FIRST ANNUAL GLOBAL HEALTH HACKATHON ENCOURAGES COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION

What do a guitar string and a raw chicken leg have in common? They’re the ticket to the first-place prize for innovative solutions to global health problems at Baylor College of Medicine’s inaugural Global Health Hackathon.

“A hackathon is an event that brings together people from different disciplines to come up with solutions to particular problems,” said Dr. Sharmila Anandasabapathy, Director of Baylor Global Initiatives. “In this case, we’re bringing together students, faculty and people from industry to solve critical problems in global health.”

With the goal of developing innovative solutions to clinical issues from underserved areas worldwide, the event brought together healthcare professionals, engineers and businesspeople for 24 hours to “hack.”
Hackathon Continued

The hackers were welcomed by Dr. Paul Klotman, President and CEO, Executive Dean of Baylor, who gave them an overview of the College and of the Texas Medical Center. Klotman also served as a judge for the event.

“It’s going to be a great 24 hours – I’m excited for you,” he said.

Participants were reminded that their ideas should impact global health through collaboration and that their concepts should be culturally and socially appropriate.

The clinical problems were focused on surgical and procedural care, women’s health and emergency response. Dr. Joseph Sclafani, Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Baylor, presented his clinical problem from Malawi, a landlocked country in southeastern Africa, via Skype.

After all of the clinical problems were presented, hackers were invited to individually present an initial pitch so interested participants could begin forming groups.

One of the biggest resources available to the participants was the ability to seek advice from mentors in various specialty areas: clinical medicine or biomedical sciences, engineering, social sciences, business administration and management and information technology. Mentors wore color-coded capes depending on their area of specialty so that participants could easily locate them.

After 24 hours of hacking, each group was invited to give a pitch to the judges. The final winners were:

1st place: Hackoscope – build a low-cost endoscope to create opportunities to do endoscopy in low-resource settings

2nd place: Red Zone - A device to record and transmit patient information from the red zone of an Ebola suspect ward to a green zone. The custom device uses existing raspberry pi technology to send data in the red zone

3rd place: Malawi Healthy Mothers – a training and educational program to integrate traditional healers in rural villages to improve prenatal care for women, reducing premature births and labor emergencies

The winning team used guitar strings, a 3D printer and even a raw chicken leg to come up with their final concept and pitch.

“We hope this will be the first of many Hackathons for our global programs,” said Anandasabapathy. “I am amazed by the quality of the innovations that were produced and by enthusiasm and camaraderie of the teams.”

Fall Alumni Receptions

To attend, RSVP to alumni@bcm.edu up to one week before the event.

Baltimore

Nov. 7, 6-8 p.m. at the Hilton Baltimore Convention Center

Baltimore-area alumni are invited to join Drs. Paul Klotman, Alicia Monroe, Jennifer Christner, Mary Brandt and Toi Harris at this Baylor reception held in conjunction with the Association of American Medical Colleges conference.

Las Vegas

Nov. 15, 6–8 p.m. at the Venetian Hotel

All Las Vegas-area alumni are welcome at this reception co-hosted by the alumni office and the Department of Ophthalmology at the American Academy of Ophthalmology conference. Dr. Tim Stout, Chair of Ophthalmology, and Dr. Robert Lehmann, past President of the Alumni Association, will be in attendance.

Stay in Touch

For more information about alumni programs at Baylor College of Medicine, please contact alumni@bcm.edu or 1.844.BCM.ALUM (226.2586).
Alumni Events and News

Save the Dates for Reunion and Alumni Awards


Celebrate Baylor alumni excellence in achievement and service at the Alumni Awards Dinner, May 12, 2016. The deadline for nominating a deserving classmate or yourself is Oct. 9. Please see bcm.edu/alumni/awards for more information.

Alumni Directory

The Alumni Association has retained the services of PCI to compile the 2016 Baylor College of Medicine Alumni Directory. The firm is reaching out to more than 18,000 Baylor alumni worldwide to confirm their contact and occupational information and accept orders for the directory, which will print this fall. The directory is a great way for alumni to reconnect with classmates for social and business networking and for the College to ensure it has up-to-date information on all alumni. Thank you for participating in this project.

Remembering Katrina: Our time shared with Tulane

Katrina – for most people the name evokes images of immense flooding in New Orleans and evacuees desperately seeking help in Houston at the Astrodome. For me, it brings the image of what happened next…. the move of the Tulane University School of Medicine to Houston, assuring that all of their students completed their academic year on time.

To do that, it took the Baylor College of Medicine Community coming together to offer not only education space, but also opening their homes to give the Tulane faculty, students and residents a temporary place to live. The first- and second-year Tulane medical students were based on the Cullen Campus with education programs provided by both Tulane and Baylor faculty. The third- and fourth-year medical students and residents were shared by Baylor, UTHealth, UTMB and Texas A&M HSC. This was truly a time when the Houston-area medical education community embraced our Louisiana neighbors. During that year, we had Mardi Gras beads for any and all celebrations, a double Match Day at Baylor for fourth-year students from both schools and the creation of new friendships that continue 10 years later. This was Baylor College of Medicine at its best and forever bonded us to a sister medical school.

A gift from the Tulane fourth-year students hangs in the B hallway of the Cullen Campus. It is a photo taken by a student and signed by the class with an inscription from a Winnie the Pooh story that the students believed best described their feelings for Baylor College of Medicine. It reads: Christopher Robin had a question to ask, and he was wondering how to ask it. “Well,” he said at last, “it’s a very nice house, and if your own house is blown down, you must go somewhere else mustn’t you, Piglet? What would you do, if your house was blown down?” Before Piglet could think, Pooh answered for him, “He’d come and live with me,” said Pooh, “wouldn’t you?” Piglet squeezed his paw. “Thank you, Pooh,” he said, “I should love to.” It was a magical nine months for both schools.

–By Claire Bassett, Vice President of Communications and Community Outreach
Dr. Martin Matzuk, Professor and Director of the Center for Drug Discovery at Baylor College of Medicine, and leaders of the DNA-encoded chemistry technology platform in the Center for Drug Discovery, has been awarded a $2.8 million grant by the Welch Foundation to support his work toward discovering next-generation drugs.

The grant to Matzuk, who also holds the Stuart A. Wallace Chair and Robert L. Moody, Sr. Chair in Pathology & Immunology at Baylor, will be used over the next two years with the possibility for an extension up to four years. The goal of the work is to generate drug-like small molecules to study disease pathways and to provide the basis for creating new medicines.

“We have confidence that our technology will empower academic biologists to translate their fundamental science to better understand disease pathways and lay the foundation for the discovery of next-generation medicines.”

- DR. MARTIN MATZUK
For medical and allied health students, the white coat is a symbol of the medical profession and a reminder to embrace the responsibilities that come with it, especially to the patients they will serve.

The Class of 2016 in the Master of Science in Orthotics and Prosthetics Program held its White Coat Ceremony June 18. For the 20 students in the class, the ceremony marked the completion of basic sciences and didactic coursework, and they will now start hands-on training during the clinical residency portion of the MSOP Program.

The White Coat Ceremony for second-year physician assistant students at Baylor was held in July. It also marks the completion of their didactic training and their transition to the clinical phase of training. The white coats are purchased with donations from the medical school and allied health alumni.

On Aug. 14, the newest class of Baylor College of Medicine medical students held its White Coat Ceremony. The 185-member Class of 2019 officially donned for the first time their white coats, which they will wear throughout the duration of medical school.

“When a patient sees someone in a white coat, there is a certain level of expectation they have, that the person in the white coat is understanding and empathetic to their needs, they are in it for their patient and defending everything about the patient personally,” said Baylor President and CEO, Executive Dean Dr. Paul Klotman. “As you enjoy putting on your white coat, embrace the profession with all of its responsibilities, live up to the expectations of the white coat and in the words of Hippocrates ‘happiness and good repute will be forever yours.’”