronavirus. However, there have been very few, if any, COVID-19 testing sites in these communities,”** said CDU President and CEO Dr. David M. Carlisle. “Testing is critical to disease detection that helps us ‘flatten the curve’ of the spread of COVID-19 — for everyone. It is extremely important that we make these tests available to hard-hit communities of color. CDU as a community-founded institution has been in South Los Angeles for 53 years with a commitment to eliminating health disparities. This is why we are **partnering to open a testing center and better serve our community.**”

To date, the mobile testing site serves over 400 residents per day. Extensive research has been conducted on the findings from the testing site. Our CDU Health Policy Team, led by Dr. Roberto Vargas, took the charge on collecting this data from the mobile testing site. **“The findings within the report show that persons from high-risk groups in under-resourced settings will engage in testing for COVID-19 when systemic barriers, outreach is more targeted and testing access is made easier for them, “** state by Dr. Carlisle, President and CEO.

To access the report, click here:

<http://docs.cdrewu.edu/assets/broadcast/files/CDU%20COVID%2019%20Report.pdf>



## Alumni on the Frontlines

CDU alumni have been working vigilantly on the frontlines during the COVID-19 crisis. Our alums continue to embody the mission and values of the University within their communities. Here are some of our alums who have shared with us their photos while working to provide quality healthcare for all.



**Dr. Imani McElroy, Class of 2017, College of Medicine**

She is currently working the frontlines at Massachusetts General Hospital. “CDU has equipped me with the skills to serve my community during this time.”



**Dr. Chris Hanuscin, Class of 2017, College of Medicine**

He is currently working the frontlines at Kings County Hospital Center in Brooklyn, New York.



**Amanda White, RN, Class of 2015, School of Nursing**

She is currently on the frontlines working with patients in Los Angeles County.

## Lecture Series @CDU

### Office of CME

Our mission is to provide excellent Continuing Medical Education (CME). At CDU, we place particular emphasis on primary care and research clusters focused on high impact problems in underserved and underrepresented communities, including factors and conditions that influence health care disparities. The CDU CME Program is geared to improve the **physician’s ability to become health care team leaders**, implementing evidence-based medicine. Our continuing education uses the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)/ American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) core competencies as a basis for the content developed, to ensure we are meeting the needs of our learners.

### Overview of CME Initiatives

- ❖ Quality Improvement (QI) Series
- ❖ Multidisciplinary Journal Club
- ❖ Professional Development Series
- ❖ Root Cause Analysis
- ❖ Cancer Journal Club
- ❖ Friday Noon Lecture Series
- ❖ Tumor Board

### Upcoming CME Activities

- 07/10/2020 Friday Noon Lecture Series
- 07/17/2020 Friday Noon Lecture Series
- 07/24/2020 Friday Noon Lecture Series
- 07/31/2020 Friday Noon Lecture Series
- 08/07/2020 Friday Noon Lecture Series
- 08/14/2020 Friday Noon Lecture Series

For more information on CME activities or CME credit, contact Alicia Reid at [Aliciareid@cdrewu.edu](mailto:Aliciareid@cdrewu.edu)



### Save The Date

**Save the Date!**

**2020 STATE of the UNIVERSITY ADDRESS**

*issued by CDU President and CEO David M. Carlisle, MD, PhD*

**Live via Stream**  
**Wednesday, August 26, 2020 | 11 a.m.**  
**RSVP Portal Coming Soon**

**WE ARE OUTSTANDING.**

### CDU Campus Community Protest for #BlackLivesMatter

On June 18, 2020, CDU’s National Student Nurses Association and Student Government led a Black Lives Matter protest on campus to rally against the recent killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and many others at the hands of police brutality.

The protest included remarks from Dr. David Carlisle, President and CEO, Dr. Steve Michael, Provost, Sana Abassi, former CDU Student Government President and many others. As well as remarks echoing sentiments of hope and enduring this fight against injustice, there was a moment of silence held for eight minutes and forty-six seconds to commemorate the life of George Floyd.



# On the Front Lines: Thank You For Your Support

*With your generous support, we have been able to reach those who are most in need of testing and education in light of this global pandemic. Your continued support will help us in continuing the fight against COVID-19 in South Los Angeles. Continue reading to learn how you can help us do more.*

**WELLS FARGO**



**ballmer  
GROUP**



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science would like to express our sincere gratitude to Wells Fargo, the California Wellness Foundation and The Ballmer Group for their generous grants of \$75,00, \$250,000 and \$100,000, respectively, to support COVID-19 testing site operations. On another positive front, we also thank our **longtime partner L.A. Health Foundation** for their grant of \$100,000 to support ten student scholarships worth \$10,000. It is because of gracious support such as yours and our valued funding partners that we are able to continue training diverse health professionals who enter the health workforce prepared to take on, and prevail, over challenging times such as these.

Last, but certainly not least, we give our heartfelt thanks to the following organizations and individuals for their donation of masks, food, cash and other essential supplies to the workers staffed at the COVID-19 testing site and other COVID-19 expenses for the month of May: Ms. Jessica Flores; Dr. Jimmy Hara; Dr. Lauren Swerdloff; Dr. Charles Swerdlow; Dr. Sheila Young; Yolanda Vera, CEO of MLK Outpatient Center; Apple Spice; Catering by Bryan; Chik-Fil-A; China Gate Restaurant; City Fare; McDonald's; NYMK Catering; Panera Bread; Porto's Bakery; Starbucks; and Sweetgreen, CDU Trustee Linda Griego, Betty Johnson, Rosemary Tillman-Kellum, Dr. Tom McGee, Melanie Rodriguez; Brenda Anderson; Lisa Brighina; Carlin Smith-Stine; LA RAMS; Arthur J. Gallagher; Keith Kobayashi; Johannelda Diaz; Dine 11; and Poppy and Rose.

COVID-19 has challenged us all to share and show acts of kindness. Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science is truly thankful for the continued expressions of support that we have seen from our friends and partners in response to COVID-19. Because of your generosity we have been able to test over 35,000 community members since opening on Wednesday, April 8. We have also been able to provide more than 4,000 meals to our students, staff and faculty volunteers at the site which have included LA County Fire and LA County MLK Outpatient Center staff.

As stay at home orders are being lifted in phases, the need for COVID-19 testing has intensified. Our students, faculty and staff volunteers along with LA County Department of Health Services staff and students from other area colleges are choosing to be on the front lines until the needs for testing in the Watts-Willowbrook/South Los Angeles community are met. We hope you will join us as an advocate and supporter for our role in testing, data collection and analysis and in educating future health workers that will serve in disadvantaged or underresourced communities with excellence and compassion.

It's not too late to help us protect the community against this COVID-19 battle:

Monetary gifts can be given online at [CDU COVID-19](#), or via text by sending "CDREWU" to 44321. Additionally, in-kind donations of breakfast, lunch, healthy snacks, water, or juice can be made by emailing [advancement@cdrewu.edu](mailto:advancement@cdrewu.edu). (Note, responses to in-kind donations may take 24-48 hours for response.)

With your help, we are reaching those who are most in need of testing and education. We're ready to do more. Thank you for considering a gift to support CDU and giving us the tools to remain flexible and serve our Mission. Your gift today will make a difference. Please stay tuned to CDU's COVID-19 efforts at: <https://www.cdrewu.edu/updates-covid-19>.



## CDU Alumni Council Recruiting for 2020-2022 Cycle



The Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science Alumni Association (CDUAA) is now recruiting for the 2020- 2022 cycle. Members of the CDUAA will be entrusted with the responsibility maintaining, fostering and expanding the unique and special relationship between CDU and its alumni through initiatives that

**consistent with the University's values such as:** Promoting and engaging CDU and its alumni; Advocating for CDU; and Facilitating professional development events for alumni and current students. Leadership positions in the Council are open for Committee Chair, Committee Vice-Chair, and Council Officer. The council as a whole will meet four times with the year. To apply, click the flyer, or visit <http://bit.ly/cdualumnicouncil>. The deadline for applications will be August 31, 2020.

For more information, please email [CDUAlumniAssociation@cdrewu.edu](mailto:CDUAlumniAssociation@cdrewu.edu).

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## CDU Alum in the News



Duane J. Taylor, MLK Jr. Otolaryngology Residency Alum, Class of 1990, **was** the keynote speaker at the Johns Hopkins Annual Diversity and Inclusion Lecture held January 27, 2020. Dr. Taylor who is the first African- American President of the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS) spoke to the faculty, residents, students and staff on Diversity Inclusion and Wellness.

Elected by AAO-HNS members, Dr. Taylor will serve a one-year term leading **the Academy's nearly 12,000 members who specialize in the treatment of the ears, nose, throat, and related structures of the head and neck.**

# NOTE FROM THE ASSOCIATE



Greetings, Alumni!

The events of 2020 have been unprecedented- from COVID-19 to the recent racial injustices and killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and others; this time will forever be remembered. Perhaps what will be equally remembered is the resiliency, perseverance and tenacity of the Class of 2020. You have conquered what many have not experienced and thrived in an uncharted **reality**. **As we continue to process our current “new normal”**, you will not be forgotten, Class of 2020. In the midst of the unknown, what I know for sure is that you – Class of 2020 – have the entire CDU Mighty Lion alumni network ready to welcome you. A family like no other. A community like no other. We know we cannot make up for cherished moments and missed celebrations; however, we will embrace and connect with you for the rest of your life. The CDU Alumni Association is a supportive, strong, and dynamic family. And we are here for you.

As you enter into a new journey, we invite you to stay connected and involved with the Alumni Association. We are excited to celebrate you for years to come. Cheers to you, Class of 2020, for lighting the path and achieving immeasurably more than imagined. Congratulations on this huge milestone!

This year has not only been new territory for our recent graduates but for the University as a whole. The pandemic has truly changed the way we operate. However, we are committed to our campus community and to you, our alums. Although, we are not able to do in-person events, we plan to host several virtual events centering around alumni and engagement. One of the first virtual events we are rolling out is the Alumni Connect Webinars. These webinars will allow alumni the opportunity to connect with students and the University by hosting webinars on topics ranging from professional development to various research projects. We want to highlight the work you are doing within your profession and your community; the expertise you bring to the table is invaluable to the University.

As we continue different avenues to engage our alumni, we urge you to stay connected with us via social media and on the website. There are many exciting opportunities for alumni and we are eager to engage with you all!

Sincerely,

Brittney Miller  
Alumni Relations and Corporate Giving Manager  
Office of Strategic Advancement

## HUMBLE BRAG

Please keep us informed of any new career accomplishments and activities. We would love to showcase the achievements of our alumni community! Send all updates to [CDUalumniassociation@cdrewu.edu](mailto:CDUalumniassociation@cdrewu.edu).

**STAY CONNECTED!**



[@CDUAlumniAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/CDUAlumniAssociation)



[@cdrewualumni](https://www.instagram.com/cdrewualumni)

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