Hair coloring is very popular in America. Some hair coloring trends include highlights, streaks, full hair, and more recently, the balayage. Hair relaxers are super popular too because it makes it easier for people with very curly hair to straighten their hair. Also, deep conditioners are very appealing because they nourish, moisturize, and strengthen hair. Although these products are very popular in the hair industry, research shows that they may have links to breast cancer.

What is breast cancer and how common is it in the United States?

Breast cancer is when cells in the breast uncontrollably grow. The cells have the chance of becoming a malignant tumor where they grow into nearby tissues. This type of cancer mostly effects females. Globally, approximately 1.7 million females were diagnosed with breast cancer.
What current research shows the link between hair products and breast cancer?

According to a study at Rutgers University, published in *Carcinogenesis*, there are positive correlations between breast cancer risk and hair products such as: dyes, relaxers, straighteners, and deep conditioners. Adana Llanos, an epidemiologist at Rutgers School of Public Health and Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, stated that this is the first study to look at how hair relaxer products effect Caucasian women (nj.com). These patterns of risk differ between African-American and Caucasian women. 4,285 women between the ages of 20 to 75 years, participated in the Women’s Circle of Health Study which focused on understanding the development of breast cancer in African-American women. “2,280 had breast cancer (1,508 black and 772 white women), and 2,005 did not (1,290 black and 715 (continued)

__“Just because we found these associations doesn’t mean that if you dye your hair dark, or any color, you’re going to get breast cancer. But at the same time, the study points to something else we should be mindful of.”__

- Dr. Adana Llanos (nj.com)

[Image of hair products]
white women)” (medicalnewstoday.com).
The Rutgers research team measured the frequency of dyes, relaxers, and deep conditioners. They found that Caucasian women used hair dyes 58% more frequently than African-American women who used them 30% of the time. In contrast, African-American women were more frequent users of relaxers (88% vs. 5% Caucasian users) and deep conditioners (59% vs. 6% Caucasian users) (medicalnewstoday.com).

What were the results?
Data Analysis showed that there was a different pattern of breast cancer development between African-American and Caucasian women.

African-American women showed that the use of darker colored hair dyes increased their chance of developing breast cancer by 51%. Also, they had a 72% increase of developing estrogen-positive breast cancer (nj.com).

Caucasian women showed that relaxers, straighteners, and/or hair dyes used alone or together increased their risk of breast cancer by 74% (nj.com).

According to Llanos, even though an association was found, there is still so much more research that must be done.

Care Extender Committees

Department Coordinator Assistant (DCA) Position
DCAs must perform “sweeps” at Ronald Reagan or Santa Monica Hospital to gain feedback from staff and Care Extenders. DCA’s must also make sure Care Extenders are attending shifts and are in proper uniform.

Recruitment Committee
These leaders must spread the word about the Care Extender Program by emailing professors, visiting the school’s career center, making class announcements, etc.

Greeters Committee
Those in this committee must train incoming Care Extenders to get them more acquainted with the hospital. The tours consist of taking Care Extenders to the most visited places in the hospital.

Admissions Committee
These members must facilitate the interview and Live Scan Process by checking in applicants, taking photos, giving health requirement presentations, and answering applicants’ questions.

(*NEW) Project Health Literary Committee
Members will conduct research on IRB approved observation based clinical research under the supervision of Dr. Neil Parikh and his medical team. The Research team will assist in protocol development, feedback implementation, and data analysis for studies.
The Care Extender program has just launched the Project Health Literary Committee (PHL) last Spring quarter.

The co-founders and coordinators, John Tawfik and Ojas Deshpande, started this program with the hopes of improving patient care at Ronald Reagan Hospital and Santa Monica Hospital.

The committee aims to help patients better understand their health conditions through a two-part process of patient surveys and volunteer assistance. In the first part, volunteers give patient surveys to determine their health literacy. If the survey determines that the patient isn’t knowledgeable about a certain part of their condition, the Care Extender informs the RN/Physician. Volunteers in this committee are the key to bridging the gap between patient and physician.

The Project Health Literary Committee is under the supervision of the Principal Investigator (P.I.) Dr. Neil Parikh MD, MBA and Eugene Park MS. There are currently 11 departments at Ronald Reagan Hospital and 7 departments in Santa Monica Hospital involved in the PHL Initiative. There are PHL labeled departments in each respective department with all of the materials necessary to complete the study. John Tawfik said that Care Extenders also provide real-time intervention for patients with low health literacy by notifying health care providers and assisting in any clarifications with RN/Physician supervision.

This committee not only gives Care Extenders the experience of data collection and patient interaction, but also an opportunity to create their own research studies.

(continued)
When there are low amounts of fat tissue, hence low amounts of leptin, leptin induces chemical signals in the brain to commence food intake. However, when one fasts, one doesn’t increase the amount of leptin. Low leptin levels mean low chance of acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL).

What was your reason behind the conception of this committee?

Ojas Deshpande: “Through every patient interaction, every moment shadowing a physician and every procedural observation, I mulled the idea of how much better patient care would be if the patient understood what was happening to them, at least in a basic sense. Through those countless moments in the hospital pondering this question, Project Health Literacy was born...

Project Health Literacy not only highlighted economic or cultural disparity, but became an effort to alleviate it, all while providing Care Extenders a unique opportunity to explore the integration of medicine and public health.”

John Tawfik: “Growing and living in a developing country like Egypt, has given me an insight on how dissimilarities in both education and social status, due to a widening socioeconomic gap, can translate into variant levels of health literacy among patients...Our intentions in launching Project Health Literacy is to ascertain levels of health literacy in both the UCLA Ronald Reagan Hospital and UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica, in an effort to offer long term intervention to address low levels of health literacy within our health system.”

What are you looking for in an applicant?

“We are looking for dedicated, highly driven, enthusiastic individuals that have a passion for patient health care, and have been impacted by the issues of health Literacy in one way or another. The Project hopes to incorporate individuals who are willing to commit the time and effort to kick-start Project Health Literacy, by offering their research and volunteer expertise as well as their individualistic novel mindsets that will prove crucial in revolutionizing The Project and better integrating it into the UCLA Health System”- Tawfik and Deshpande

Benefits of being a part of the PHL research committee include:

- Qualifying for a letter of recommendation from the Care Extenders Program if you remain in good standing in the committee for 2 or more rotations
- Working directly with CE Program staff and gain firsthand insight into how the program is run
- Receiving 50 merit hours in addition to receiving round credit for the hours you complete doing the 10 mandatory Data Collection Rounds
- Experiencing the rigor of developing and implementing clinical research.

Committee members must:

- perform a total of 10 quality Data Collection Rounds per rotation. Committee members are required to complete at least 2 Surveys/Assessments per Round.
- Submit each round’s data using an online submission form, which takes about 5-10 minutes.
- Attend at least 1 of 3 meetings with the medical team
2017 Auxiliary Scholarship Award Recipients

The UCLA Health Auxiliary sponsors student volunteer scholarships for those who have completed 150 service hours in a year from January to December.

The number of applicants for this scholarship varies from year to year. There are approximately 15 finalists and 8 winners. The award is at least $1,000 or more and winners get to attend an Awards Luncheon.

Aboude Abdulrahman, UCLA undergraduate, was one of the Auxiliary Scholarship Award Recipients recognized for his hard work and dedication to the Care Extender Program.

In his first rotation in the Summer of 2016, he volunteered in the 8E department. He joined Care Extender staff a rotation after and constructed the Emergency Department for Greeters with the help of the Director, Silva Thomas.

When asked about his future plans, he replied, “I am applying to medical schools and working on a project to serve refugees abroad. Moreover, I am planning on exploring more departments through the program in Ronald Reagan Hospital.”

The following two people are additional Auxiliary Scholarship Award recipients:
1. How has Care Extenders been beneficial for you?

Not only did this program give me the clinical exposure I craved as a pre-med student, it exposed me to an entirely different side of health care through my involvement on Care Extenders Staff. Working with professional hospital administrators and the rest of the Executive Team, I have been able to implement changes in policy that not only improve the experience of our volunteers, but really made a difference in the quality of patient care we provide.

2. Any advice for prospective applicants of the Auxiliary Scholarship?

Be yourself! If you are passionate about what you do, both in your volunteer work and outside the hospital, it will shine through. Even if you are hesitant, I really encourage all qualifying volunteers to apply. UCLA Health Auxiliary wants to recognize your hard work and dedication.

3. What are your future plans?

While I would ultimately like to pursue a career in hospital administration, I am currently following my dream of attending medical school, and am in the process of applying this cycle. I plan to continue volunteering during my gap year, working to establish Care Extenders as the most distinguished program available to pre-medical students.
1. What is your position in Care Extenders and how long have you been involved in the program?

I started out as a volunteer back in my freshman year, in February 2014, so I have been here for quite some time. Then, I became a staff member around October 2014. My first position was the Department Coordinator of GONDA Observation Unit, which I held from October 2014 to around January 2017. I was also the first DC of GONDA, so that was quite a nice role to help establish a new department for the program. Currently, I am serving as the Special Projects Coordinator, overseeing a few different projects to help expand our program (more details coming out in the future). For this rotation, a few of you may recognize me as the Preferences Coordinator, as I am briefly taking over that role.

2. What school did you attend and what was your major?

I just graduated from UCLA with a degree in Bioengineering.

What I really like about the major is that first, it allows me to explain a lot of phenomena, biological and non-biological, at the fundamentals level through modeling and equations. And second, it exposes me to the practical side of science and learn more about the path of how an invention can go from bench to bedside, which is crucial now more than ever in the era of lean method and value-based healthcare. To those who like to pursue a degree in Bioengineering, I encourage you to do so. As long as you put in the time, it should be good. It was a very rewarding experience for me.

3. What made you want to pursue a master’s degree in bioengineering at UCLA?

I have two reasons for why I decided to pursue another degree here at UCLA. First, I would really love to finish the research projects that I was lucky to be a part of from the start. Second, I would like to have some time for myself to explore this full-time research aspect a bit more and prepare myself better for applications.

The reason why I chose UCLA specifically is really because of my lab and the curriculum. Among the choices that I have, UCLA fits the best to what I like to do: to grow as a scientist and
prepare myself to apply to MD/PhD. The curriculum focuses more on the research (when some other programs I look at are geared towards industry). And most importantly, I love the people and the training that I have from my lab, and also the good projects that I am lucky to be a part of since the beginning. To me, that is a much more convincing story than if I suddenly leave to another school just for a better brand. So, do think about your story when you choose your school. It is really about the fit than the name.

4. What are your future career goals?

My next immediate goal is definitely to become a medical scientist, because that will allow me to do research, but also see a few patients a year.

Long-term goals wise: there are a few career options that I am considering, but the one I am interested in the most (as of right now) is a professor position at an academic hospital, hopefully with a joint appointment in the school of medicine and the school of engineering. I really like to do research, teach, and see patients, so that role will definitely fulfill the three goals for me. A few other options that I am looking at is: an administrative role within a hospital board (or at least running a research center within a larger academic hospital), or becoming a medical officer on a board of a biotech company.

5. What is your advice for current Care Extenders that are interested in pursuing medicine?

I guess I have a couple, but I will not say that my advice can be applied exclusively towards medicine, but anything in general.

The first thing is really to be confident in yourself. It is so easy for us to compare ourselves to some others, but then we often forget that no path to success is easy. Successful people have their own struggles too, except those were not mentioned as much. Everyone loves a great story of success, but not everyone can appreciate the difficulties behind it. Each person has their own path to success, so embrace it and be confident that you can make it, because if you don’t believe that you will make it to the other side, you already lose at the first try. Carry that chip on your shoulder to prove that you are one of a kind, because you truly are.

Second thing is to be honest with yourself. medicine, because the path is long, and it is not for everyone. It is okay to realize that healthcare setting is not for you, better earlier than later. When one door closes, another door will open. This is true for anything in general, which I will mention in my third point.

Third thing is to be respectful of your time. Everyone has 24 hours a day, and everyone has their own decision to how to make the best use of it. We make decisions based on how we prioritize things. You can’t complain you don’t have enough time to study because you have too many things to do for your clubs. In fact, you choose to do those things for your clubs, so now you don’t have time to study. So, think carefully about your actions and choices. Prioritize what means the most to you.

Then, the fourth thing is to be all-or-nothing. You can only be good at so many things so might as well be really good at them, because if you are mediocre at everything, nobody will come to you to ask for
help. They will come to the experts. So, devote your time to the few things that truly matter to you. When you work on something (or go to work), work your best and then relax later. And if you decide that a certain thing does not matter to you anymore, be honest, be respectful of your time and stop doing that.

Next, the fifth thing is to be patient. No success comes overnight, and you know that. Keep working hard, and results will come. A part of being patient is also to be respectful of your time. You devote time to something, so might as well get the fruit of your labor. Now, there is always a balance since not everything will work out the way you want.

Unfortunately, I can't tell you what that balance is. It will most likely come down to is it worth the effort, and what are your priorities (and how you will like to adjust them).

Subsequently, the sixth thing is to be inquisitive. This is especially important in modern medicine with value-based healthcare. I think that what we will see in the next few years are the drive for innovations, for technological advancements, for quality improvements, etc. but arguably at a greater speed than before. As students and as volunteers, this is a great opportunity to learn more, ask questions, and prepare ourselves to become better leaders in medicine in the future. So always ask: what can be done differently? What are the alternative routes? Practice these critical thinking skills, because they will surely come in handy in the future.

Finally, the last thing is to find yourself good mentors and be a good mentor. Well, first you need a good mentor. Everyone needs at least one good mentor, and they can be anyone, your professors, your employers, or even your friends. They can come from anywhere, so stay humble and keep learning. Put yourselves out there (it will be uncomfortable at first, but it will get better). Connect with people. And when it is your turn, be a good mentor to someone else.
Care Extenders of the Rotation

RONALD REAGAN MEDICAL CENTER

- Eva Wetzel  
  - Greeters C
- Simone Saigali  
  - ER-B
- Simone Saigali  
  - ER-B
- Andrew Min  
  - 7W-CTU
- Waania Beg  
  - GOU
- Davis Whiteside  
  - 8N
- Marissa Petchpradub  
  - 8N
- Trin Hong  
  - CCL
- Kimberly Uehisa  
  - CCL
- Clifford Danza  
  - 8E

SANTA MONICA MEDICAL CENTER

- Kelly Nakamura  
  - Labor and Delivery
- Sara Hill  
  - Oncology
- Ailee Plunkett  
  - NICU
- Laura Funes  
  - Radiology
- Luke Verlisnky  
  - Radiology
- Milagro Escobar  
  - Labor and Delivery
- Dvorah Lederman  
  - Labor and Delivery
- Sammie Fung  
  - OA
- David Ramirez  
  - CCL
- Natalia Behnken  
  - Emergency Department
- Ramona Clarkson  
  - Oncology
- Mary Bui  
  - Oncology
- Bronson Baretto  
  - Geriatrics

Like what you see? Email the Care Extender Newsletter Coordinator Evyn Mirasol at EMirasol@mednet.ucla.edu.
Who knows? You might even be featured in the next newsletter! 😊

If nominated by your Department Coordinator as Care Extender of the Rotation, you will be eligible for a letter of recommendation! 😊
## Important Dates

### AUGUST

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- **8/7** Recruitment Committee Applications Open up
- **8/9** Extension Request Form Deadline
- **8/13** Preferences Sign-up Opens/ Recruitment Committee Applications deadline
- **8/26** Admission Committee Application Opens up
- **8/27** Preferences Sign-up Closes

### SEPTEMBER

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- **9/25** UCLA Fall Quarter begins
- **10/1** Fall Department Assignments and Meeting Information Posted
- **10/16** DCA Applications Open up
- **10/22** Training day and Department Meetings
- **10/28** DCA Application Deadline
- **10/29** Last day of the rotation

### OCTOBER

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