

## Klingenstein Thirteenth Annual National Medical Student Conference: A Student Member Perspective



■ **Kevin Lee Sun**

I stood at the podium, looking out at the conference attendees and delivering instructions for an upcoming activity. I saw students from different medical schools sitting together, with faculty interspersed among the tables. I started wondering – if medical trainees everywhere were afforded supportive mentorship and a warm peer community to realize their professional goals, would it resemble this precious annual gathering of child psychiatrists and medical students from around the country?

As student helpers of the 2019 Klingenstein Third Generation Foundation (KTGF) National Medical Student Conference at Stanford, John Cannon and I designed and hosted the activities, known as the “Games.” Throughout the day, I saw both diversity and collaboration in thought and execution. In one of the Games, mentors and mentees had twenty minutes to build a diorama representing “peer review,” “therapeutic alliance,” or “resilience.” Working with a

dearth of materials—modeling clay, glitter glue, construction paper, and slime—the teams managed to produce stunningly unique dioramas of mermaids and scuba divers, white coat figurines, monsters from under the bed, and toilets. These were metaphorical evocations of patient care and research that left us all gasping in wonder and crying with laughter.

In his opening remarks, **Thomas Anders, MD**, exhorted us to “remember the kids.” Students responded to his call, giving incisive, child and adolescent-related presentations. We heard about—among many topics—structural violence against DREAMers, online child grooming, pediatric psycho-oncology, and creative writing interventions for hospitalized adolescents. Learning about my peers’ research projects and clinical experiences, I witnessed a professional community begin to take form, and I was proud to count myself as a part of it.

I heard the word “mentorship” many times through the course of the day, but the idea only really clicked when I heard Klingenstein Fellow and current Stanford psychiatry resident Desiree Li declare, “Mentors should believe in you.” As I reflected on my past and current mentors in child and adolescent psychiatry, I was overcome with emotion, hit by an immense force of gratitude that was both humbling and empowering. I felt all my mentors’ hope and care for me riding within their belief in me.

At the end of the conference, **Anita R. Kishore, MD**, emailed all of us our conference group photo. She titled it “Our Future—it looks like a pretty spectacular one!” I agree with her. I cannot wait to see what our community of peers will do for the field of child and adolescent psychiatry. ■

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*Kevin Sun is a second-year medical student at Stanford. He was the 2018-19 teaching assistant for the Stanford Klingenstein Fellowship program. He also has been a researcher in the fields of mood disorders and autism, with funding from Stanford MedScholars and the NIMH T32 grant. He may be reached at [klsun@stanford.edu](mailto:klsun@stanford.edu).*

