

Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG) Program of Excellence Award Winners

Excellence in Promoting the Scope of Medicine

Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine-Quinnipiac
University

FMIG Operation

The Frank H. Netter School of Medicine FMIG is led by a student executive board composed of first- and second-year medical students. This year, we expanded our leadership team to reflect our growing membership and program volume.

Our 2024-2025 board included:

President - Oversees all FMIG programming, leads meetings, coordinates with faculty, and serves as the student representative to the Connecticut Academy of Family Physicians (CAFP).

Vice President - Supports the president and assumes leadership responsibilities as needed.

Treasurer - Manages FMIG's budget and coordinates reimbursements and funding requests with the Office of Student Affairs.

Secretary - Tracks meeting minutes, maintains a contact list of members, and shares communications about upcoming events.

M1 Liaisons (2) - Serve as first-year class representatives, design event flyers, share feedback from M1s, and help increase engagement and outreach.

Events Chair (new role this year) - Assists with event planning and coordination, ensuring smooth execution of our many workshops, panels, and community initiatives.

Our executive board meets regularly to coordinate upcoming events, share AAFP and CAFP updates, and identify opportunities for collaboration with other student interest groups. By including both first- and second-year students on the board, we ensure a wide range of perspectives and ideas from across the pre-clinical years. This structure not only enhances our outreach and engagement efforts but also promotes continuity as first-year board members are encouraged to remain involved and take on leadership roles in subsequent years, helping to sustain the growth and momentum of our FMIG.

Goals

Our mission is to promote the field of family medicine by helping medical students explore the specialty's diversity, scope, and community focus. We aim to provide early, meaningful exposure to the wide variety of career paths in family medicine while fostering mentorship, advocacy, and clinical skill development.

Our core goals are to:

1. Showcase the breadth and flexibility of family medicine through diverse programming and mentorship.
2. Provide hands-on clinical experiences to reinforce family medicine's procedural scope.
3. Engage with local communities and public health efforts, particularly through service-based learning.
4. Foster collaboration with other student organizations to promote family-medicine related principles such as the value of primary care.
5. Build peer and professional mentorship pathways that support exploration and commitment to family medicine.

Faculty Advisor

Our FMIG faculty advisors play a vital role in guiding and supporting our organization. The executive board meets with them regularly throughout the academic year to discuss programming ideas, funding opportunities, and long-term goals. All three advisors are actively involved with the Connecticut Academy of Family Physicians (CAFP) and participate in monthly CAFP meetings alongside our FMIG President. Through these connections, they help advocate for our interest group and provide valuable opportunities for student involvement in state-level programming.

More specifically:

Dr. [REDACTED] (Family Medicine Clerkship Director/President of the Connecticut Medical Society) is a longstanding mentor who offers insight into advocacy efforts, connects students with guest speakers, and ensures our programming aligns with broader educational and state initiatives.

Dr. [REDACTED] (Chair of the Department of Family Medicine) champions student professional development and plays a key role in helping students secure resources to attend national conferences, such as the AAFP National Conference.

Dr. [REDACTED] (Program Director of the Quinnipiac University Rural Family Medicine Residency) provides mentorship in rural and underserved care, supports residency exploration, and frequently participates in FMIG programming as a guest speaker.

Programs

Showcasing the Breadth of Family Medicine - Welcome Event, Alumni & Physician Panels

This year, our FMIG launched a multi-part speaker series designed to introduce students to the wide range of careers, practice settings, and pathways within family medicine. The initiative consisted of three main events: our Welcome to FMIG Event, an Alumni Panel, and a Physician Career Panel. The overarching goal was to help students appreciate the scope, diversity, and adaptability of family medicine early in their training. The Welcome to FMIG Event was held at the beginning of the academic year in partnership with the Internal Medicine Interest Group. The idea to co-host the session came from informal conversations among FMIG and IMIG board members, who noticed that many M1s had overlapping interest in both specialties. The session featured a presentation by FMIG and IMIG leaders with discussions focused on the similarities, differences, and unique aspects of family and internal medicine. This format encouraged open dialogue and helped attendees gain a more nuanced understanding of both fields. Building on that foundation, we hosted a Family Medicine Alumni Panel featuring two Netter graduates currently practicing in family medicine. They spoke candidly about their decision to pursue the field, their medical school and residency experiences, and how they continue to evolve professionally. Later in the year, our Physician Career Panel featured four physicians with distinct family medicine practices: one who practices full spectrum primary care, one in addiction medicine and primary care, one in emergency medicine/telehealth, and a current sports medicine fellow. These panelists were intentionally selected to highlight the breadth and flexibility of career paths available within family medicine. Planning these events required collaboration across multiple FMIG roles. The President and Events Chair coordinated outreach, scheduling, and logistics. The M1 Liaisons helped with event promotion, while the Secretary handled communications and RSVP tracking. Our faculty advisors were instrumental in shaping these events. Dr. [REDACTED] and Dr. [REDACTED] provided speaker recommendations for both the alumni and physician panels and helped frame discussion questions to emphasize career variety and the holistic nature of family medicine. Their guidance ensured that the events aligned with our educational goals and provided meaningful exposure for students. Execution of each event included guided questions, personal storytelling from speakers, and audience Q&A. Student participation was strong across all three events, with a particularly high turnout at the Physician Career Panel. Many students reported that hearing firsthand from physicians and alumni helped clarify their interests and inspired them to explore family medicine more deeply.

These events directly promoted family medicine by: Highlighting its flexibility (e.g., outpatient, urgent care, addiction medicine, sports medicine). Emphasizing its longitudinal care model and focus on preventive and community-based care. Positioning family medicine as a specialty that evolves alongside a physician's interests and life goals. We evaluated success using post-event surveys and verbal feedback. Students consistently praised the variety of perspectives, relatable stories, and honest discussion about career paths. The co-hosted welcome event was especially effective at drawing in undecided students and opening the door to further exploration. Compared to last year, this year's programming was more intentional in showcasing diverse practice models, fostering inter-specialty collaboration, and engaging students early and often. By framing family medicine not as a single path but as a broad, customizable career, we succeeded in expanding student understanding of what family medicine has to offer.

Procedure Nights - Expanding Clinical Skills in Family Medicine

Our procedure workshops aim to provide students with hands-on exposure to clinical skills that are frequently used in family medicine. This year, our focus was to highlight that family physicians are not only expert diagnosticians but also skilled proceduralists who manage a wide range of conditions in outpatient settings. We hosted two workshops, Joint Injections and Skin Biopsies, in collaboration with the Middlesex Hospital Family Medicine Residency Program. These workshops were developed in direct response to feedback from last year, where students expressed a strong interest in earlier procedural training and shared how impactful their interactions with family medicine residents had been during previous events. Planning and coordination were led by the Events Chair and FMIG President, who communicated with the residency program director to schedule the events. The Secretary and M1 Liaisons supported event promotion, managed student registration, and assisted with logistics on the day of the event. Our faculty advisors played a key role in maintaining our partnership with the residency program, which has now become a standing component of our annual programming. Their involvement emphasized how mentorship and procedural training are integral parts of family medicine education. Each workshop began with a didactic overview, followed by step-by-step instruction and supervised, hands-on practice. Students rotated through small-group stations where they practiced ultrasound-guided joint injections and dermatologic biopsies with guidance from residents. Family medicine was promoted through both the procedures themselves and the residents' insights into how these skills are used routinely in practice. Students gained a better understanding of the breadth of services family physicians can provide, including dermatologic, orthopedic, and preventive care, all within the primary care setting and often without the need for specialist referral. Both workshops filled quickly, reflecting high student interest. Verbal feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with students praising the interactive format, procedural relevance, and opportunity to connect with enthusiastic resident mentors. To further enhance the experience this year, we introduced joint injections in place of last year's reproductive health focus based on survey responses indicating greater interest in musculoskeletal care. We also aligned the workshop timing with the M1 musculoskeletal block, making the content more relevant and reinforcing concepts learned in class. These changes broadened the procedural scope students were exposed to and deepened their appreciation for the versatility of family medicine.

Community Engagement & Advocacy - Family Medicine Beyond the Clinic

This multi-faceted initiative included three events: Food Pantry Volunteering, a new Advocacy Letter Writing Workshop, and a new EKG Workshop. These initiatives shared the goal of promoting family medicine's role in community health, prevention, and advocacy. The Food Pantry Volunteering event, a returning favorite, took place at CT Foodshare, a local organization providing groceries to families facing food insecurity. Led by the FMIG President and M1 Liaisons, the event involved coordinating with pantry staff and orienting volunteers. This event underscored the importance of community partnerships in addressing upstream drivers of health. The Advocacy Workshop, developed in partnership with the

Pediatric Interest Group, taught students how to write effective letters to legislators about healthcare issues. Inspired by faculty mentors' participation in state advocacy, the event was led by the President, with support from Dr. [REDACTED] who helped identify relevant legislative topics. The new EKG Workshop was a major highlight of the year. Co-hosted with the Cardiology, Internal Medicine, and Emergency Medicine Interest Groups, the event combined hands-on training in EKG lead placement with a panel and presentation by In A Heartbeat, a nonprofit that provides free EKG screenings for children and teens. The event was spearheaded by an FMIG board member who had previously volunteered with the organization. With over 80 participants, it was one of our most well-attended events. All members of the FMIG executive board played a key role in its success: teaching EKG skills to first-year students, moderating the panel, and organizing funding to support standardized patients who served as models for the skills session. Many attendees went on to volunteer at In A Heartbeat screening events, reflecting a meaningful connection between the workshop and sustained student engagement. Our faculty advisors supported these programs by offering logistical guidance, assisting with promotion, and encouraging connections with community-based organizations and family physicians involved in advocacy and public health. Their involvement helped frame each event within the broader context of family medicine, emphasizing the specialty's focus on prevention, health equity, and service. Together, these initiatives showcased the wide-reaching impact of family physicians as community leaders, educators, and advocates for change. Students were able to see how family medicine extends beyond the clinic and engages directly with the health and well-being of entire communities. We evaluated success through attendance, student feedback, and follow-up engagement, including volunteer sign-ups and interest in future events. Compared to previous years, this year's community-focused programming expanded significantly in both scope and inter-group collaboration, giving students a deeper understanding of how family medicine uniquely positions physicians to lead at the intersection of clinical care, public health, and advocacy.