History of Medicine Essay Award
Application Form

**Essay contest topic:** The history of medicine and public health with respect to a persistent dilemma of American society: racism and discrimination against African Americans.

**Description:** Understanding historical context is an important aspect of medical education. In 2007, the Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) established the Medical Student Essay Award Contest to honor a student for the best research essay related to the history of medicine or public health since the initiation of the MMS in 1781. This year, in recognition of recent disturbing events indicative of persistent and pervasive institutional racism in American society, the Committee on History is specifying a topic for the annual essay contest.

The MMS is committed to examining the history of implicit, as well as explicit, racism in medicine in Massachusetts and the United States, particularly as it has impacted African American physicians and communities, and continues to do so. We ask essay authors to focus on this as a topic and on the role of MMS, district medical societies, national medical associations, medical schools, academic medical centers, and other components of what might be considered the “medical establishment,” with both positive and negative impact. While the Committee recognizes that racism, discrimination, and power dynamics are certainly not a problem only for the African American community, we would like to narrow the focus of this year's contest to maximize what these essays can teach us about the history of medicine concerning a particular problem embedded in the very beginnings of this nation. However, using examples related to other circumstances of discrimination in medicine or healthcare are welcome if they further illustrate aspects of racism as it affects the African American community.

Authors of essays are strongly encouraged to use primary sources to the extent that they are available under restrictions in place for the coronavirus pandemic. Students are invited (but not required) to consult, either in person or by phone, with members of the Committee on History to discuss the formulation of their research question, as well as sources that might be investigated. Potential online sources include the Annual Orations of the MMS, the content of the *New England Journal of Medicine* and its precursors, historical archives, and association proceedings.

The essay should be original, tightly argued, and well-referenced, and it will be judged on scholarship, originality, and clarity of expression. Photographs and illustrations may be included with the essay.

**Eligibility:** The award is available to a medical student (“You” or “Your”) who is a member of the Massachusetts Medical Society (the “Society”), provided that You are not a member of the Committee on History.

**Entry Requirements:** The essay must be a maximum of 3,000 words (not including citations or footnotes) and may be submitted by e-mail or printed copy. A one-paragraph abstract is due by November 23, 2020, and the final essay is due by January 25, 2021 to Josh Rosenfeld, Massachusetts Medical Society, 860 Winter Street, Waltham, MA 02451, email: jrosenfeld@mms.org. A copy of this form must be signed by You and provided to the Society by the submission deadline.
The Award: The Society will select the best essay on the basis of factors including scholarship, originality, and clarity of expression. If Your essay is selected, You will receive an award of $1,000.

The Society reserves the right, in its sole discretion, not to issue any award.

Other Conditions: If You receive the award, (1) You agree that the Society may edit Your essay and reproduce, distribute and/or display it at the Society’s website or elsewhere in electronic or other media, and (2) you must submit Your photograph and You agree that the Society may identify You by photograph, name, medical school, and city in connection with Your essay and the award program.

Agreed to:

__________________________________  ______________________________
Your Signature                                      Date

Your name (printed or typed):

Address:

Telephone:

E-mail: