

May 1, 2024

Jane P. Gagliardi MD, MHS

Wednesday Wellness Workshop – The Stories Project

“The shortest distance between two people is a story.” So did Chaplain [Katherine Henderson](#) open the May 1, 2024 presentation by Henderson and Dr. [Jeffrey Lee](#) on their collaborative [Stories Project](#).



Attended by students representing programs including Doctor of Physical Therapy, Physician Assistant, Medical Doctorate, and Masters of Biomedical Sciences, the 75-minute workshop facilitated by Henderson and Lee provided an opportunity to reflect deeply on the privilege of being a healthcare provider and learning with and from patients about their deepest and most meaningful experiences.

The workshop was evocative of emotions, self-awareness, and deep observation. Participants found themselves feeling connected with and curious about the person they learned about, noting a feeling of duty to care, optimism at recognizing the depth of the patient’s personhood, and longing to be able to help in the setting of suffering, loss, the complexity of the human condition, unmet needs and, ultimately, systemic injustice. Appreciating the opportunity for interprofessional engagement, participants also reflected on the fact that our patients’ stories are deep, and electronic medical record problem lists are not fully representative of who our patients are.

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The Stories Project, funded by a grant from the Trent Foundation and operationalized by Dr. Lee, Chaplain Katherine Henderson, social worker Elissa Nickolopoulos and medical student Michelle Tang, with input from faculty mentors Drs. John Ike and Jane Gagliardi, is conceptualized as a way to improve connection between patients who are made vulnerable by intersecting identities as well as interactions with the healthcare system, and the people who take care of them. Recognizing that emotional detachment, callousness, and compassion fatigue have many possible root causes, the project is designed to help clinicians “understand who patients are as human beings...making [clinicians] more likely to see and care for their patients as more than vehicles for pathology.”

