

# PEORIA PONS

*Bridging communication; Celebrating accomplishments*

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## Fall in Love with Peoria

Autumn is in the air, which means it's time for sweaters, hot cocoa, pumpkins, bonfires, apple cider, and changing autumn leaves. The annual Morton pumpkin festival happened in September and many UICOMP students enjoyed everything pumpkin, including the extremely popular pumpkin pancakes. But if you missed the festival, don't worry! October is a great time to visit Tanners orchard for apple picking, drinking delicious apple cider, and munching on donuts.

I think many of us have good reasons to fall in love with the Peoria campus. Students can easily approach the deans, the staff is receptive and supportive, and the M1 students even receive surprise pre-exam gifts! As students, we can make our time at Peoria extra special in addition to studying by participating in the Halloween Party for Children with Diabetes hosted by the Peds IG, going out to dinner with our advising houses, and networking and volunteering with the student interest groups. So who is ready to go out, enjoy some pumpkin spiced lattes, and get involved with the community? I think we are ready to make a difference here this season! Christine Pak (M3)

## Peoria Medical Student Council (PMSC) Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, October 16th  
6:00 PM, UICOMP A100-2

Does your SIG event need more notoriety? Get your event included in the Student Events Calendar!

Contact Jaymi Belcher: [jaymib@uic.edu](mailto:jaymib@uic.edu)



# Upcoming Events

## Community Service Fair

Tuesday, October 1st

3:30 PM – 5:30 PM; UICOMP Lobby

Come learn about all the various service opportunities available in and around Peoria!

## "The Next Step" OSF HealthCare Career Fair

Wednesday, October 2nd

4:30 PM – 7:30 PM; JUMP Simulation Center (1306 N. Berkeley Ave.)

Meet with leaders from every OSF HealthCare region and service line to discover career opportunities available within OSF. Open to all medical students.

## Blood Drive

Friday, October 4th

10:00 AM – 3:00 PM; UICOMP A100-2

UICOMP's semi-annual blood drive benefiting the Red Cross. Any participation is warmly welcome! Click [here](#) to sign up.

## Orchard Outing

Saturday, October 12th

10:00 AM; Tanners Orchard (740 State Route 40, Speer, IL)

Enjoy apple picking, running through a corn maze, and eating the best apple cider donuts in town at Tanners Orchard with the Food Interest Group. Please come wearing your coziest flannel!

## Halloween Party for Children with Diabetes

Saturday, October 26th

11:00 AM – 2:30 PM; UICOMP

Come volunteer for the Peds Interest Group's annual Halloween Party for Children with Diabetes, including games, activities, and troves of diabetes-friendly food. Click [here](#) to sign-up.

## Spooktacular Soiree

Friday, November 1st

8:00 PM – 11:00 PM; Kickapoo Creek Winery (6605 N. Smith Rd., Edwards, IL)

This year's annual Barn Dance is taking a spooky spin, as this year's dance will be Halloween themed, complete with costume contest! Bus from Kelleher's Irish Pub will be provided. Click [here](#) to RSVP.

# 2020 Presidential Race Heats Up as Primaries Grow Closer

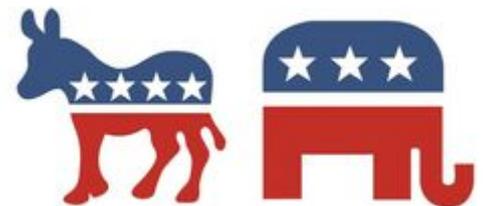
ON SEPTEMBER 12, THE Public Health Interest Group (PHIG) held a watch party for the 3rd Democratic Debate. Ten of the top Democratic candidates battled on stage on a broad variety of topics, ranging from healthcare and the environment, to immigration and gun control. Speaking of the event, Bhargavi Dhanireddy (M2) stated, “I definitely do not keep up with politics and the PHIG event was a great way to learn and have people explain things when I had no idea what was going on.” While there was no clear winner or loser of the night, the debate was an exciting preview of what issues will be important during the upcoming primaries and presidential election in 2020.

But, why should medical students stay informed about politics? Garret Waterstradt (M2) put it best: “Although it's hard to stay up to date with all of the work that's required of us, I think it's important that we attempt to stay aware of what's happening in the political world. It not only affects us, but the patients that we will be serving someday. It is within our best interests to vote for the candidates we believe will benefit our patients the most, as well as our own beliefs.”

To check if you're registered to vote, click [here](#)  
For further breakdown of each Democratic candidate's stance on the issues, click [here\\*](#)

Anna Kolasa (M2)

*\*The views expressed in external links are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of UIC or UICOMP.*



# THE NEW MD INTERVIEWING EXPERIENCE

*UICOMP begins the switch to the Multiple Mini Interview*



Mindi Miller, Assistant Director of Admissions

## IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY THAT

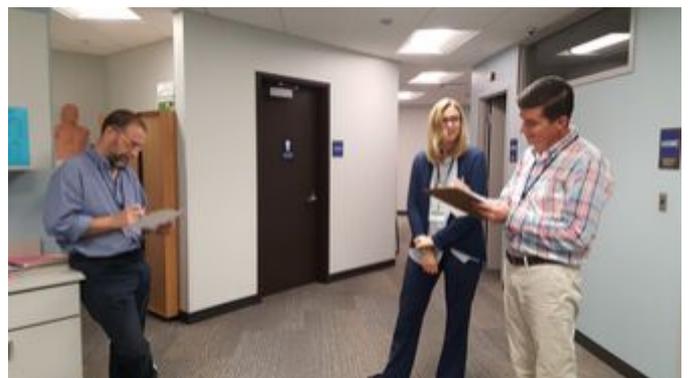
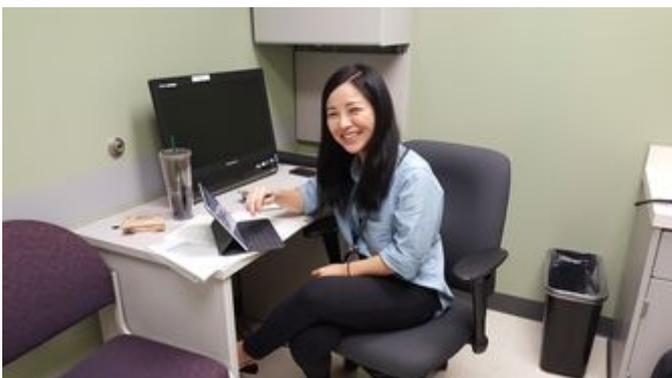
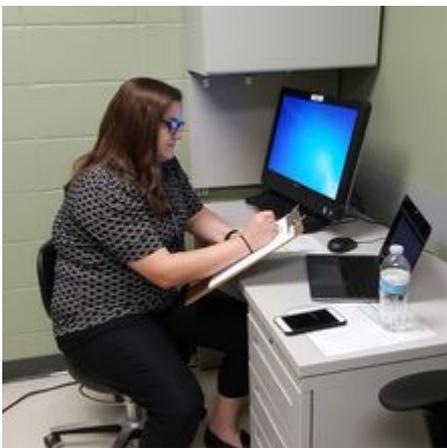
the school year started and Peoria welcomed the Class of 2023. Yet, just as the current M1s have started to figure out the whole med school life, Peoria is already welcoming some to the Class of 2024. Starting September 17th and continuing every other Friday through Spring 2020, UICOMP will host interviews for the incoming class.

But there is a significant difference between this application cycle and ones prior. The University of Illinois College of Medicine, across all three campuses, has incorporated an MMI (Multiple Mini Interview) as part of the interview day's experience. In this format, candidates move back-to-back through seven 10-minute stations, where they encounter a student volunteer and a scenario. The traditional faculty interview remains, but the MMI does supersede the student-led interview used in previous years.

According to Mindi Miller, who has spearheaded implementation of the traditional-MMI mixed format at UICOMP, "MMIs provide a way for applicants to demonstrate their problem-solving and reasoning skills in a variety of situations." She adds that the faculty interview "complements the MMI and communicates to Admissions whether the candidate fits the mission of the College of Medicine."

Overall, those involved have found MMIs to be a positive experience. When chatting with student volunteers about comparing the MMI to their own interviewing experience at Illinois last year, the common theme appears to be "they're way more fun and entertaining." Mindi Miller notes that even many of the applicants feel the same, with one reporting that, "It was nervous going into the first few [stations], but after a while everyone started acting more natural and enjoyed being here."

Tahsin Zaman (M1)



# SIG Spotlight

*We are proud to introduce SIG Spotlight, the section of the Pons where we ask you, the readers, about the student interest groups that you're involved with. Each month, we highlight a group and find out what they do and why you should join.*

In this edition of SIG Spotlight, we spoke with Michelle Beetler, M3 and president of the new student interest group **Admissions Ambassadors**. Michelle explains everything you need to know about Admissions Ambassadors and how you can get involved!

## **What made you start this SIG?**

I wanted to start this SIG because I felt like my interview experience here was not quite representative of the welcoming and friendly nature that we have at UICOMP. I wanted to make sure that incoming interviewees had an experience that better depicts our excitement that they could soon be joining us, as well as our willingness to help them through this process and in their transition to medical school.

## **Who should join?**

Anyone who is interested in improving the interview experience or wanting to volunteer at interview weekends should join. The level of involvement after joining is totally up to you.

## **What does your SIG do?**

We aim to improve the interview experience. We are doing that by initiating a pre-interview hosting program, throwing pre-interview socials with interviewees, designing handouts about each campus in case they are interested in one other than their interview site, and increasing overall current student involvement throughout the interview process.

## **What are your SIG's goals for this year?**

Our goals are to start improving the interview experience, build a culture of student involvement around interview days, and to learn about what we can do for next year.

## **When is your next meeting?**

We do not have a set next meeting yet, but if you would like to be on the email list to be notified when that is scheduled, please let us know!

## **Is there anything else we should know about your SIG that you didn't get to discuss?**

One of the things I am most excited to get off the ground is the student hosting program.

I know that other schools had that available when I was interviewing, and it was a gamechanger for the one weekend I was able to utilize it at another program. I would love for us to be able to get that going in full swing here at UICOMP. We are looking for more volunteer hosts! If you are interested, please let us know.

## **For those who want to join, who should they contact?**

Michelle Beetler, [mwill33@uic.edu](mailto:mwill33@uic.edu)

Next, we spoke with Diana Otuwa, M3 about **PhiDE**.

## **What made you join this SIG?**

I was part of PhiDE in undergrad, and it was a great experience. Once I heard that Peoria was the only UICOM campus with a chapter, that was one of the many reasons why I chose to come to Peoria instead of another campus.

## **Who should join?**

Anyone can join! We are a medical fraternity with the main mission of creating physicians of integrity. We provide members with a national and local network of medical professionals.

## **What does your SIG do?**

As a medical chapter we mainly raise money for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. The great thing about CMNH is that all of our money stays local at Children's Hospital of Illinois. In the past we've done events like Phine Dining and selling white coat pins.

## **What are your SIG's goals for this year?**

We are planning to hold multiple events for our members including a suture clinic, volunteering to cook dinner at Family House, fundraisers and socials. We also host a yearly wine tasting event with our international CEO, Karen Katz.

## **Is there anything else we should know about your SIG that you would like us to feature?**

PhiDE is a great way to network with medical students at our campus and also across the country. We have regional or national conferences each year and every medical school chapter has at least one representative. Physician mentors in various specialties also attend these conferences and are always willing to help fellow members.

## **If I am interested in participating, who should I contact?**

Our President is Taylor Balk and email is [phide.uicomp.membership@gmail.com](mailto:phide.uicomp.membership@gmail.com)

Michelle Famakinwa (M3)  
& Christine Pak (M3)

# OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Know of anything Pons-tacular?

We are always looking for stories, events, or accomplishments that happen around UICOMP. If you have a story you'd like to see included in the *Peoria Pons*, please email written articles to Anna Kolasa or Christine Pak. Please keep all articles to 250 words or less; photos are always encouraged. Deadline: 25th of every month.

## THE LIST OF STUDENT INTEREST GROUPS AND CONTACT INFO

Click [here](#)

## THE LIST OF ELECTED STUDENT LEADERS 19-20

Click [here](#)

## University Medical Student Council (UMSC) Quarterly Meeting

Saturday  
November 16th  
10:00 AM  
@ Rockford



YOUR PMSC 2019 - 2020

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