



# ZEBRA HOOFBEATS

interprofessional diversity newsletter

## April 2021 Edition

So much happened this month I decided to delay publication of Zebra Hoofbeats so we as a community could reflect deeply on the ways in which we are not only personally impacted, but also the ways in which we personally perpetuate various forms of oppression in this world. Whether that means working on mitigating racist, classist, ableist and/or sexist tendencies, or whether that means standing against various forms of violence in our communities and/or families, I encourage you think about how you want to exist in this world and in what ways we can use our

collective privilege as healthcare privileges to bring about change.

### **COVID-19**

The COVID-19 vaccines are the [fastest to ever be developed](#), thanks to mRNA technology ([check out this Tik Tok summary](#)). Nearly 30% of the total U.S. population has been fully vaccinated, and COVID cases and hospitalizations are declining in most states. Some of the country's most vulnerable populations have made remarkable strides toward inoculating their communities; the Navajo Nation, which experienced a disproportionately high rate of cases last spring, says it's vaccinated more than half of its adults.

Unfortunately, there has been global inequity in vaccine rollout that may define the next phase of the pandemic. [Nearly half of available doses have gone to the world's highest-income countries, including the U.S. and United Kingdom \(whose residents make up just 16% of the world population\)](#).

In India, [only 1.7% of residents have been vaccinated](#). Over the past two weeks, [the slope representing India's new infection rates has become almost vertical](#). Members of the Indian diaspora across the globe [have tried to help from afar](#), like a Bay Area couple who set up a fundraiser to get more units of oxygen delivered to hospitals in New Delhi. In [eight countries](#) (Iran, Guatemala, Namibia, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Honduras, South Africa, and Gabon), fewer than 1% of residents have been even partially vaccinated.

To address this disparity, the U.S. has pledged \$4 billion to Covax. Plans are underway to loan millions of AstraZeneca doses to countries including India, Mexico, and Canada. The administration has also reversed the previous ban on sharing the raw materials for vaccine manufacturing. The question that remains: will pharmaceutical companies, which hold the

patents for the life-saving inoculations, allow wealthy countries to donate or resell their extra doses?

- [\\*Volunteer: Support equitable vaccine distribution in Cleveland](#)

### **Police Brutality and Black Lives**

All eyes were on Minneapolis, awaiting the verdict in the murder trial of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin for the death of George Floyd. Chauvin was guilty on all three counts. The three other officers who were with Chauvin when he knelt on George Floyd's neck, will be tried together on Aug. 23.

Does it mean the system is fixed? "Today's verdict might be just, but it is not justice," said Phillip Atiba Goff, of the Center for Policing Equity. In Columbus, Ohio, on the day of the Chauvin verdict, 16-year-old Ma'Khia Bryant was killed by a police officer in front of her foster home. Two days after Derek Chauvin was led away in custody, a funeral was held for Daunte Wright. The 20-year-old had been killed by an officer, Kim Potter, in nearby Brooklyn Center during a traffic stop while the Chauvin trial was in process.

Meanwhile, Republican lawmakers in several states have begun proposing and passing laws that would, in essence, [criminalize protests](#) - even peaceful ones. In Oklahoma, a [GOP-led bill](#) would punish protesters while granting immunity to drivers who purposefully steer into protesting crowds. Iowa has passed a similar bill. Proposed legislation in other states would refuse student loans if the applicant has been a protester ([Minnesota](#)), or deny immediate bail until a protester comes before a judge, a process that could take days or weeks (Florida).

- [Sign: Pass the Justice in Policing Act](#)

**Stop Asian Hate**

Harassment, violence, and discrimination is on the rise for the AAPI community. Out of 3,800 Asian hate crimes reported since 2020, 68% were threats against Asian women. This violence cannot be neatly summed up by solely the heightened anti-Asian sentiment witnessed throughout the pandemic. Rather, it is the product of a confluence of factors. Addressing the root cause of the violence requires more education, more expanded civil rights protections and more restorative justice models.

- [Stop AAPI Hate](#)
- [API Healer Network and Therapy Resources List](#)
- [Self-Care Tips For Asian Americans Dealing With Racism Amid Coronavirus](#)
- [AAPI LGBTQ Resources](#)

### **2021 Becomes Record Year for Anti-Transgender Legislation**

More than 250 anti-LGBTQ bills have been introduced in state legislatures across the country in 2021, and additional bills may be filed before the end of the legislative sessions. It's the highest number the organization has recorded since it began tracking anti-LGBTQ legislation more than 15 years ago.

So far, eight anti-LGBTQ bills have already been enacted into law. These include: 3 anti-trans sports bans in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee; 1 anti-trans medical care ban bill in Arkansas; and 4 religious refusals bills, including in North Dakota, South Dakota, and two bills in Arkansas. Another ten bills are already on governors' desks awaiting signature in Alabama, Kansas, Montana, West Virginia, and Tennessee.

The majority of bills would affect transgender youth, a group that researchers and medical professionals warn is already susceptible to high rates of suicide and depression. To learn more about the bills, [click here](#) and [here](#).



**MSPA**  
LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY ★ ADVOCACY ★ INNOVATION

## **Medical Student Pride Alliance LGBTQ+ Equity Report Card**

*By Penelope Halkiadakis, MD/MPH Candidate*

The 2021 MSPA LGBTQ+ Equity Report Card was released, evaluating medical schools on: nondiscrimination, the extension of family benefits to same-sex partners, gender-inclusive spaces, health coverage, diversity, admissions, employees, organizations, professional development, and sensitivity training. You can read the report in its entirety [here](#).

CWRU SOM received a B for its overall grade, which indicates "Fully Meets Criteria". Survey participants reported difficulty with health insurance reimbursement for gender affirming care; co-pays and co-insurance for gender affirming, reproductive, and mental health care coverage; no focused, mandatory LGBTQ+ specific sensitivity training; and that professional development initiatives (such as mentorship, networking, and other career opportunities) are primarily student-run and student-driven rather than an administrative priority.

This report demonstrates that there is room for improvement at CWRU SOM to

increase LGBTQ+ inclusion and equity. In the coming months, MSPA intends to update the Report Card with recommendations for medical schools on how to improve the climate and policies surrounding LGBTQ+ inclusion at their institutions.

Check out the [GLMA: Recommendations for Enhancing the Climate for LGBT Students and Employees in Health Professional Schools \(2013\)](#) report to learn how health professionals schools can improve their climate for LGBTQ+ students, faculty, and staff. Also, be sure to check out [Case Med Pride](#), the Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) School of Medicine (SOM) LGBT student group which focuses on LGBT patient curriculum, student affairs (recruitment, retention, and support), and local advocacy work with other CWRU LGBT groups.

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## Month in Review



## **National Minority Health Month**

*By Mihika Thapliyal, MD Candidate*

Recent news of anti-Asian rhetoric and violence in the USA has brought the long growing issue to the forefront of many people's thoughts. [Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, racist and xenophobic rhetoric against Asian Americans has become more prevalent than ever](#), highlighting the importance of addressing these issues within the sphere of our school community and the broader sphere of health care.

The American Medical Association, among other organizations, has declared racism a public health crisis, but the work does not stop there. National Minority Health Month is the perfect opportunity to explore Asian American needs in terms of their health and wellbeing.

Right now, many Asian Americans are forced to contend with heightened fear and trauma, and it is especially important to remember how social factors influence individual and population health. As a predominantly immigrant minority group, Asian Americans might also face added barriers to accessing

health care, such as ineligibility for state funded insurance programs. Finally, we encourage you to consider the dangers of the ["model minority"](#) label many Asian Americans are assigned, and take another step towards breaking down a long-standing culture of racism and discrimination against this minority.

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## **National Child Abuse Prevention Month**

*By Erica Chambers, DMD Candidate*

April is [National Child Abuse Prevention Month](#)! Although we are all tasked with preventing child abuse all year long, during this month we highlight this important role. It is extremely vital, each year in April, to call attention to and bring awareness to this horrendous tragedy. We hope our efforts will save the lives of numerous innocent children who are enduring similar atrocities like the ones Naomi experienced.



When accounts of child abuse are reported and disseminated through media outlets, all too often neighbors or others close to the incident will say they thought something was awry and yet they did not report their suspicions to local child protective services or the authorities. This is the main point of this month. To make people aware of this horrific reality and to encourage those who see something that seems out of place to speak up.

Oral healthcare professionals are in a unique position that allows them to identify the signs of abuse and neglect discovered during their dental exams and procedures and inform the proper agencies of those signs. It is estimated that over 50% of injuries from child abuse occur in the head and neck region. Additionally, dental trauma and occult intraoral injuries like burns or frenulum tears are often out of view for others who are charged with ensuring a child's welfare and safety. This unique position makes oral healthcare professionals the only hope for intervention for some children. For oral healthcare professionals, it is important to become familiar with the perioral signs of child abuse and to report all suspected cases to the proper authority.

For everyone, help spread the word by bringing this to the attention of others and report any activity that looks suspicious.

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## **April Fools**

*By Mihika Thapliyal, MD Candidate*

In classic Cleveland fashion, we celebrated April Fool's day with fluffy flurries and comically cold temperatures. April Fools! And to newcomers, welcome to CLE :)

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APRIL

# AUTISM AWARENESS

## **April 2 – World Autism Awareness Day and Autism Awareness Month**

*By Shirley Yee, PA Candidate*

April marks the beginning of Autism Awareness Month which is shifting from awareness to acceptance (and more recently being known as Autism

Acceptance Month). Numerous landmarks, buildings, homes, and communities around the world join together on April 2nd to “Light It Up Blue” for World Autism Awareness Day, in honor of those with autism, their families, and advocates.

As healthcare professionals, it is important to help individuals and loved ones receive the support necessary to adjust to life with autism, including care, education, and other services based on their needs. Autism is complex, and it affects essential human behaviors and social interaction. It can manifest with restricted and repetitive behaviors as well as limit communication of ideas and emotions, making it difficult to establish relationships. According to the CDC, currently 1 in 54 children have been diagnosed with autism, four times more common among boys than girls. It is one of the quickest growing developmental disorders in the United States.

Although World Autism Awareness Day and Autism Awareness Month (or Autism Acceptance Month) are designated in April, we must remember that autism is part of the daily life of many. Building an inclusive community is vital for individuals with autism to be able to live fully in all aspects of life. Visit the [Autism Awareness Month website](#) if you would like more information on ways to get involved.

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## **April 4 - Easter**

*by Christian Medical and Dental Associations*

On your calendar, you'd likely only see Easter Sunday. But to most practicing Christians, the Easter season begins 40 days prior.

This 40-day period, known as Lent, is a time in which many people prepare for Easter. Oftentimes, this includes the practice of fasting: giving something up, such as a meal. The goal of this "sacrifice" is to create mental space for personal reflection on our relationships with God and our Christian community. Some people practice this personally, while others practice it collectively via friend groups or whole churches. Why 40, rather than 30 or 50? Historically, this draws its roots from a biblical story in the Gospels, where Jesus fasts for

40 days.

The week leading up to Easter is often called The Holy Week or Passion Week. It includes Palm Sunday, the day Jesus entered and was celebrated in Jerusalem, Maundy Thursday, the day of the Last Supper where Jesus observed Passover with his disciples, and Good Friday, the day Jesus was put to death and crucified on the cross.

For most practicing Christians, Easter Sunday is the defining event of our faith and represents a culmination of what we believe to be Jesus's purpose on Earth. We believe that after Jesus was crucified on Good Friday, He resurrected from the tomb on the third day, Easter Sunday. This fulfills the prophecy of the Messiah who would be persecuted, die for everyone's sins, and give us new life so we can have a relationship with God the Father. We celebrate His resurrection as the foundation of our faith and hope for life after death.

This holiday has since been heavily commercialized (think hollow chocolate bunnies, Easter egg hunts, marshmallow Peeps), but these symbols of spring had originally intended to convey renewal, joy, and life. To us, this day is an important day to reflect on why we believe Christ is the source of those words.

Yet COVID-19 has challenged all of us. As we approach another virtual Easter, we remain hopeful and pray over the world. We pray especially for those who have been affected by death, injustice, and brokenness of this past year with confidence God hears us because Jesus has given us access to God through his death and resurrection.

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## **April 7 - World Health Day**

*by Shirley Yee, PA Candidate*

Started in 1950, World Health Day has been celebrated on the 7th of April each year in order to acknowledge a specific health theme that is a priority area of concern for the World Health Organization. Topics have ranged from mental health to climate change and everything else in between, shedding light on the current status of global health.

Activities extend well beyond this day and are focused at promoting physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. For [World Health Day 2021](#), the campaign will be "building a fairer, healthier world." The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly highlighted the discrepancy in access to quality health care services,

and we must recognize this in order to bring changes to the conditions in which people grow, live, work, and age.

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## **April 12 - Ramadan Begins**

*by Penelope Halkiadakis, MD/MPH Candidate*

Ramadan is the most sacred month of the year for Muslims. Muslims believe it was during this month that God revealed the first verses of the Quran, Islam's sacred text, to Mohammed, on a night known as "The Night of Power" (or Laylat al-Qadr in Arabic). Ramadan is an important time because it is a celebration of the Quran, the holiest text for 1.4 billion Muslims around the world.



During the entire month of Ramadan, Muslims fast every day from dawn to sunset. It is meant to be a time of spiritual discipline and deep contemplation of one's relationship with God. During this time, Muslims engage in extra prayer, increased charity and generosity, and intense study of the Quran. Ramadan is about action, working on improving every part of your personal character and spirituality. It's a time of celebration and joy, to be spent with loved ones. At the end of Ramadan there's a big three-day celebration called Eid al-Fitr, or the Festival of the Breaking of the Fast.

Ramadan began on Monday April 12 and ends on Wednesday May 12.

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## **April 22 - Earth Day**

*by Aaron Harvey, Environmental Chair, PA Class of 2022*

Earth Day, an annual event occurring on April 22nd of each year in support of environmental protection, was first held in 1970 with a massive turnout of millions of people throughout the United States celebrating its conception,

becoming the largest single day protest in human history. The concept and leading non-profit organization, known as Earthday.org, has been a global leader in climate and environmental education and reform for the past 50 years, specifically empowering youth all over the world to become leaders in pushing actions to preserve our planet's natural resources and habitats. Some of the major focal points include climate action, science education, better understanding communities, conservation and restoration, and plastic and pollution.

Amidst all the great work that is being done lies perhaps the most significant challenge – policy design and implementation. The current presidential administration is focused on one major umbrella goal of achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Redesigning and building new infrastructure that is environmentally responsible, efficient, and even regenerative will play a major role for long-term success. The United States has since rejoined the Paris Climate Agreement and installed Gina McCarthy as the 1st White House National Climate Advisor, who will lead the domestic pursuit in a myriad of projects that include improving the function of the EPA, incorporating the input of indigenous peoples in project approval processes, introducing new standards for methane emissions, halting a majority of oil and gas drilling, wildlife protection, doubling renewable energy, and turning the country's overall power sector completely fossil-free by the end of 2035.

On Earth Day this year 2021, President Biden convened a global climate summit to encourage all leaders around the world to step up their commitment to climate change and significantly reduce emissions to combat global warming.

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Read. Watch. Listen





## **Alyssa's Podcast of the Month: In the Thick: The Other Public Health Crisis**

*by Alyssa Cornejo, DMD Candidate*

This last month has been a sad reminder of the violence that plagues minorities communities. In light of the travesty of the Atlanta spa shooting, and Boulder

supermarket shooting I have chosen to recommend a podcast that discusses the other pandemic America is facing, gun violence.

The American Medical Association announced that gun violence is a public health crisis. Many believed that due to the limited number of public gatherings caused by COVID-19, mass shootings would be greatly reduced. The reality is just the opposite, 2020 was the deadliest year of shooting of 4 or more people in public or private spaces, these shootings disproportionately occurring in minority communities. The hosts Maria Hinojosa and Julio Ricardo Varela talk with historian Manisha Sinha and gun violence survivor Gregory Jackson Jr. about the historical context and community significance of gun violence. The hosts then discuss how Americans can move forward regarding gun control advocacy.

I encourage you, the reader, to acknowledge the victims of these gun violence travesties as people. It is so easy to lose the humanity behind these tragic events and victims become just a number or a statistic. After the events on March 16th and March 22nd, 18 families lost a loved one, countless people lost a friend, co-worker, and neighbor. I believe the first step to change is acknowledging how huge a travesty even one life lost is.

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## **Remembering Cicely Tyson**

*by Wynette Bender, DMD Candidate*

Cicely Tyson was an American actress who was born December 19th, 1924. Cicely played in movies such as the, *Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman*, *The Help*, and *How to Get Away with Murder* just to name a few.

Cicely was a pioneer, trailblazer, and a phenomenal woman who was a role model for so many people around the world. Cicely embodied grace, class, wisdom, inclusion and diversity. Cicely during her time fought very hard to become a well known actress. Despite how hard it was for Cicely to find acting roles during a time of great oppression, she only accepted acting roles that embodied her spirit, beliefs, and values. She continued her passion for acting well into her 90s and spread so much joy.

Cicely has inspired a generation of people and touched the lives of so many,

including myself. Her legacy will forever be remembered and I am so honored to have witnessed the amazing work that she was a part of.

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## **Mental Health Resources.**

[Frontline Fatigue](#)

[Asian Mental Health Collective](#)

[Melanin and Mental Health](#)

[Depressed While Black](#)

[Heads Up Men](#)

### **Mental Health Blogs:**

[The Mighty](#)

[The OCD Stories](#)

[Love and Life Toolbox](#)

### **University Health and Counseling Services**

[Support Groups and Services](#)

[Group Therapy](#)

[Mindfulness Hour](#)

[Guided Relaxation Exercises](#)



## Yoga Breathing Exercises:

[Ujjayi](#)

[Kapalabhati](#)

[Nadi Shodhan Pranayama](#)

[Sitali](#)

[Simhasana](#)

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