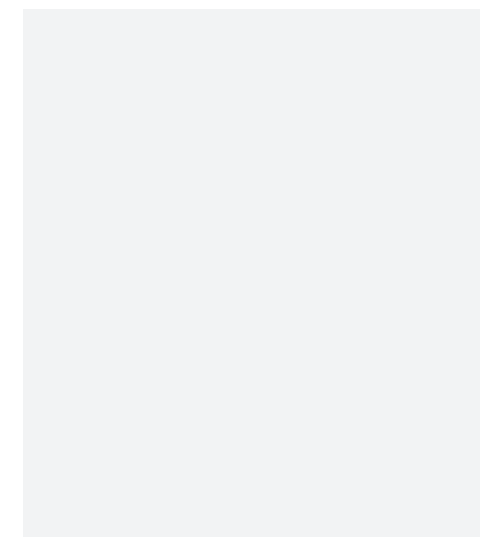

FEATURES

Mind | Body | Spirit
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Naturopathic medicine in the media goes “mainstream”

A recent radio story on the CBC associated the words “naturopathic medicine” and “mainstream.” Who would have thought, 20 years ago?

There has been no shortage of media coverage of naturopathic medicine in the last year. We at CCNM have found ourselves



Q Describe your background in medicine and oncology. Have you always been interested in cancer care?

A – I've been a clinical oncologist for over 20 years. I graduated from the medical school at Cairo University, Egypt. I wanted to be a cancer doctor since I was a med student so I applied for the clinical oncology residency program and was accepted. I spent three years treating different types of cancers using radiation therapy, chemotherapy and palliative care. In that time, I also completed a master's degree studying psychological disturbances among cancer patients. After completing my residency training I started working as an assistant lecturer of oncology at Cairo University, teaching undergrad students the principles of radiation therapy and chemotherapy. I also practised, where I focused on brain tumors, and started a prospective study on using two different types of radiation therapy in the brain. I then passed the medical doctorate exam in radiation oncology.

I became a professor of clinical oncology at Cairo University in 2009 and published 33 peer-reviewed research articles in reputable journals.

Q When did you immigrate to Canada and why did you decide to attend CCNM?

A – I immigrated to Canada in 2013 and decided to attend CCNM. The most important reason was to fill the gap in my medical education because my work in patient care and management was focused on conventional cancer treatments like radiation therapy and chemotherapy. When patients needed additional care I had to refer them. But CCNM teaches many areas of care that are lacking in the medical system, such as nutrition, herbal medicine and acupuncture. I wish to continue learning about these to optimize my patient care from both the conventional and naturopathic sides. CCNM also houses a cancer focus in the RSNC which gives me a chance to learn more about naturopathic care for cancer patients.

Q What are the benefits of combining a conventional medical education with naturopathic medicine?

A – Naturopathic medicine is an essential part of health – conventional medicine cannot manage disease/health concerns alone. Aspects such as good nutrition can play a large role in patient care; for example, patients with diabetes or high cholesterol will never benefit from conventional care if they don't eat properly.

Q You are a research resident at CCNM. Tell us more about your day-to-day activities.

A - Currently I'm involved in a research project about colon cancer and naturopathic supportive care, reviewing all patients who presented to RSNC with colon cancer and correlating their general performance and symptoms before and after treatment. Meanwhile I am doing a monthly review of one of the research articles in naturopathic medicine, creating research questions relevant to this study, posting it as a 'study of the month' on Moodle and creating hard copies for students to encourage their critical thinking.

I also teach primary clinical diagnosis for second-year students and primary care practical sessions, phlebotomy and B

For anyone interested in and supportive of naturopathic medicine, the past twelve months has seen a steady stream of media coverage aimed at NDs and the profession. While some of the coverage has been positive, such as extolling the benefits of naturopathic care (by practitioners and patients alike), some of it has also been controversial. With a bigger spotlight on the profession comes a greater responsibility to ensure our message is clear, powerful and effective.

We asked those on the front line to share their thoughts on what it's like to work with the media and how to deal with the outcome – both negative and positive.

There seems to have been a lot of media interest in naturopathic medicine in the last twelve months. What do you attribute that to?

BB: It is interesting, as NDs are gaining more respect in many parts of the medical establishment our critics are becoming more vocal. I certainly see the two as connected.

NDs are interacting with the media more and more – what are your thoughts on how NDs can have the best possible

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BBH

“I think many patients of NDs are frustrated to see the media trash medical support that they have found incredibly important to their health. I know that patients receiving adjunctive care for cancer are particularly appreciative of the difference the treatments have made in their lives and they want others to be aware of what is available.”

Bob Bernhardt, President, CCNM

Senators' GM Bryan Murray leads fundraising drive for alternative cancer centre (April 6, 2016)

Representatives from the OICC and CCNM were on hand at the launch of the OICC Foundation's fundraising campaign at the Canadian Tire Centre in Ottawa. Former Ottawa Senators GM Bryan Murray, who is currently receiving treatment at the OICC for colon cancer, also serves

JW: OAND is both reactive and proactive with the media. We answer media calls when they come in, but how much to engage and what to say is a careful balancing act. We reach out with media statements, letters to the editor, and interviews on issues of interest to Ontario NDs.

As naturopathic medicine has become more and more popular, there has also been some controversial media coverage. What's your advice on how to deal with that?

DS: Always stay positive, take the high road and never take it personally.

BH: Know that these days, media can cycle so quickly – even faster than the typical 24-hour news cycle. With social media at play, once another story hits the news, the controversial piece on NDs is now old news. At the height of media scrutiny in Alberta in April, within 6 hours, the next new controversy in Alberta hit – that the restaurant chain, Earl's, was no longer using Alberta beef! And like that, it went onto the next news item a day after that. Within 48 hours, the newsfeeds were no longer carrying the critical pieces on NDs.

JW: My advice is always to speak to what you know and don't take the bait on loaded questions designed to create controversy. Stick to the message that you want to get across.

On a number of radio shows in the last year, we have heard many patients call in and share their positive experiences with their own naturopaths. Were you surprised by that?

BH: Not at all! We know that our patients are our biggest advocates. They have seen first-hand how successful naturopathic medicine can be.

BB: Not at all. I think many patients of NDs are frustrated to see the media trash medical support that they have found incredibly important to their health. I know that patients receiving adjunctive care for cancer are particularly appreciative of the difference the treatments have made in their lives and they want others to be aware of what is available.

DS: Somewhat, but not really. These are the people we are making a difference for and they are intelligent and outspoken. It's really very encouraging.

As naturopathic medicine increases in popularity among Canadians, so does the media interest in what naturopathic doctors do, how they are educated, etc. This interest is amplified when tragedy or controversy arise. Working with the media can be tricky. Here are some tips to help you if you're ever contacted by the media.

Unconventional medicine

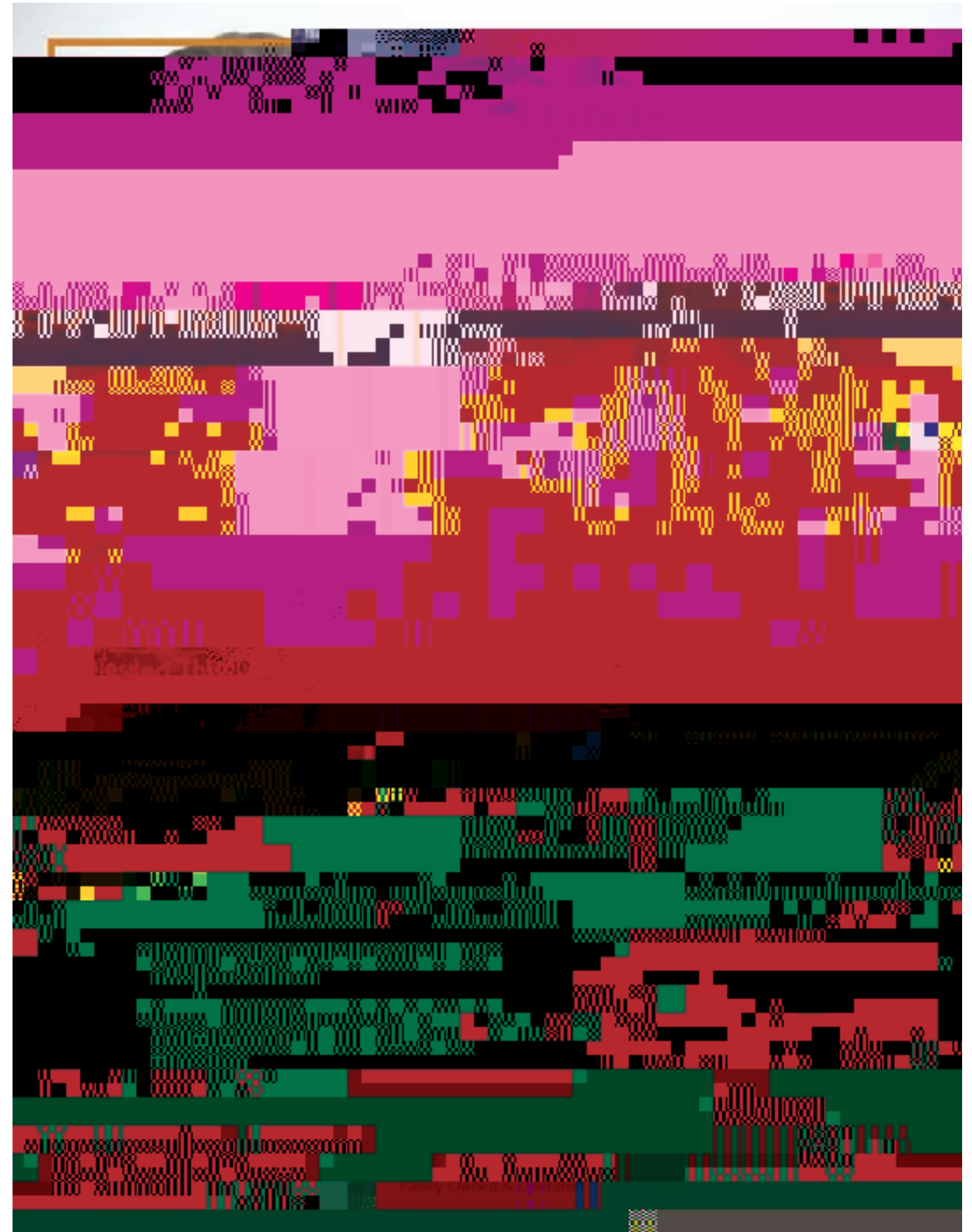
Where do you see naturopathic medicine in 10 years?

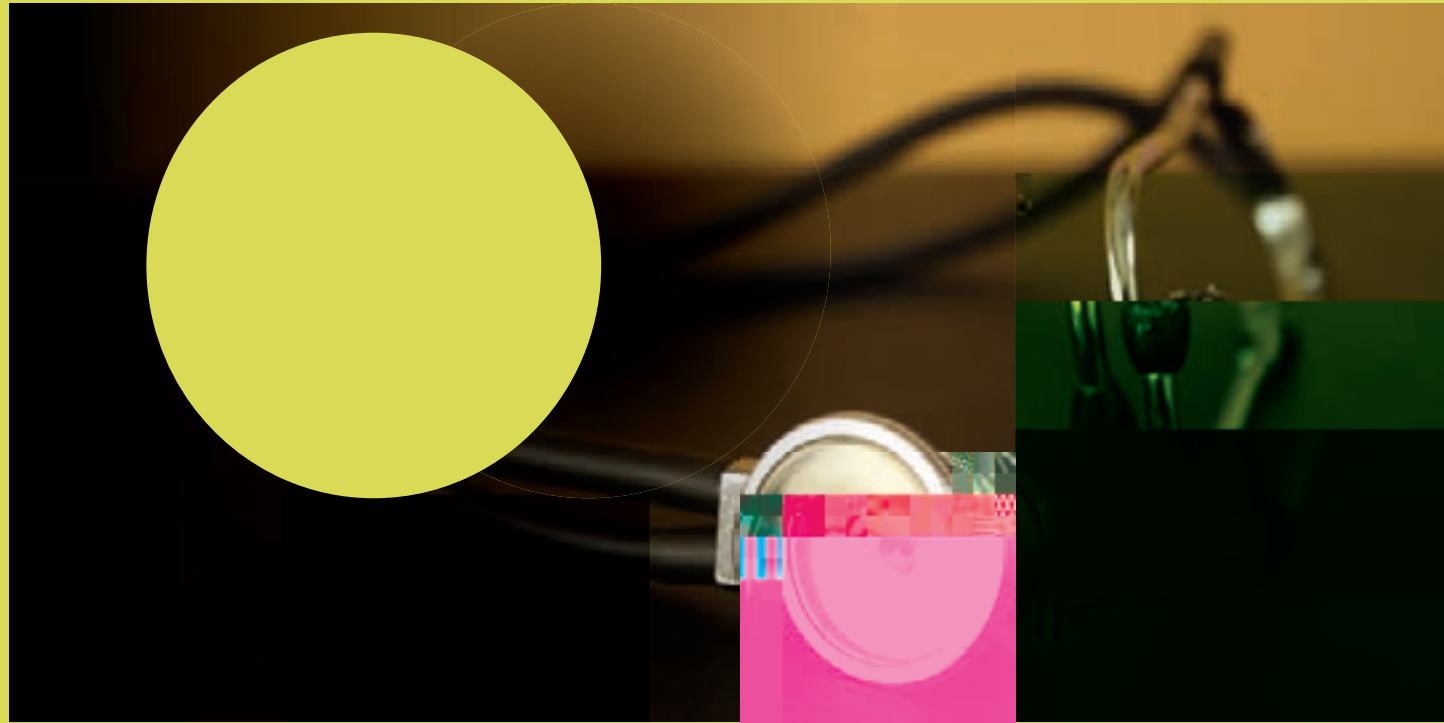
BH: We have yet to visualize the potential that we have as a profession. We need to focus on our patients and US. There is no need to make any comparisons to others in order to 'measure up'. That shift is happening and we will continue to build on this momentum. In the past 12 years of practice, I have seen this profession blossom and grow. The seeds of our profession were sowed by our elders for whom I have immense gratitude. We have tended to the seedlings and watched the leaves grow on its branches. If we are trees today, then in 10 years, we will be a thriving forest.

DS: I see it integrated within family health teams, hospital services, with coordinated referral bases.

JW: I see a bright future that includes: the population understanding and embracing what naturopathic medicine can offer; government and insurance providers better recognizing the role that naturopathic doctors can play in preventing illness; the recognition that there are budgetary benefits to keeping people healthy instead of just treating them when they fall sick; and more collaborative work with medical doctors when the value of naturopathic medicine is better acknowledged.

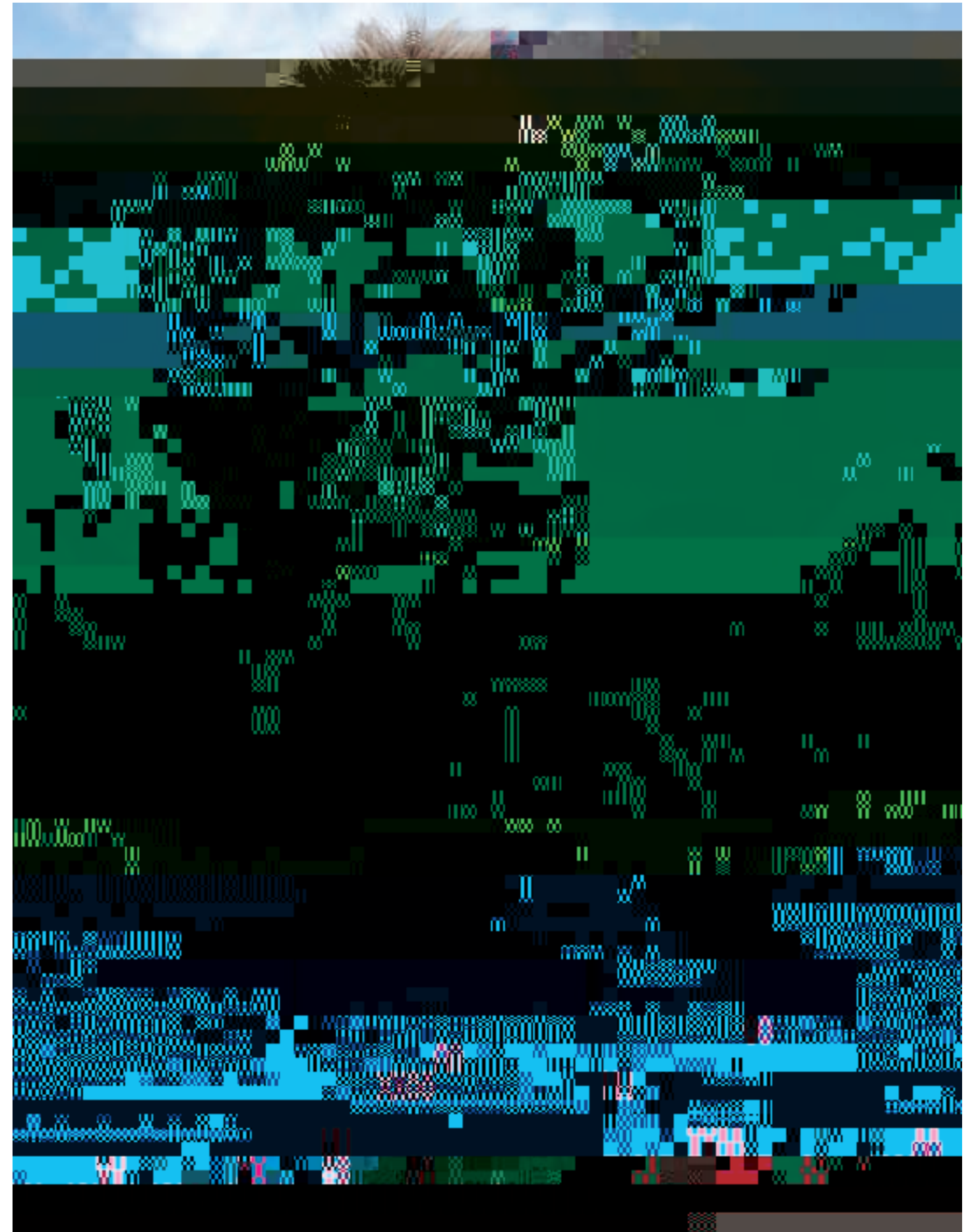
BB: I see a future in which the unique contribution of naturopathic medicine is widely respected. This respect will drive: regulation in each Canadian jurisdiction; broader scope with expanded rights for ordering diagnostic tests and for prescribing; many government paid positions for NDs in order to provide access to those who cannot currently afford the care; integration with other health-care providers, as the norm not the exception; and an environment in which all CCNM graduates are successful – both financially and personally. *





Keith Pownall, CCNM's legal counsel, provides guidelines on how to conduct yourself with the media

- 1 Choose your words carefully.** It is understandable that you want to rebut the critics of naturopathic medicine. Try to resist the temptation to attack the critics and instead focus on addressing the issues as you see them.
The media thrives on controversy; litigation stemming from defamation on the internet is on the rise. It can be expensive and time-consuming to defend yourself. It is dangerous to comment on matters when you are angry or don't have the facts. You are well advised to wait and organize your thoughts.
- 2 In trying to illustrate a point, be careful that you do not disclose confidential information about your patients.** Make sure if you are using a patient case scenario that nobody, including the patient, would be able to identify the patient based on the information you provide.
- 3 Do not infringe on someone else's copyrighted material.** Anything you write has to be an original creation by yourself. While it is permitted to refer to studies, you must properly attribute works created by others. You cannot republish them without the permission of the author.
- 4 Be mindful of CONO's prohibition on NDs endorsing products while identified as an ND.**
- 5 Do not, intentionally or unintentionally, provide medical advice.** In some forms of media you can include a disclaimer that the information you are providing is not to be considered medical advice and that readers should consult a health practitioner for specific individualized care. In some formats this is not possible or at least cumbersome. In such instances you must then be careful to stating something that may not be appropriate if it was to be taken as advice by all readers. *





“This bursary allows for financial space that is much needed; not having to split my day between school and work is an opportunity I am extremely grateful for. I’m able to focus solely on my academics. Naturopathic medicine aligns with my core beliefs: educating and caring for people – the fundamental healing principle to seek out the root cause of disease and heal the whole person.”

Kayzie Sutton, Reginald A. Braithwaite Memorial Bursary recipient

Reginald A. Braithwaite Memorial Bursary criteria

- > **Must be of African descent and have attended primary or elementary school in Canada for a minimum of five years**
- > **Must be registered as a student in the Doctor of Naturopathy program for the 2016 – 2017 academic year**
- > **Must demonstrate financial need, or qualify for government financial aid**
- > **Must have a cumulative GPA of 2.7 or better**

Third-year CCNM student Kayzie Sutton has a bright, energetic personality, capable of filling a room with her charm and effervescence. A 2003 graduate of York University, Kayzie put her psychology and communications degree – and later a broadcasting degree from Seneca College – to use in the world of corporate communications and media. A few years ago, a medical situation forced her to look into alternative options. When naturopathic medicine dramatically improved her health, she wanted to help others do the same.

Her interest has always been people. “How can we be better and help each other reach our full potential?” she muses. “From a young age I was involved in various extracurricular activities – sports, dance and music. When you are surrounded by mentors and peers who are striving to be better than they were yesterday, you can’t help but push yourself to be better as well.”

If you ask her peers or professors, they’d tell you that Kayzie is an asset to the student population (she is the current VP Finance for the NSA) and to the profession. But without the support of a generous donor, Kayzie’s calling may have been left unrealized.

The Reginald A. Braithwaite Memorial Bursary

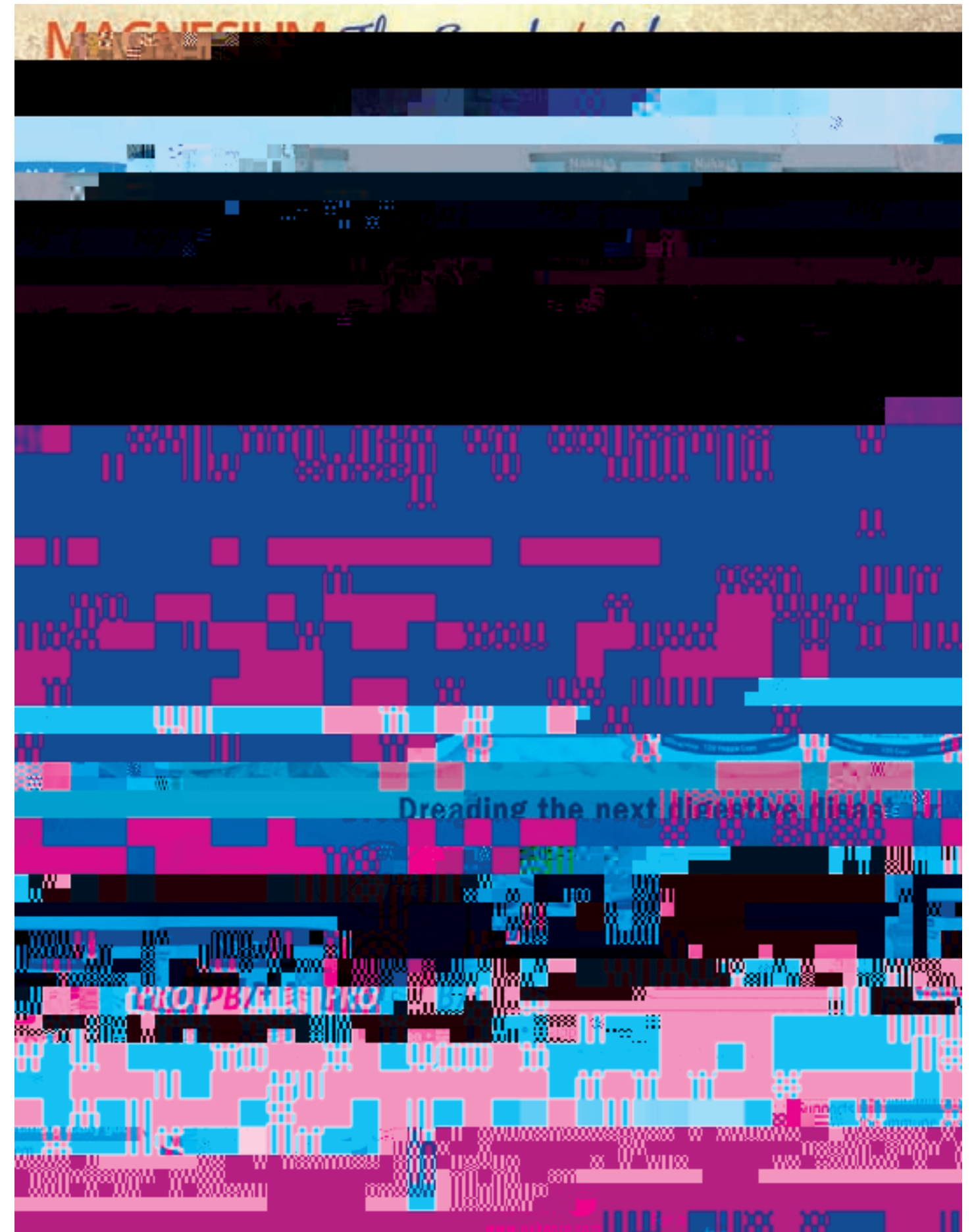
Established by the family of the late Reginald Ashton Braithwaite, an immigrant to Canada from the Barbados who worked on the Panama Canal and valued hard work and education, the Reginald A. Braithwaite Memorial Bursary is awarded to a CCNM student of African descent with a strong academic record. The bursary is offered at a maximum of \$10,000 annually and Kayzie is its first recipient.

“One of the biggest challenges for me is tuition – attending a private medical school makes the challenge even greater. I’ve been juggling classes while working 20-25 hours a week, simply so I can afford to attend classes,” she says.

During the application process earlier this year, Kayzie met with a member of the family and felt encouraged by her support and understanding.

“This bursary acknowledges the challenges that come from being a student with an experience that is different from the majority of students who attend. It helps to reduce the barriers that affect us all and allows for conversations that may not have been had.

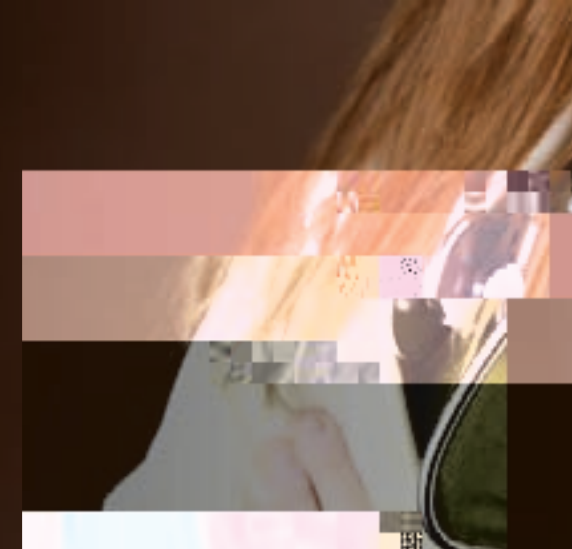
As a Canadian of Afro-Caribbean descent,
some of the challenges we face while

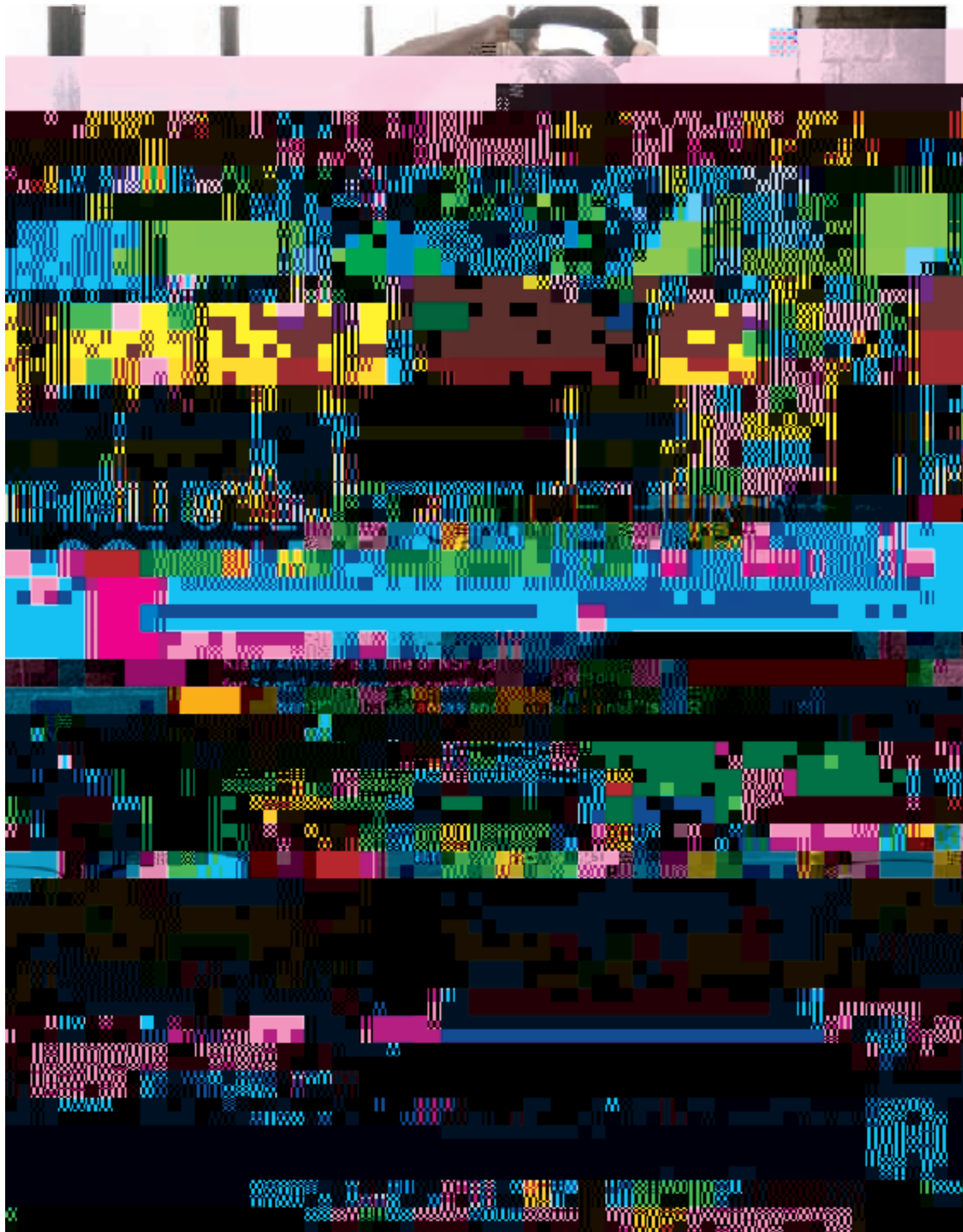




Working across the health care system

What motivates Class of 2009 graduate
Dr. Sylvi Martin, ND and nurse?
A responsibility to serve the community
and a strong sense of ethics





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Keep up to date with the latest news,
events, health tips and more!

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Hey Alumni – We're Looking for You!

Do you have news you would like to share with your fellow CCNM alumni? Send us a brief update – we'd like to promote your efforts!

Contact:
Sana Abdullah, managing editor, Mind | Body | Spirit
sabdullah@ccnm.edu

- Have you opened a new practice?
- Received local or national media coverage?
- Are you volunteering in your community, or developing new products?
- Do you have a story to tell that may interest other alumni?
- Written or published a book or article?



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