

IDEAS

INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ADVOCACY, SUPPORT

HSC ODI QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2024



On April 15, the UofL Health Sciences Center Office of Diversity and Inclusion, in partnership with the School of Medicine hosted Dr. Jonathan Metzl, author, psychiatrist, and professor at Vanderbilt University. Jonathan Metzl is an acclaimed physician and sociologist who speaks, teaches, and writes on a range of topics including mental illness and gun violence, race and whiteness in America, health and healthcare, and diversity and structural competency in higher education. He is the author of the groundbreaking book *Dying of Whiteness: How the Politics of Racial Resentment is Killing America's Heartland*. A New York Times bestseller, the book is an in-depth look at why so many working-class White Americans support politicians whose policies are literally killing them.

A CONVERSATION WITH JONATHAN METZL

Ryan Simpson (he/him)
Manager, HSC ODI



Dr. Jonathan Metzl, speaking at the Kornhauser Health Sciences Library Auditorium on April 15, 2024
Photo credit: Tom Fougousse

Being a gun violence expert, professor, and psychiatrist is a unique combination that allows Dr. Metzl to speak and write about gun violence in America, and in particular to address stereotypes that link guns with race or mental illness, or that blame mental illness for mass shootings and other gun crimes. The topic is the focus of Dr. Metzl's most recent book, *What We've Become: Living and Dying in a Country of Arms*, which looks at the 2018 racially charged mass shooting in Nashville, Tennessee, and reexamines how we as a nation should address gun violence.

At the fireside chat at UofL, Dr. Metzl explored a variety of topics including but not limited to his approaches to research and writing, racism impacting healthcare, new approaches to examining gun violence, and the current landscape of diversity and equity in higher education.

In a room full of students and researchers he was asked to share his thoughts on getting started on research topics. His first bit of advice to researchers was to "give themselves grace and embrace the suck." He continued to suggest that graduate students reflect on when they have been in difficult research space and how they have gotten through it previously. The last advice he shared, which was most valuable to him, was to pay attention to things that did not make sense, especially where the medical, social, and political worlds intersect. For Dr. Metzl, one of those things was the overdiagnosis of schizophrenia with Black men. This led to his book *The Protest Psychosis: How Schizophrenia Became a Black Disease*.

A Conversation with Jonathan Metzl (cont.)

Part of Dr. Metzl's journey in exploring things that did not make sense to him came out of research he was conducting regarding perspectives on health care. He found in focus groups that he was leading that white men were sharing perspectives on healthcare that were detrimental to their own wellbeing. Medically ill white men were willing to reject the possibility of accessible healthcare through things like the Affordable Care Act (ACA), if it meant "other groups" who they felt were less deserving did not get access to healthcare. This, in part, led him to explore the differences in health outcomes in states which did not embrace the ACA (Tennessee) and states which did (Kentucky). Similarly, Dr. Metzl explored the health impacts of changing gun laws in Missouri and education policies in Kansas. This research was summarized in his book *Dying of Whiteness*. In this book he argues that white people in these states were being fed misinformation that they were being taken advantage of. They in turn voted for and supported policies which were in their political interests, but which had profound negative health impacts.

Dr. Metzl described his latest book as one of the hardest things he has ever written. As a long-time public health researcher, he still believes in public health approaches to addressing gun violence, but they did not account for the full history and current context of gun ownership, race, and power. Through his research he found gun ownership amongst both conservatives and liberals has increased in recent years, and their perspectives are being pitted against each other, which perpetuates gun purchases. He contended that recently, gun ownership has become more of an identity and tied to politics. The public does not see guns as a health risk, but as a tool of power. The typical public health approaches that we have seen work in reducing smoking and asbestos exposure have not been working as effectively to address gun violence.



Above: Dr. Metzl signing books for event attendees; Below: Copies of Metzl's books sold by Carmichael's Booksellers
Photo credit: Tom Fougerousse



Dr. Metzl (left) speaking with HSC ODI Manager, Ryan Simpson
Photo credit: Tom Fougerousse

If you would like more information about Jonathan Metzl, his books, upcoming events, and more, be sure to visit his website:

<https://www.jonathanmetzl.com/>

When asked about his perspective on our current state regarding anti-DEI movements in higher education, Dr. Metzl shared how far medical education has come over the years in terms of exploring health equity, and yet how we are still just scratching the surface in these regards. He stated that for him it is heartbreaking and frustrating that there is a movement to fight against the progress that has been made towards addressing health disparities. If we would allow our progress to just thrive, we could very well end up with an equitable health care system down the road, which is beneficial to everyone. He shared that while he is hopeful that we get through this moment, it is more than likely that health professionals will have to be fighting for health equity for the rest of their careers.

Nursing 4 All

We wrapped up a great first semester of the SON initiative “Nursing 4 All Program” in the Fall of 2023. We had the pleasure of hosting 254 middle and high school students who participated in various fun and interactive health-related activities, including simulations, escape rooms, and other hands-on experiences. The visits were made possible thanks to the support of grant funding from AHEC, 15 faculty members from the School of Nursing, 14 nursing students (including two Ph.D. students), and several community nursing professionals. We also provided CPR training to 40 students at Central High School, which was a great success. Overall, it was an amazing semester that left the students feeling energized and excited to continue to come to the School of Nursing to learn about nursing. The other schools that participated were Grace James Academy, Valley High School, Shawnee High School, and Oldham County High School.

Right: Nursing 4 All Program statistics
Center: Students attending Nursing 4 All Program

Below: Dr. Cynethia Bethel-Hines
Credit: UofL OCM



Meet Dr. Cynethia Bethel-Hines

Dr. Cynethia Bethel-Hines is an assistant professor at the University of Louisville School of Nursing where she teaches in the undergraduate and graduate programs. She is a certified Pediatric Nurse Practitioner at Shawnee Christian Healthcare where she works in two of the organization’s school-based clinics to provide care to elementary and high school students.

Dr. Bethel-Hines, a native of the city of Louisville, graduated from Berea College with a BSN. She is a graduate of the University of Kentucky with an MSN in Pediatric Primary Care. In 2017, she received her Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) from Northern Kentucky University where she explored breastfeeding in the African American community. She was funded by an AACN/CDC academic partnership to implement a breastfeeding promotion quality improvement initiative at a local health center.

She is involved in several nursing and professional organizations such as the National Black Nurses Association/KYANNA Black Nurses of Louisville where she has served as secretary and president and holds the past president position of the local chapter and the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, where she served as the conference chair for the local conference for five years. She is the founding member and current president of the Louisville Coalition for Black Maternal Health. She has been involved in the 3-year IMI Midwifery Learning Collaborative which aims to identify ways to reduce maternal health disparities. In 2016, the National Black Nurses Association awarded her an Under 40 Award. This award recognizes nurses aged 40 and younger who have shown strong leadership and excellence in practice. She was also honored to be included in Who’s Who Louisville: 2018 African American Profiles. She was awarded an Outstanding Community Service award from the Louisville Metro Council in 2023. Dr. Bethel-Hines joined the HSC ODI team in January 2024.



Photo credit: Katie Myers

Laura Flake



MEET OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS

Kitty Le

Kitty Le is a departmental coordinator for the HSC Office of Diversity and Inclusion. She is a Louisville native and a graduate of the University of Louisville with a B.A. in Political Science. Before she started at the HSC Office of Diversity and Inclusion, she worked at numerous litigation support offices for law firms and government agencies nationwide.

When she isn't working, Kitty loves to spend time reading, bullet journaling, and doing puzzle hunts with her friends.

Name: Laura Flake

Position: Student Learning Specialist (Post-Bac Pre-Med Record Enhancing Program)

Hometown: Russellville, Arkansas

Degree(s): Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education (B.S.); Master of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership (M.Ed.); and Educational Specialist (Ed.S.)

Bio: Laura is a lifelong educator. Starting in elementary education, Laura has worked with students from kindergarten through college. She has taught courses in elementary assessment, elementary curriculum, and education general courses. Laura has worked at Arkansas Tech University as the Director of Teacher Education, North Carolina Central University as the Director of Student Services and Licensure, and University of Cincinnati as a Director of the Faculty Enrichment Center. Prior to her higher education days, Laura taught first and second grade and was an administrator for a K-5 school. She has two dogs, Raney and Harper Jane, and enjoys crafting, watching sports, and spending time outside.



Photo credit: Helen Le (Kitty's sister!)

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE POST-BAC PRE-MED PROGRAM EXPANDS WITH RECORD ENHANCING OPPORTUNITIES



Credit: Canva Stock Photo

Laura Flake, Ed.S. (she/her)

Learning and Student Specialist, HSC ODI

Post-Bac Pre-Med Program (PBPM) Record Enhancing Program

The University of Louisville is excited to announce the expansion of its Post-bac Pre-med Program, offering new record enhancing opportunities for pre-med college graduates looking to strengthen their credentials for medical school. With a focus on improving grade point averages and MCAT scores, the program now features two tracks designed to support students in their journey towards a successful medical career.

Track one of the program provides students with the chance to complete or retake pre-med required courses; enroll in upper-level science classes; and receive MCAT preparation, tutoring, and supplemental instruction to enhance their learning strategies and test-taking skills. This track is tailored to help students build a strong academic foundation and boost their competitiveness for medical school admissions. For those seeking to further enhance their credentials at the graduate level, track two offers a one-year non-thesis M.S. in Physiology. This track allows students to delve deeper into their studies while continuing to receive support from the program every step of the way. Accepted PBPM students must participate in track one to be considered for track two, ensuring a comprehensive and supportive educational experience.

Students in both tracks will have the opportunity to engage in valuable experiences such as shadowing physicians, volunteering in the community, and receiving assistance with application development. These hands-on opportunities aim to provide students with a well-rounded preparation for their future careers in healthcare. With only 15 spots available, interested students are encouraged to apply soon. The application deadline has been extended to May 1, 2024, giving applicants more time to submit their materials. To learn more about this exciting new program and to apply, visit the [website](#) and take the first step towards a successful career in medicine.

Don't miss out on this unique opportunity to enhance your academic record and advance your career goals in the medical field. Apply now and join us as we launch this innovative program this fall! For questions or comments, please reach out to Laura Flake by emailing laura.flake@louisville.edu.



Questions, comments, praise, criticism, corrections, submissions, or general conversation?

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Contact us at hscodi@louisville.edu