



**DELAWARE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH (DIMER)  
QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING  
Wednesday, December 11, 2024  
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Hybrid In-Person and Teams Meeting**

**Meeting Attendance**

**DIMER Board Members Attending:**

- Kathleen Matt, PhD (Chair)
- Brian Frazee, MPP
- Rachel Hersh, DrPH, MSN-PH, RN
- Neil Jasani, MD, MBA, FACEP
- Joseph Kim, DO
- Marshala Lee-McCall, MD, MPH
- Brian Levine, MD
- R. Christopher Mason, PhD
- Robert Monteleone, MD
- Nichole Moxley
- Juliet Murawski
- Jennifer Nauen, PhD
- Joyce Robert, MD FAAFP
- Gary Siegelman, MD, MSc, CPE
- Paul Sierzenski, MD
- Kate Smith, MD, MPH
- Tabassum Salam, MD, MBA, FACP

**Board Members Absent:**

- Janice Lee, MD MMM, FAAFP
- Robyn Miller, MD

**Partners / Speakers Attending:**

Omar Khan, President & CEO  
Delaware Health Sciences Alliance (DHSA)

Pamela Gardner, Director  
Delaware Health Sciences Alliance (DHSA)

Alisa LoSasso, MD  
Vice Dean for Admission and Chair, Committee on Admissions (SKMC)

Adrienne L. Jones, MLS  
Chief Admissions Officer (PCOM)

## **Delaware Health Care Commission**

- Elisabeth Massa, Executive Director
- Sheila Saylor, Admin

## **Public Attendance**

- Christopher Weeks, Sussex Economic Development Action Committee
- Ryan Marshall, Beebe Healthcare
- Bria Greenlee, 302 Strategies
- Gwen Scott-Jones, Wesley College of Health
- Ceil Tilney, League of Women Voters
- George Beckerman, Hoart I Beckerman Consulting

Dr. Kathy Matt started the meeting at 3:05 pm.

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – BOARD VOTE**

Dr. Matt requested a motion to approve the June 18, 2024, meeting minutes. Dr. Matt issued a disclaimer that only DIMER board members present at the June Board meeting could vote and that new members could not approve the minutes. Nicole Moxley made a motion to approve the minutes and it was seconded by Juliet Murawski. The DIMER board members made no objections and the minutes were approved.

### **Welcome to all DIMER Board Members**

Dr. Matt initiated a roundtable for the self-introduction of all DIMER board members. The Board was asked to give their background and if continuing members how they had served on the DIMER board. This was the first meeting of the newly constructed board which was created with the enactment of House Bill 432.

### **Overview of DIMER and Next Steps**

Dr. Matt briefed the board on how DIMER was originally established in 1969, to allow the residents of Delaware to attend medical school. The success of the program is due to the guaranteed admissions seats for Delaware residents, 20 at Sidney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC) and 10 at Philadelphia College of Medicine (PCOM). The admissions seats are held for Delawareans who meet all admissions requirements.

Dr. Matt spoke about the acceptance percentages for Delawareans versus a general applicant how the numbers were increasing and the chances would drastically decrease if the DIMER program was not in effect. Although it is not required, it has always been hoped that DIMER graduates would return to Delaware to practice increasing our workforce. Dr. Matt gives credit to the Delaware Health Sciences Alliance (DHSA) for helping with events and outreach to students to

increase their awareness of the DIMER program, and to attract the graduates to return to Delaware for residency and to set up practices in Delaware .

Elisabeth Massa (Executive Director DHCC) gave an overview of House Bill 432 w/House Amendment 1 signed September 19, 2024, and suggested the next steps for DIMER.

Ms. Massa highlighted that one of the changes the bill represented was that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board shall be elected by the Board. Candidates for Chair and Vice Chair of the Board shall be reviewed by a nominating committee. Membership of the nominating committee and rules for nominating candidates shall be determined by the Board. The Chair shall be subject to a 3-year term with no more than 3 consecutive terms. A Vice Chair shall be established in the same manner and with the same term lengths and limits.

Ms. Massa suggested as the next step that the DIMER Board establish a nominating committee to review candidates. Ms. Massa advised that if any board member would like to be on the committee, email her at [elisabeth.massa@delaware.gov](mailto:elisabeth.massa@delaware.gov).

Ms. Massa reviewed the process for selecting a Chair and Vice Chair stating that the Board has discretion on how to constitute the nominating committee and how the committee nominates candidates. Then the full board votes to elect a Chair and Vice Chair based on the candidate(s) from the committee. Candidates can be nominated or self-nominated. Nominations can be sent to [elisabeth.massa@delaware.gov](mailto:elisabeth.massa@delaware.gov). Ms. Massa stated she hopes the Subcommittee can meet between now and the next DIMER meeting and bring candidates for Chair and Vice Chair to the full DIMER Board for a vote.

### **Update: Delaware Health Sciences Alliances (DSHA)**

Omar Khan, MD (President & CEO) and Pamela Gardner (Director) provided an update on DSHA DIMER activities.

Dr. Khan presented an overview of DSHA stating that DSHA partners with DIMER to create and sustain a workforce pipeline increasing the emphasis for graduates to return to Delaware to practice. DSHA also students in their transition to Delaware Branch Campuses for 3rd and 4th-year medical school rotations at ChristianaCare, Nemours, Beebe, Bayhealth, and Tidal Health. DSHA also helps matches them after graduation with Delaware health systems and promotes DE-based loan repayment programs to encourage recruitment and retention.

Dr. Khan reviewed the leaky pipeline of medical education and the workforce from high school to residency for medical students. DSHA studied the leaks and developed ways to plug them such as mentorship, college pre-med advising, MCAT prep, receptions, and retreats.

Dr. Khan discussed the requirements for the DIMER program and the upcoming DIMER events under the DSHA contract and advised that all DIMER board members are invited to any event. Dr. Khan spoke about communication and lack thereof, and that DSHA sends letters to admitted applicants to increase the connection and add engagement with the students.

Pam Gardner discussed DSHA events/engagements that promote DIMER that are outside of the contract with DHCC, highlighting learning opportunities and ways to support students in different ways. Ms. Gardner highlighted that these events were open to other specialties such as nursing.

Ms. Gardner mentioned that the MCAT prep was free of charge to accepted DIMER students. Another advantage the DHSA offers is an MCAT exam fee scholarship for economically challenged students in the program. These events are created to inspire the student's interest in practicing and staying in Delaware. Ms. Gardner presented statistics on 2023 Matriculant Demographics by gender, race, and county along with 2023 Graduate Demographics by race, gender, specialty, and residency. Ms. Gardner advised that 2024 would be the last year they would be able to report these demographics due to the Supreme Court ruling.

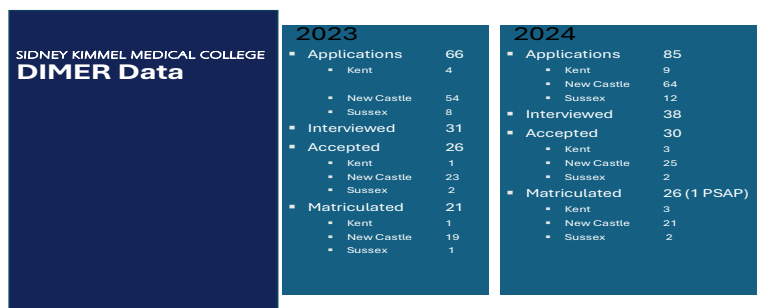
Dr. Matt asked if Dr. Khan could talk a little bit more about DHSA and what ways we can move forward. Dr. Khan spoke about how DHSA started with research projects with institutions connected with Delaware (SKMC, Nemours, ChristianaCare) and eventually moved to medical and health education.

Dr. Matt asked how DHSA gets information out to everyone about DHSA and DIMER making it accessible for them. Dr. Khan stated that they have partnered with high school counselors through 3 programs and pre-med advisors at the universities. Also, relationship building with various other organizational levels and with the Department of Education. The DHSA presentation is available on [DIMER Website](#).

**Update: Sidney Kimmel Medical Collage (SKMC) at Thomas Jefferson University**

Dr. Alisa LoSasso shared an update for SKMC.

Dr. LoSasso provided infographics stating that 35% of DIMER applicants have been accepted.



Dr. LoSasso gave an update for the Class of 2029 noting that there were 91 DIMER applications, 40 applicants invited to interview, and 10 have been accepted. Dr. LoSasso noted that SKMC has rolling admissions so these numbers will increase.

Dr. LoSasso talked about the “JeffBEACON” program (Bringing Equity and Care for Our Neighborhoods). The JeffBEACON program trains SKMC students in actionable skills to serve the needs of communities through partnerships and collaborative advocacy which is a co-curriculum. Dr. LoSasso said that SKMC is celebrating 50 years of The Physician Shortage Area Program. This program is working to have more presence in Delaware and 1 DIMER student who matriculated last year's class is in the program so they will be dedicated to returning to work back in their rural community. Dr. LoSasso stated that the 2024 Residency match rate is 95% which is above average. 14 SKMC students were matched to positions in Delaware at Bayhealth, Nemours, and Christiana Care. Dr. LoSasso conveyed that the United States Medical Licensing Exam (USMLE)

passing rate continues to be above the national average. SKMC average last year was 96%. Dr. LoSasso highlighted the recent merger with Lehigh Valley.

Dr. LoSasso reviewed important dates for 2024/2025 and highlighted the SKMC Delaware Student Affinity Group Leadership and the group's achievements for the year.

Dr. Marshala Lee-McCall (First State Chapter of the National Medical Association) asked if Dr. LoSasso could provide more details about the acceptance rates for students from historically underrepresented backgrounds or class compensation rates, and also what SKMC is doing to increase those numbers. Dr. LoSasso stated because of the Supreme Court ruling the admissions data legally must be blinded but the year one class that started is the most diverse ever. Dr. LoSasso said that in the past five years, SKMC went from 9% URM to over 17%. SKMC is not just looking at diversity through race but many other factors and we know there is work to be done.

Dr. Robert Monteleone asked what percent of the students are matriculated to a gap year versus those who don't, and he asked what should be told to students who have financial challenges. Dr. LoSasso said about 40% do 1-3 gap years but if you think they have enough medical exposure then a gap year(s) is not necessary. The SKMC presentation is available on [DIMER Website](#).

#### **Update: Philadelphia College of Medicine (PCOM)**

Adrienne Jones (PCOM Chief Admissions Officer) provided a PCOM update.

Ms. Jones reviewed the new tagline, "Training the doctor of tomorrow is today's mission."

Ms. Jones gave the 2024 DIMER snapshot. Even though PCOM is only committed to reserving 10 seats contractually, 20 new first-year Delaware resident medical students entered the Class of 2028. Compared to the general national applicant pool to PCOM, Delaware residents who submitted a completed application to the Philadelphia Campus osteopathic medical program had a much higher rate of invitation for interview. Delaware residents had a 49% acceptance rate and a 61% yield from the acceptance rate. Ms. Jones reviewed the DIMER numbers listing 65 potential DIMER applications received by PCOM, 42 potential DIMER candidates interviewed by PCOM, 32 potential DIMER students accepted, and 20 students confirmed in the Class of 2028. Ms. Jones reviewed the colleges and majors of accepted DIMER students as well MCAT scores and GPAs. Ms. Jones touched on the Supreme Court Ruling and how PCOM effectively added a diversity question because the students are allowed, according to the ruling to identify themselves and it had a positive outcome. Ms. Jones stated that as her first test for the diversity question, she used the DIMER students with rewarding results.

Ms. Jones reviewed what was new for 2024 and said PCOM had created a DIMER.edu email address for the DIMER students to keep them informed. The PCOM presentation is available on [DIMER Website](#).

#### **Update: DIMER Board Members on the Programs at their Institutions**

Dr. Tabassum Salam gave an update for ChristianaCare. Dr. Salam stated that interest in ChristianaCare at their branch campuses was at an all-time high among students at SKMC and PCOM. Dr. Salam advised that most of the interest came from DIMER students but not all of

them and this was good because ChristianaCare intends to make it attractive to keep the students in Delaware.

Dr. Gary Siegelman gave an update for BayHealth. Dr Siegelman said that Bayhealth graduated their first group of residents in June. Most took positions in the Sussex County area, 2 took positions at BayHealth and 3 DIMER students graduated. BayHealth's 4th-year medical rotation is extensive, and it helps the students get clinical exposure in Delaware. BayHealth now has 2 fellowships, and a GI did their first match and will begin in July of 2025.

Dr. Marshala Lee-McCall gave an update for Harrington Trust at ChristianaCare. Dr. Lee-McCall spoke about their upcoming 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Pre-Health Symposium for students from historically underrepresented backgrounds in collaboration with ChristianaCare, DHSA, and other colleagues. The symposium will be held on February 8, 2025. Dr. Lee-McCall provided information on their outreach to SKMC and PCOM for the Symposium and are trying to get representatives from organizations to share their resources with the students.

Dr. Joseph Kim gave an update for TidalHealth. Dr. Kim gave background on the inception of TidalHealth and stated they are in the infancy stage. TidalHealth has 20 medical students currently and is talking with the University of Maryland for collaboration with their medical students because their main campus is in Salisbury Maryland. Tidalhealth has 3 residency programs and 1 Fellowship. The residency programs are internal medicine, general surgery, and anesthesia, the fellowship is cardiovascular. TidalHealth has been approved for 5 more residency programs and 4 fellowships in 2025. By the end of 2026, TidalHealth could have 26 programs, residencies, and fellowships.

Dr. Robert Monteleone gave the update for St. Francis. Dr. Monteleone stated that St. Francis residency program is stable, and one third of the residents are bilingual in Spanish, and over half are bilingual in a language. St Francis usually has 3 students in Family Medicine and 1 in Emergency. St. Francis consistently keeps 1-2 students per year and has seen a slight increase in the number of fellowships. Dr. Monteleone stated that St. Francis was chosen as a core site for integrated AI in the EPIC platform, so the students have a virtual dictation assistant.

Dr. Joyce Robert gave the update for Beebe. Dr. Robert stated that Beebe just completed the last of the interviews for the next class. Dr. Robert said that most of Beebe's students come from PCOM and expressed a desire to have more students from SKMC and felt confident that the alliance with DIMER would facilitate traction. Dr. Robert inquired about communication with DHSA to know the DIMER students who are applying for Residency Programs at PCOM and SKMC noting that DHSA is trying to bridge the gap between DIMER students when they matriculate into medical school and residency programs. This would allow Beebe to personally reach out to students when Beebe is having a conference or event to let the DIMER students know they can attend with free registration and boarding.

Dr. Christopher Mason gave the update for Delaware State University. DSU is currently reconvening and restructuring its Health Professions Advisory Committee to better serve its students and prepare them for medical school and the admissions process.

Ms. Juliet Murawski gave the update for the Department of Education. Ms. Murawski shared that they are often contacted by students and parents looking for resources to help finance their education. There is a section on the DOE website with links for resources for professional

degrees in Medical, Dental, and Veterinary and the DIMER program. Ms. Murawski asked if the colleges have specific information that they could share to get the families what they need she would be happy to share the link on the DOE website.

### **Public Comment**

Dr. Khan asked TidalHealth if their programs would rotate throughout Delaware or just Seaford. Dr. Kim stated that TidalHealth would have rotations through Milford and Seaford. Mr. Khan stated that he was glad to hear that programs have general surgery on the horizon because there is a need and wondered if OB/GYN is next. Dr. Kim stated that OB/GYN is slated for 2026.

### **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:07 p.m. The next DIMER Meeting: Wednesday, January 29, 2025, 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.