



**Melanie Hardee** grew up on her family's farm in Benson, North Carolina. She graduated from North Carolina State University with a Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences. At NC State, she was an avid member of the Goodnight Scholars Program, where she worked to provide free and accessible STEM opportunities to rural middle school students and foster care academies in North Carolina. Additionally, she worked as a CNA in southeast North Carolina and pharmacy technician at Urban Ministries Open Door Clinic in Raleigh, a free health clinic serving patients below the poverty line. These experiences further introduced Melanie to the distinctive challenges rural and underserved communities face in obtaining equitable health and

education. Melanie hopes to serve as a primary care physician in rural North Carolina, finding ways to use her love of education and holistic care for the betterment of the patients in her community. Her interests in medicine are internal medicine, family medicine, and pediatrics. She is incredibly excited to be a Kenan Scholar in Wilmington and looks forward to exploring more of southeast North Carolina. In her free time, Melanie likes to travel, learn new recipes, read, and spend time with family and friends.



**Callan Loflin** grew up on a fourth-generation family farm in Denton, NC. After graduating from Duke in 2018, she worked in clinical research for three years. Starting out as a research coordinator in pediatrics, she assisted in implementing programs to address childhood obesity across rural counties in North Carolina. She later shifted her research focus to traumatic brain injury (TBI) research where she contributed to the understanding of gaps in TBI care and development of a transitional care program for patients with TBI and their caregivers. As a result of growing up on a fourth-generation family farm in a rural part in North Carolina, she has particular interest in addressing health disparities among older adults in rural communities. When

Callan isn't studying or working on passion projects in healthcare, she enjoys spending time with her family and pursuing musical interests: vocal performance, playing piano, and collecting vinyl records.



**Camil Craciunescu** was born and raised in Durham, NC as the first son of immigrants from Romania. He graduated from Duke University where he studied Biology, Global Health, and French. Before medical school, Camil spent significant amounts of time working with the underserved in a variety of settings: as a volunteer and scribe at a community hospital in Romania, as a Peace Corps Volunteer and Community Health Educator in western Uganda, as an EMT in rural NC nursing homes at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, and as a high school math tutor for Chicago Public Schools. These

experiences helped Camil recognize the inherent challenges and nuance of serving in rural areas, as well as the happiness and sense of calm it brings him personally. As such, Camil has made it his mission to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to serve as a competent and empathic physician for the rural communities of North Carolina. When he's not studying or distilling his life's experiences and desires into a short blurb, Camil is fond of doing yoga, reading, slowly and deliberately enjoying a cup of coffee, catching up with friends, and finding something new to cook.



**Gaston Sanders** grew up on the coast of North Carolina and calls Harkers Island home. He moved to Chapel Hill to earn a Bachelor's in Biology with minors in Chemistry and Neuroscience. While completing his undergraduate degree he began working as a UNC Emergency Medicine Scribe, which highlighted the obstacles people across the state face in accessing healthcare. His experiences working with patients at Chatham Hospital were reminiscent of his hometown and affirmed his desire to work in rural North Carolina as a primary care physician. When he's not in the classroom or the clinic, you can find him on the basketball court, trying out local restaurants, or attending live musical performances with friends.



**Mya Webb** was born in Durham, N.C. and attended Hillside High School, a historically Black High School of North Carolina. Her experience there was the cornerstone for her passion to serve underserved communities and Black populations. While attending Davidson College the lessons she learned from Hillside guided her decision to give back. She served communities through Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Serenity House Hospice Care and a rural clinic in Mwandia, Zambia. Mya then left Davidson College to pursue a job in research with Harvard Medical School where she worked in a developmental biology lab. Her passion for rural health and community building never faded while in Boston— she served her community through mentoring with organizations like Tour4Diversity, Msaada mentorship, and Newport Medical Consulting. Currently,

while completing her first year in medical school, Mya Webb is a National Health Service Scholar, IRIS Magazine editor, and serves as the LILAC women in medicine conference director for 2022. On her free time Mya works as a server at a sports bar and continues to mentor students as they apply for medical school. She also enjoys writing poetry, traveling, and reading suspense/thriller novels.



**Anna Caffrey Bottoms** is from Waynesville, North Carolina. She attended UNC Chapel Hill for her undergraduate career and majored in Applied Mathematics. After college she worked for an IT company until realizing her passion for medicine. She completed a pre-medical post bacc program at UNC Greensboro. During this time, she worked as a CNA and volunteer birth doula at UNC Hospitals as well as a medical assistant at a community health center. These experiences highlighted the health inequality and access to care issues in North Carolina, especially for those from rural and underserved areas. As a Kenan Scholar, she hopes to learn how to better care for these populations. Outside of school, she enjoys hiking, baking, and spending time with her husband and dog.



**Eliza Filene** grew up in Carrboro, North Carolina and studied public policy and entrepreneurship at UNC-Chapel Hill. After graduation, she moved to Colorado where she provided technical assistance to American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes in implementing injury prevention programs. She is interested in health policy, addiction medicine, fall prevention, and geriatrics. She is thrilled to be back in North Carolina and loves drawing, cooking, and exploring NC through camping with her fiancé and dog.



**Amelia Ray** grew up in a small town in the mountains of western North Carolina. As an undergraduate at Western Carolina University, she received her Bachelor of Science in Biology while minoring in chemistry. During her undergraduate career she participated in microbiology and stem cell research while also volunteering in local clinics, emergency room, and morgue. She also worked part time as a Dermatology medical assistant before transitioning to full-time upon graduation where she earned her CDT. Her diverse collection of experiences has left her passionate for many areas of medicine, but she has found a particular love for rural medicine and one day wishes to return to her home in the mountains to practice primary care for the underserved populations she encountered during her undergraduate and postgraduate career. Being raised on a farm has also established a place in her heart for caring for the local rural farmers. Within primary care, she is interested in internal medicine and surgery. During her first year of medical school, she is continuing to participate in cell biology research and volunteering with the student run clinic, SHAC. She loves animals and has helped her family raise and care for everything from skunks to pigs to iguanas, and anything in-between. For now, she will have to settle for caring for her sole pet rabbit, Borborygmus. In her spare time she loves drawing, painting, photography, hiking in the beautiful North Carolinian mountains, and brushing up on her Italian and violin.



**Ricardo Crespo** was born in Mexico City and raised in Pink Hill, NC. At a young age, Ricardo began interpreting for his family during medical visits, a responsibility which sparked his curiosity for the medical field. He cultivated this curiosity throughout undergrad and developed a passion for working with diverse patient populations through his activities, including internships with geriatric, oncology, athletic, emergency, and underserved populations. Ricardo attended UNC-Chapel Hill where he studied Exercise & Sport Science and dedicated most of his free time to leading the wrestling club and

volunteering at the Student Health Action Coalition (SHAC), eventually becoming the SHAC interpreting director. He currently serves as the medical clinic co-director for the SHAC clinic. Ricardo has a professional interest in Sports Medicine and General Surgery. One of the many things he values most about healthcare is establishing relationships with patients and taking care of them in the long term. He aspires to be someone his patients can trust and come to for anything. Ricardo wants to learn how to best take care of patients as whole people, always remaining cognizant of social contributors to health. The idea of being able to provide high-quality medical care to people in rural communities of North Carolina where they otherwise might not have access to quality medicine is what motivates him to devote himself to his studies day after day.

Ricardo loves sports include boxing, wrestling, running, and football, and he has competed in many of these at a high level. He is extremely family-oriented (family comes first). In his free time, Ricardo loves to explore new restaurants, travel when he can, hike, and try new recipes with his beautiful girlfriend (who he incidentally met at SHAC)!



**Michael Dunn** was born and raised in Woodleaf, a small town in Western North Carolina. He attended North Carolina State University, where he studied Biomolecular Chemical Engineering. Upon graduating, he worked as an engineer in cosmetics for Burt's Bees and later pharmaceuticals for Merck. Though he enjoyed the problem solving and critical thinking that accompanied his role as a pharmaceutical engineer, he felt distant from the people he was trying to help. Michael left engineering to pursue a career in medicine with the goal of improving the health of rural North Carolina, similar to where he grew up. His primary medical interests are general surgery and family medicine. As a Kenan Scholar, he hopes to improve his knowledge in general surgery tailored towards serving rural and underserved communities. Outside of medicine, he enjoys fishing, cooking, and brewing beer.