

FALL 2021 NEWSLETTER

HARC Healthcare Advancement Resource Center

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HARC MISSION:

The HARC (Healthcare Advancement Resource Center) is committed to recruiting, enrolling, advising, mentoring, and offering holistic support to foreign-trained medical graduates living in New York state as they navigate educational and career opportunities in the healthcare industry in the U.S.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Greetings!

We have one simple message from the HARC: **You belong here.**

Just as we opened our doors in March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic hit and we were forced to turn to virtual operation. However, despite the pandemic, the HARC, housed in the Purcell School of Professional Studies, is going strong and thriving with 85 members. Currently, our participants represent over 20 countries, including: Afghanistan, Brazil, China, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Ghana, Guyana, India, Iraq, Kenya, Pakistan, Peru, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Syria, Turkey, Uganda and Uzbekistan.

At the HARC we advance the Le Moyne College mission and the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation's (<https://cabrinihealth.org/>) commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and service to the community. A generous grant provided by the Cabrini Foundation has been instrumental in establishing the HARC and offering cutting-edge services to our participants. Our services are designed to help foreign-trained medical graduates every step of the way as they develop present and future educational and career plans in healthcare.

We recently rebranded the Center from Welcome Back Center (WBC) to HARC. The new name is consistent with the Center's focus in healthcare, and is accessible to the participants who are interested in pursuing an education or career in the healthcare field. Although we changed our name, we are still affiliated with the national Welcome Back Initiative (WBI) and recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the WBI, which allows the center to continue benefiting from the support and resources from other Welcome Back Centers across the nation.

There are many exciting happenings and updates to share! I encourage you to read this newsletter to learn more about the HARC and what the Center can do for you and your loved ones.

MEET OUR STAFF



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► **Kathy Elbadawi, MA**
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Professor Raymond Jannetti, M.D., celebrating with Faustin Bahizi at his white coat ceremony from Le Moyne College's Physician Assistant Studies Program on Aug. 19, 2021.

Stories of Success and Growth

► PROGRAM:

The HARC has a new team. Stella Rwanda, Ph.D., was appointed HARC director in June 2021 (<https://www.lemoyne.edu/News/News-Article/ArticleId/330>), and Kathy Elbadawi is the new educational case manager. "The HARC's work is closely aligned with the mission of Le Moyne as the incredible staff of the HARC assesses each candidate holistically and develops individual plans to help them attain their goals," says Meega Wells, dean of Le Moyne's Purcell School of Professional Studies.

► PARTICIPANTS:

Our HARC Members Have Remained Focused on Their Academic and Professional Endeavors

HARC member **Faustin Bahizi** graduated from Le Moyne's Physician Assistant Studies (PA) Program in August 2021. He graduated from medical school in the Democratic Republic of the Congo amidst a deadly war and was fortunate to have had the opportunity to obtain an advanced master's degree in humanitarian action that opened the door for him to work with international agencies and serve vulnerable populations. He worked with Doctors without Borders in Haiti, Liberia and South Sudan before emigrating with his wife and extended family to the United States to avoid further persecution in the Congo. Upon arrival to the U.S., Bahizi experienced culture shock and struggled with the language barrier as he was raising a family and trying to get back to the medical profession. After several roadblocks, he was connected with the HARC. Bahizi shares that, "The HARC provided me with help in terms of academic support and most importantly financial support. Furthermore, the HARC put me in contact with foreign medical graduates in situations that were similar to mine. We are people who, once educated, moved to this country for diverse reasons. But we find ourselves unable to practice the profession we cherish. The HARC gives hope. My goal is to work in underserved areas to provide care for those who need it the most." Bahizi most recently passed his PACE licensing exam and is ready to practice medicine in the U.S.

English as a New Language (ENL) Classes

The HARC partners with Syracuse University – English Language Institute (SU-ELI) to offer both daytime and evening English classes to our participants in all proficiency levels (low-advanced). Cumulatively, more than 28 HARC members have taken English classes and others are working to improve their skills. Additionally, we have developed a beginner English class that serves members who are not quite ready for SU-ELI classes. Our own HARC English course meets on Le Moyne's campus three days a week (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) and provides individualized instruction as we help increase students' proficiency in all skill areas. If you are a HARC member and interested in one of our class offerings, please fill out this resource request form at:

<https://forms.gle/kPpfNn7891tcHFrQ9>.



HARC members (from left to right) Anastacie Nyiramahoro, Anjelani Amani, Salumu Bienvenu hard at work during English class.



Kefayatullah Nazary, M.D., a doctor from Afghanistan, arrived in Syracuse in 2018 and has been working at a furious pace to pass his licensing exams and work toward a residency match. To date he has passed his Step 1, 2 and 3 exams and his Occupational English Test (OET). He has also worked as a COVID-19 contact tracer and obtained U.S. clinical experience in internal medicine through an eight-month internship. He wrote to the leaders of HARC to share his successes and noted, "I am thankful that I had your financial support on my OET exam and USMLE step 3 resources."



Anastacie Nyiramahoro, a nurse in her home country of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, started a new job working as a home health aide with our partner Senior Home Care Solutions, LLC. She is gaining experience and training working with individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

Davor Ivanovski, a doctor from Croatia, has passed his USMLE Step 1, Step 2, and Step 3 exams and is preparing for the Fall 2021 Residency Application Program. He recently said, "I am fighting like a lion for a better future so that I can give back the best of who I am to the community." This sentiment captures the feelings of so many of our members. They are working countless hours to reach their dreams and are ready to give back to the Syracuse community that welcomed them.



Yusdanie Fernandez Diaz shared that he was promoted to a managerial position in his current job in the hotel industry. While working full time, Fernandez Diaz has also been able to obtain licensure as a medical assistant, as well as in phlebotomy and electrocardiography, as he works toward getting back into the nursing profession he began in Cuba.

Rosa Gomez Negrin, an OBGYN nurse in her home country of Cuba, has been working on her English at the Syracuse University English Language Institute and is proud of the learning she is doing as she studies English and works full time as a medical assistant.



The HARC Provides Support and Resources to All Members.

OUR SERVICES INCLUDE:

- ▶ Career Advising and Mentoring
- ▶ International Transcript Evaluation
- ▶ English Language Support
- ▶ Academic Scholarships
- ▶ USMLE-STEP Review
- ▶ NCLEX Study Support
- ▶ Résumé and Job Search Support
- ▶ Interview Preparation
- ▶ Résumé Creation

A CELEBRATION OF *Life*

We pay tribute to the late Silvestre Delgado de la Cruz, M.D., a HARC participant and local frontline healthcare worker, who passed away over the holidays from COVID-19. Silvestre was a doctor of internal medicine in the Dominican Republic and worked as a medical technician at the Syracuse Community Health Center. At the time of his passing, Silvestre was a student at the SU-ELI English class and was preparing for his U.S. Citizenship exam. Silvestre will be remembered for his enthusiasm and dedication to the care of his patients. Silvestre is survived by his wife, Maria Muñoz, and his sons Diego José, Periandro and Isaac.

**DO YOU KNOW
SOMEONE
WHO IS AN FMG,
OR ARE YOU AN FMG
INTERESTED IN THE
HARC'S SERVICES?**

Please fill out this form:

[https://forms.gle/
5qStnKbS5aeCQbZg9](https://forms.gle/5qStnKbS5aeCQbZg9)

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HARC

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OUR **ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS:**

- ▶ Pat Bliss, LMSW, Community Representative
- ▶ Georgia Carvounis, M.D., Community Representative
- ▶ Felicia Castricone, Catholic Charities
- ▶ Michael Cominoli, Practice Resources, LLC
- ▶ Emily Creasia-Worden, Catholic Charities
- ▶ Ginnie Cronin, PhD, FNP-BC, Syracuse Community Health Center
- ▶ Michelle De Tota, Loretto Health and Rehabilitation
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- ▶ Teresa Mosher, Loretto Health and Rehabilitation
- ▶ April Palozzola, JobsPlus
- ▶ Rita Paniagua, Syracuse City Common Council
- ▶ Eric Rodriguez, Upstate Health, FNP Program
- ▶ Laiza Semindey, Center State CEO
- ▶ Liliana Barros Una, MPH, Upstate Health Services Library

Who Are Our Community Partners?

We are proud of HARC's community partnerships and the reciprocal relationships we have established. "Partnering with Le Moyne College on the HARC initiative is a source of great joy and satisfaction for the staff here at the English Language Institute, which is part of the College of Professional Studies at Syracuse University. The HARC participants bring diversity, maturity and a spirit of perseverance to our program," says ELI Director David Lind. Our partners are key to the programming and services we are able to offer our members. The team at Senior Home Care Solutions, LLC has told us, "We are thrilled to partner with HARC, the staff and candidates that we are working with are professional, reliable, prompt and, most importantly, they are compassionate. We look forward to a long-term relationship with the HARC."

If you feel you or someone you know would be a likely community partner, please contact HARC at rwandasm@lemoyne.edu or elbadakm@lemoyne.edu.

All Saints Church
Catholic Charities
Centerstate CEO
Crouse Hospital
Griswold Home Care of CNY
I.A. Tangoren MD, PLLC Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery
InterFaith Works
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Onondaga Community College
Practice Resources LLC
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St Joseph's Hospital
St Lucy's Church
Syracuse Community Health Center
Syracuse University
Upstate Medical Hospital

▶ **Read more about the HARC on our new website!** Check us out at <http://lemoyne.edu/HARC>