

NEOMED FREE CLINIC NEWSLETTER

Meet our New Medical Director

Dr. Saira Ismail, MD, a '94 graduate of NEOMED, has been appointed our new medical director of the free clinic. Learn about her journey since graduating and her vision for the clinic's future!



- **Meet the Executive Board**
- **FAQs**
- **Quality Improvement**
- **Volunteer Opportunities**

GIVING TUESDAY

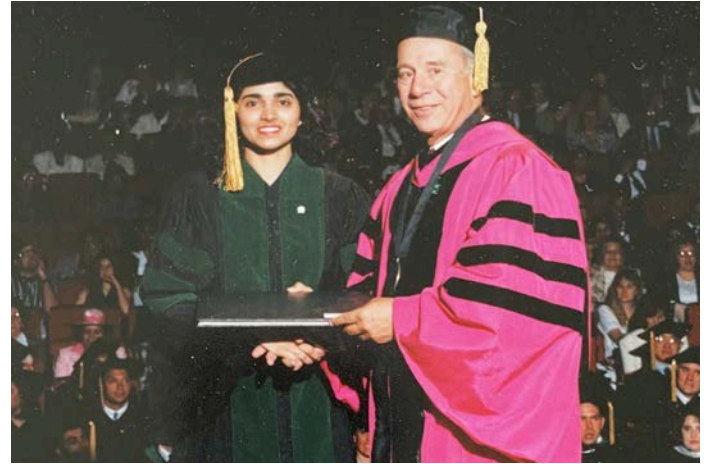
Upcoming Events

Learn about how you can volunteer at upcoming events and get involved with Giving Tuesday on December 3!

MEET DR. SAIRA ISMAIL, MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Q. Can you tell us about your journey since graduating from NEOMED in 1994? What experiences have shaped your career the most?

A. After graduation, I matched at Summa Health System in Family Medicine. I had a supportive learning environment at the Akron City Campus and served as the Recruitment Chair during residency. After residency, I briefly practiced with a group in the Cleveland area until it began negotiations with a large health care organization in the Cleveland area. I wanted to remain in a private practice model. The timing coincided with the purchase of my first home. I knew one of the physicians in town who used to serve as a preceptor at Akron City Hospital. We reconnected, I met his partner, and they invited me to join the practice. Starting my career in a private practice model allowed me to gain insights on the business of operating a medical practice. I've had so many experiences through my career it's hard to determine what shaped it the most.



I will say that working during the pandemic definitely was a time of tremendous professional growth. At the onset, new policies or procedures were in place at the office and changed almost on a daily basis. Meeting the patients' needs required a whole new process. I am really proud of how my office staff rose to the occasion, maintained level heads, and worked under difficult circumstances.

Q. What inspired you to come back and take on the role of the medical director at our free clinic?

A. I volunteered at the SOAR clinic for the past couple of years. I learned that the clinic meant a great deal to the students, faculty, and patients. When the leadership position became available and NEOMED was seeking an experienced physician to help with its management and operations, it was an opportunity to support my alma mater, support student education, and provide community service. I look forward to sharing my expertise with the organization and meeting the challenges in moving the mission forward.



MEET DR. SAIRA ISMAIL, MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Q. What are some of the key goals you have for the clinic this year?

A. The clinic has a wonderful foundation, enthusiastic student volunteers, and dedicated core faculty. Understanding what student volunteers, physician volunteers, and patients hope to gain from their time and experience at the clinic is important. Maintaining the strengths of the program while addressing any areas of improvement is a priority as well. Growth of the program and increasing patient visits will also allow for more impact in the community and more experience for the students. That may or may not occur this year; however, it's worth mentioning. I welcome both students and faculty who share that desire to join the Free Clinic Volunteers.

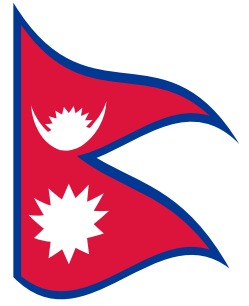
Q. As someone who has been both a student and now a leader, what advice would you give to current students who are passionate about community health?

A. Every generation seems to have its unique challenges. Addressing health disparities is a challenge that will likely impact the younger generation of physicians more than those before them. Surround yourself with those who support your passions. Remain steadfast in the face of perceived setbacks. Being involved in community service in whatever way, shape, or form works for you makes a difference.



Q. What's your idea of a perfect day when you have no work obligations? What are some of your favorite hobbies and activities?

A. Haha, no work obligations? That is a rare day indeed. An ideal day would likely involve being outdoors engaged in some activity either in the mountains or by the shore. It would include my family, a delicious meal, and some chocolate! I'm learning how to watercolor. It's a challenging medium and I hope that it will develop into a hobby.

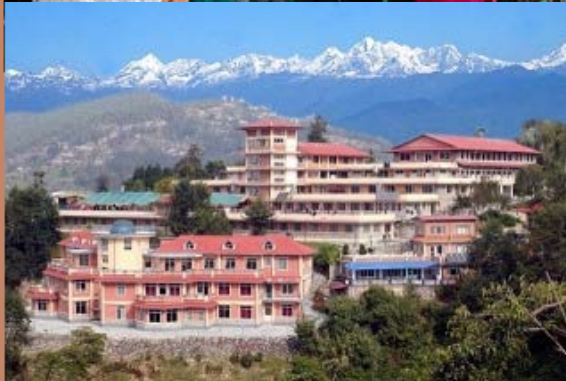


LEARNING ABROAD IN NEPAL



Nepal is a country full of contrasts: from the jungle in the south with Tigers and Rhinos to the world’s tallest mountains—the Himalayas. Medically and economically, Nepal continues to struggle, as the average income of a rural citizen barely exceeds 1\$ per day and **healthcare access remains a challenge** due to the terrain, lack of roads and health infrastructure.

In addition to our moral obligation as professionals to mitigate suffering, Nepal also offers a **unique opportunity for students to learn and participate in international health**. It is safe, and offers an insight into a world of medicine we are not familiar with. Students who have taken this opportunity have returned with insights not only about the country and its medical system but with insights about oneself and how our profession gives us purpose and meaning. Last but not least: students also enjoy the unique beauty of the Himalayas during their trekking adventures, which bring them to Everest Base Camp and many other equally spectacular places.



STUDENT LEARNING AND PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES IN NEPAL:

Students with a sense of curiosity and adventure have enjoyed the many opportunities to join medical teams in Nepal. From hospitals to rural clinics, **students gain perspectives on medicine and understand the meaning and implications of a “low resource environment.”** Not just by reading, but by joining families and communities on their quest to health and prosperity.

Interested in learning more? Reach out to **Program Director of Global Health & Innovation:**

- Bernhard Fassl, MD at bfassl@neomed.edu
- Director of Global Engagement Victor Torres at vtorres@neomed.edu

CASINO NIGHT

The NEOMED Grand Casino, held in honor of the 50th Anniversary of NEOMED's founding, transported attendees into a world of glitz and glamour. The event took place on November 1st, offering an unforgettable evening of celebration, fellowship, and philanthropy. Guests tried their luck at poker and craps tables, the roulette wheel, slots, and other traditional casino games, using their winnings to enter the Grand Casino Raffle for wonderful prizes.

The evening featured silent auctions and a grand prize raffle for a 5-night stay in Maui, Hawaii. Lounge spaces provided opportunities for conversation and networking with members of the NEOMED community, while music and great food added to the festive atmosphere. The night raised over \$250,000, which benefited the NEOMED Blue Fund. The NEOMED Blue Fund directly supports today's NEOMED students through scholarships, academic resources, and program enhancements, such as the NEOMED Free Clinic.



**SCAN ABOVE TO READ
THE PULSE ARTICLE!**



GIVING TUESDAY

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2ND

Giving Tuesday is a **global movement** for people around the world to support their communities. Funds will go towards providing **free, high-quality healthcare** and additional services to people without health insurance in Northeast Ohio.

This Giving Tuesday (December 2nd), support the NEOMED Free Clinic! Your donation or social media share will help us **provide essential care to those in need.**

[CLICK HERE TO DONATE](#)

STUDENTS:

Join us as volunteer advocates!

It's an easy way to **make a huge impact** and boost your CV.

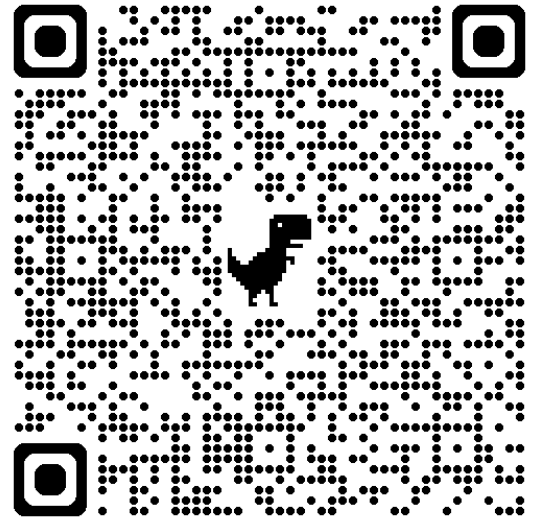
Please contact **Meera Nair** (mnair2@neomed.edu) or **Jared Hinton** (jhinton@neomed.edu) if you have any questions.



GIVING TUESDAY

**Scan the QR code
to donate or become
a fundraiser today:**

Any amount is appreciated!



What your donation would provide:

\$50

General office
supplies



\$100

Stethoscopes

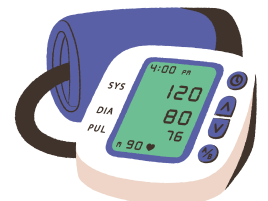
\$500

Medical equipment



\$1000

Community outreach,
education, & support



QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

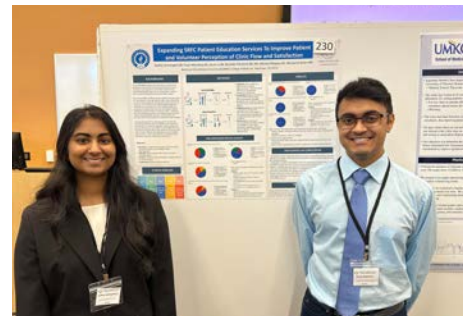


Our free clinic volunteers attended the **Family Medicine Education Consortium (FMEC) and Society of Student-Run Free Clinics (SSRFC) Conferences** recently to present their quality improvement projects! Read about them below:

1

Improving Patient Education Teams and Implementing a Dietician Role

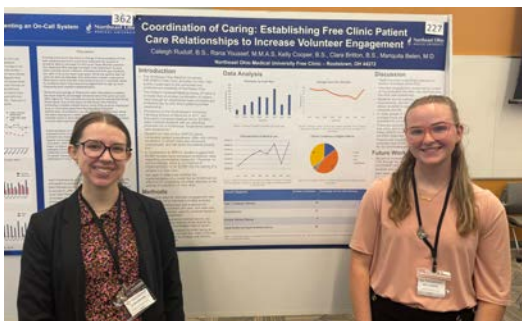
Brandon Petrovich, Sophia Vemulapalli, Quan Lu, Pujan Moradiya, Michael Mappes



2

A Multifaceted Approach to Enhancing Patient Satisfaction in a Student-Run Free Clinic

Joseph Kessler, Leo Puhalla, Jessica Lee, Maham Alvi



Coordination of Caring: Establishing Free Clinic Patient Care Relationships to Increase Volunteer Engagement

Kelly Cooper, Rana Yousef, Clara Britton

3

Enhancing Volunteer Retention through Longitudinal Patient Care Teams

Caleigh Rudolph, Rana Yousef, Clara Britton, Kelly Cooper

4

5

Enhancing Volunteer Staffing in a Student-Run Free Clinic by Implementing an On-Call System

Sophie Tayade, Henyah Dardir, Meera Nair, Alex You

EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Celine El-Khoury

IPE5 Course Director



Tailyn Houston

**Vaccine Coordinator
Chair**



Donna Al-Falih

**Financial Advocacy
Chair**



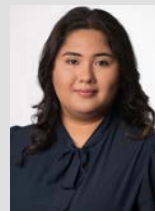
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CMR Chair



Alyssa Sanders

CMR Chair



Cameron Terzian

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Administrative Affairs



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VP of
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Community Outreach
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Quality Improvement
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Leo Puhalla

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VP of Patient Affairs



Camille Muakkassa

Jr VP of Volunteer
Affairs



Caleigh Rudolf

Clinician Recruitment
Chair



Erik Lamb

Lab Director



Zach Stahi

Lab Director



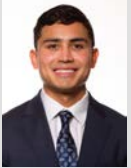
Alexis Steer

Lab Director



Andrew Fiorentino

COM Volunteer
Recruitment



Ethan Sontz

COM Volunteer
Recruitment



Henyah Dardir

COP Volunteer
Recruitment



Paramvir Kaur

Patient Education &
Resources



Quan Lu

Scheduling Chair



Nicholas Hartman

Lab Supervisor



Donovan O'Brien

Lab Supervisor



Madeline Evan

Lab Supervisor



Mark Villers

GET INVOLVED

Hands-on learning is what the Student Run Free Clinic is all about. Supervised by clinical professionals including doctors, patient assistants, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, and laboratory professionals, volunteers interested in various healthcare fields can learn more about the day-to-day operations of healthcare clinics while they help individuals in their communities receive quality, affordable healthcare.

Ways to get involved:

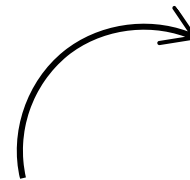
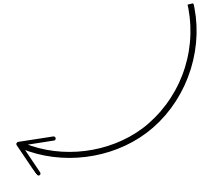
- Scan QR codes to the right for November & December sign-ups

OR at any time:

- Email: volunteers@outreachneo.org
- [Click here for monthly sign-up link](#)



November Sign-up



December Sign-up



Why get involved?

Student or provider, the NEOMED Free Clinic offers an invaluable opportunity to support the local community with access to high-quality healthcare at no cost.

Beyond the service to your community, the NEOMED Free Clinic provides the opportunity for learners of all levels to hone in clinical skills via instant feedback in a pressure-free, safe space for learning.

