



# Benjamin Rush Institute

## QIV-FY20/21 REPORT

July 30, 2021

Despite the lingering effects of the Covid pandemic, the scope and impact of the Benjamin Rush Institute (BRI) and its programs continue to grow. As the spring semester wound to a close, BRI had grown to 44 medical student, residency, and international chapters, continuing our track record of double-digit growth over each of the past three academic years. As we prepare for the beginning of the fall semester, we have nine additional chapters waiting only for a return to campus.

Due to the highly charged political and economic atmosphere, both in public affairs and on campus, it is more critical now than ever before that BRI continue to inform and educate medical students about free enterprise solutions that protect the doctor-patient relationship as the primary means for delivering quality medical care.

Your support has been and will continue to be critical to BRI's success. Without BRI, most medical students would only hear from the AMA, representing corporate medicine and third-party insurers, and Physicians for a National Health Program, advocates of cradle-to-grave, government mandated, desktop medicine and never hear about free enterprise, limited government models for the practice of medicine that provide optimal patient outcomes, increase physician satisfaction, and reduce costs. As the prospect of a severe doctor shortage looms and doctors are increasingly burned out, the stakes couldn't be higher. As students return to campus and face these daunting challenges, we are ready!

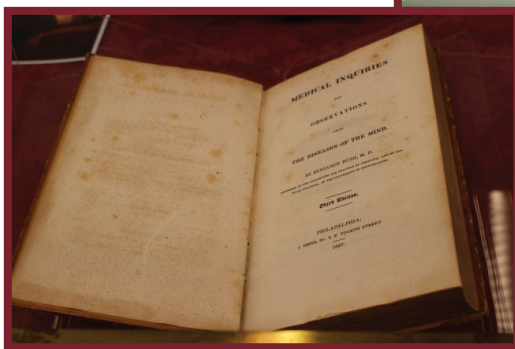
### BRI Launches Intergenerational Project with NY Medical College

Teaming with New York Medical College alumnus Dr. Peter Bentivegna, BRI launched a student chapter at NYMC that is the first of its kind at any medical school. The chapter provides the opportunity for NYMC students, faculty and alumni, students in other BRI chapters, and other medical and healthcare professionals to meet and discuss issues critical for the modern practice of medicine.

This unique opportunity allows BRI to reach a new and broader population of medical students, faculty, and practicing physicians, who receive CME credits certified by NYMC for attending.

At the most recent BRI/NYMC event, Dr. Bentivegna (*right*) donated an original printing of Dr. Benjamin Rush's book (*center*), "Medical Inquiries and Observations Upon the Diseases of the Mind," to NYMC. The book led to Dr. Rush being called the Father of American Psychiatry.

BRI is working with BRI chapters at three other medical schools to develop similar intergenerational programs—Penn State, Southern Illinois, and Boston University.





## Benjamin Rush Institute's Virtual Event Series

Less than a week after the Covid pandemic shut down medical school campuses during Spring Break 2020, BRI quickly adjusted, developing a new event format, the BRI *Virtual Event Series*.

The webinar-style online event series features prominent physicians and healthcare policy experts speaking on topics relevant to the practice of medicine that are consistent with BRI's mission to protect the doctor-patient relationship as the primary means for delivering access to higher quality, affordable medical care.

BRI has produced 24 hour-long *Virtual Events Series* interviews just since the series began fewer than 15 months ago. During that time, recordings of *Virtual Event Series* interviews have been downloaded more than 20,000 times and an average of three to five BRI student chapters have streamed each event live. In addition, the number of new visitors to BRI's website has increased by 91 percent since the *Virtual Event Series* began.

*"I was blown away by the lectures I tuned into. I'm an older medical student, and I don't want to waste money practicing medicine I hate. You've given me so much hope."*—Max Ribot, chapter leader, University of Georgia.

Topics featured during the series have ranged from Dr. Darcy Bryan's presentation about policy solutions to ameliorate the obstetrical crisis in rural America to celebrated neurosurgeon Dr. Teo Forcht Dagi's discussion about doctors as entrepreneurs and how a free enterprise approach improves patient outcomes and physician satisfaction.

In addition to Drs. Bryan and Forcht-Dagi (*both, top left*), the series also has featured (*counterclockwise after Dr. Dagi*) interviews with Dr. Grace Torres-Hodges, BRI Board Chair Sally Pipes, Dr. Chad Savage, Dr. G. Keith Smith, Dr. David Ring, and Dr. J. Peter Rubin, among many others.

*"Thanks for giving us events to send to our new chapters. It's great to have something to keep our conversations going about free market medicine. I have lots of students interested."*—chapter leader, Southern Illinois School of Medicine.

Due to its popularity, BRI will continue to produce interviews relevant to the practice of medicine when students return to campus, such as medical ethics and physicians as CEOs, among others.





## BRI Speakers Bureau

Concordia University Wisconsin joined with the Remedium eXchange (Rx) Think Tank to sponsor the 2021 Healthcare Economics Summit in July. The summit brought together Wisconsin C-level executives and healthcare innovators to discuss free market solutions, especially Direct Primary Care.

David Goldhill, author of "How American Healthcare Killed My Father," led the roster of speakers, which included BRI Managing Director Rebecca Kiessling (*right*). Rebecca's presentation focused on free market models for the practice of medicine and the implications for the careers of today's medical students.



*BRI Managing Director Rebecca Kiessling's (above) presentation at the conference focused on the importance of the doctor-patient relationship in education.*

*Other speakers and attendees included (from left) James Dunavant, Executive Director of FMMA, Dr. Daniel Sem, Dean of the Batterman School of Business at Concordia University, and David Balat, Director of Right on Healthcare.*

## Conference Scholarships and Free Market Partnerships

The intergenerational partnership with NYMC (*see page one*) is just one of the new strategic partnerships BRI forged during the pandemic. Following BRI's partnership with the Free Market Medical Association (FMMA) at BRI's 2019 Leadership Conference, Dr. G. Keith Smith, CEO of the Surgery Center of Oklahoma, requested BRI partner with FMMA to sponsor student attendance at the organization's future events. Students will be included in FMMA's annual meetings and other events, providing them with unparalleled networking and educational opportunities.

Natalie Bodnar (*left*), a student in BRI's chapter at the Chicago Medical School, attended the Concordia University Summit (*see above*) earlier this summer. She also will attend FMMA's annual meeting virtually in early August. Four students from the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine will join BRI Executive Director

Richard Walker in person at the FMMA meeting.

Leveraging the success of BRI's partnership with FMMA, the American Association of Physicians and Surgeons Executive Director Jane Orient requested BRI partner with them to drive student attendance and involvement at

their meetings and conferences. BRI also has partnered with Physician CEO, an intensive MBA-style program for practicing physicians, and we are the only organization dedicated to medical students partnering with the Free 2 Care coalition, a group of physician and patient organizations dedicated to preserving the doctor-patient relationship.



## NexGenMed, Pathways 2 Practice, and Social Media

BRI uses its social media presence to announce events and to further educate our medical student members and followers about free enterprise, doctor focused, and patient centered models for the practice of medicine. BRI has grown its online presence by more than 24 percent during the fiscal year just ended. The average open rate for our newsletter has increased by nearly 28 percent, well above the industry average.

With the launch of BRI's *Virtual Event Series* and the *Pathways 2 Practice* online digest, the average of new BRI website visitors, many of whom are practicing physicians, grew by more than 90 percent. In addition, BRI's Facebook and Twitter following increased by 18 percent.

In addition, BRI posts recordings of *Virtual Event Series (VES)* interviews, and *Second Opinion Series* debates, and other selected events on our YouTube channel. This communications venue became even more critical during the pandemic. For example, three to five BRI student chapters on average stream all VES events. And in addition to the NYMC students, faculty, and practicing physicians attending the first BRI/NYMC intergenerational event, members of the BRI student chapter and several of their fellow students at the Sackler Faculty of Medicine Medical School in Tel Aviv watched the event even though it was held at 1 a.m. in Israel.

*NexGenMed* is BRI's extremely popular student-produced podcast. The podcast provides critical information from practicing physicians and public policy experts about emerging trends that will affect the practice of medicine and the doctor-patient relationship. Past episodes, for example, have focused on political influence in medicine and how Direct Primary Care can challenge insurance companies to lower costs and provide patients with access to higher quality care.



Episodes in the series currently are produced by Tony Mazzaferro, chapter leader at Saint Louis University School of Medicine. Tony completed his studies in May and is now Dr. Mazzaferro. He will begin his residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth as the fall semester gets underway.

Our goal is to continue to pursue a strategy of branded social media engagement to sustain our current level of engagement and grow it by better exploiting existing platforms, adopting new social media technologies as they develop.

Perhaps most important, however, BRI student chapters continue to live-stream their chapter events via Facebook Live and Twitter, using Periscope. This enables other BRI chapters and student members to watch the events in real time or schedule later viewings.

### Grantee Spotlight



#### Benjamin Rush Institute

[Benjamin Rush Institute](#) unites medical students, faculty, doctors, healthcare professionals and others from across the political spectrum, who believe that free enterprise and a direct patient-doctor relationship are the best means of ensuring optimal patient outcomes at affordable prices. BRI gives medical students a voice that empowers them to overcome the push towards socialized, over-regulated healthcare.

### Bradley Foundation Recognizes BRI

The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation recognized the impact and effectiveness of BRI programs and events in their 2021 Summer Bulletin. The consistent support of the Bradley Foundation and other BRI supporters like you has been crucial for our success.

On behalf of the medical students we serve, thanks to all of you who have provided financial support for BRI. As the new academic year begins, the holidays aren't far away. As you make your philanthropic plans, please consider a donation to BRI. It's a great investment in the future of healthcare.