



The College of Physicians of Philadelphia

BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICAN MEDICINE®

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Overview

Founded in 1787, the College is committed to the mission of advancing health, enhancing the connection between medicine and society, and upholding the ideals and heritage of the profession. Situated in Philadelphia, a city with a rich history of contributions to healthcare and home of the nation's first medical school, the College has always been a vital meeting ground for medical professionals across the many institutions in the region. Over the years, fellows, members, and staff have come together at the College to address issues and support causes that benefit the local and national community and draw on its unique intellectual resources and collection. The College has a steadfast commitment to promoting healthcare access and quality as a fundamental human right, and to enhancing the emphasis on equity, diversity, and inclusion in the field. Today, the College achieves this mission through broad programming that spans a globally recognized museum, a historic library collection, grand rounds and symposia, STEM education and outreach initiatives, and public health efforts. In recent decades, the College has professionalized its operations, allowing it to dramatically expand its reach and impact. It has become a vibrant part of the city's cultural landscape reaching hundreds of thousands of individuals every year through museum visitorship, member programming, and engagement of the local community through other events.

Nearly 1,100 Fellows, all elected to the College, make up the core membership of the organization. Together with a highly dedicated staff as well as members of various interest sections, the College serves as a critical link in Philadelphia between the medical profession and the public. The College convenes and unites physicians and healthcare professionals for numerous meetings, workshops, and activities. It also engages the public to showcase the history of medicine and medical humanities with increasing attention to featuring contributions of those historically underrepresented in the field, broaden interest in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), promote well-being, and improve health policies.

The home of the College is a striking Beaux-Arts building in downtown Philadelphia—it was dedicated as a National Historic Landmark in 2002. The Mütter Museum (the Museum), one of the most widely known aspects of the College and its public face, has achieved an international reputation that has resulted in impressive growth in interest and visitors. Its collection and exhibits feature the history of medicine and culturally relevant topics in health such as the award-winning most recent exhibit, *Spit Spreads Death: The Influenza Pandemic of 1918-19 in Philadelphia*. The 22nd Street location is also home to the Historical Library and Center for Education.

The College of Physicians of Philadelphia

Throughout its 233-year history, the College has provided a place for medical professionals and the general public to learn about medicine as both a science and an art. It is the oldest professional society in the United States, and it has been recognized for pioneering public health initiatives, contributing to medical research and education, and engaging leading American physicians. The College's Fellowship has cultivated a distinguished legacy of leaders in the medical field, providing opportunities for networking, collaboration, and continued research and learning. Many physicians, nurses, civic leaders, public health advocates, academics, and other professionals currently have the honor of being College Fellows.

The College's storied history traces the remarkable contributions of the City of Philadelphia to the field of medicine. Home to the first medical school and the first general hospital, Philadelphia continues to have an outsized influence in medical education and research. The region is home to nine medical schools and trains one out of every six physicians in the nation. The College is located in Center City and is walking distance to City Hall and to the 30th Street Train Station on the Schuylkill River. The historic building is open to events including medical society gatherings and private events such as weddings.

The College is home to the world renowned Mütter Museum and the Historical Medical Library. Its outreach programs include, but are not limited to, the History of Vaccines website and the Junior Fellows program. The public is invited to attend the many lectures, workshops, and conferences the College offers.

In 2019, the College had revenues of just under \$10 million. Annual giving, philanthropic contributions, and grants make up nearly half of the revenues, with museum admissions, gift shop sales, and facilities rentals making up roughly another third. Investment income, program services, and fellowship dues make up the remainder of income. The College has reduced budget projections slightly for 2020 and 2021 given the impact of the pandemic on admissions revenue. As of October 31, 2020, the College's endowment was valued at roughly \$33.2 million.

The Mütter Museum

Regarded as one of America's oldest and finest museums of medical history, the Mütter Museum displays its beautifully preserved collections of anatomical teaching specimens, models, and medical instruments in a 19th-century "cabinet museum" setting. New, rotating exhibits that include digital and interactive programming such as *Spit Spreads Death*, complement the historical collection. Future exhibits in development include *Contributions of Black Physicians to Medicine in Philadelphia* and a celebration of the history and innovations in ophthalmology practice, associated with a new Ophthalmology Institute. Through these collections and exhibits, the Museum aims to help the public understand the mysteries and beauty of the human body and to appreciate the history of diagnosis and treatment of disease. In collaboration with the Center for Education, the Museum seeks to inspire more students and young people to pursue and be given access to careers in science and health fields. Over the last decade, museum attendance has more than doubled with annual attendance exceeding 180,000 visitors. The Mütter has been featured on countless TV programs and is the subject of two best-selling books.

The Mütter Research Institute is the research arm of the Mütter Museum. It establishes

collaborations and partnerships with other historic, scientific, or medical institutions with the goal of utilizing the College's collections to conduct research relevant to 21st century human health. The institute also provides professional consultation to other institutions and researchers who seek to create museums or exhibits with a medical historical dimension or maintain their collections of pathological anatomy.

The Historical Medical Library

The Historical Medical Library is considered one of the world's premier research collections in the history of medicine. The unique holdings of the library include over 400 incunabula (books printed before 1500), an extensive collection of manuscripts and archives, historical medical photographs, and a collection of 19th-century medical journals. The library is a member of the Medical Heritage Library, a digital curation collaborative among some of the world's leading medical libraries.

The Center for Education

The Center for Education develops and implements innovative programming that draws on the resources of the College to deepen engagement and access for youth and the community. Its mission is to provide a range of programs, initiatives, lectures, and after-school and summer activities that expose life-long learners to careers in scientific and medical fields and provide engagement around relevant topics in public health. Educational programming focuses primarily on middle, high school, and college students and allows learners to connect with science and medicine in a way often not possible in a classroom setting. Out-of-school programs nurture an interest in STEM, provide essential college and career preparation, increase self-esteem and the ability to work with others, and provide invaluable role models and mentors. Center programming focuses on reaching youth of color, students who will be the first in their family to attend college, and LGBTQ youth.

The Center for Education not only seeks to address opportunity gaps and pipeline issues in STEM education, but also to deepen the ties to the fabric of the Philadelphia community. For more specific information on the different programs, please visit:

- [Junior Fellows Program](#)
- [Girls One Diaspora Club](#)
- [STEM Internship Program](#)
- [Out4STEM](#)
- [Art Programming](#)
- [Accessibility Programs](#)
- [Mütter Museum Education & Lessons](#)
- [Teen Health WeekSM](#)

History of Vaccines

The History of Vaccines is the College's award-winning website that provides in-depth information on the development, use, and delivery of vaccines within a historical context. Much of the content is taken from the collections of the Mütter Museum and Historical Medical Library. The target audiences for The History of Vaccines include parents making immunization decisions for their children; students in high

school and college biology, health, and history courses; and healthcare providers. With interactive timelines, an extensive article bank, more than 700 images and videos, and activities demonstrating concepts such as how vaccines work, The History of Vaccines has useful, interesting information for everyone. The site is also available in Arabic, Hindi, Spanish, and Urdu.

The Garden

The Benjamin Rush Medicinal Plant Garden is a living exhibit of the Mütter Museum and provides both a serene setting and educational material for the College's programs. In the past several years, the garden has hosted a variety of programming and events.

The People

The extensive work of the College could not be sustained without its dedicated staff. Numbering just over 40, the staff make the organization's mission possible through museum curation and operations, educational programming, library collection management, event planning, fellowship programming, and advancement. The Board of Trustees is responsible for governance, oversight, strategic planning, and the development of financial and other resources needed to support the mission of the institution. There are 28 members of the board, and 5 non-voting members.

Fellows

The College has always been a meeting place where physicians and healthcare providers could gather and discuss the latest advances in medicine and address the public health issues in the community. It serves as a neutral meeting ground—"a Switzerland"—where members can leave their institutional affiliations at the door and come together around common objectives. College Fellows are recognized for their contributions to patient care, the health of the community, the advancement of medical and healthcare knowledge, the education of medical and healthcare personnel, and other activities that support and facilitate the practice of medicine and the delivery of healthcare.

Sections and Membership

The College is home to specialized interest groups, known as sections, that hold regular meetings, lectures, and other events. Current sections include Medical History, Medicine & the Arts, and Public Health and Preventative Medicine. Section memberships are open to all and dues are directed towards programming in the designated field of interest. While Fellows are considered the primary members of the College, sections allow for community participation in the College's mission.

Current Outlook

Over the last two decades, the College has seen immense growth of its programming, museum attendance, and reputation. It has become a central cultural institution in the city. The College is in fundamentally good health, and its robust endowment has positioned it to weather the current economic challenges better than many cultural institutions. Building on its strong trajectory, the College has followed a strategic plan to guide its ongoing efforts. The plan, developed in 2016 with broad engagement, identified six priority areas:

1. Strengthen the relationship and engagement between the Fellows and the College, its

- programs, and partners.
2. Strengthen engagement with the public by enhancing the identity and the public perception of the College.
 3. Transform and integrate the Historical Medical Library, Mütter Museum, Center for Education, and Mütter Institute to emphasize their importance to the Mission.
 4. Assist local, regional, and national officials to develop scientifically based public policy.
 5. Cultivate diversity and inclusivity at the College.
 6. Strengthen the financial, physical, technology, and management resources to support the Mission of the College and the goals of the Strategic Plan.

To date, significant progress has been made against these goals. Of note, in 2018, the College launched its first capital campaign: The Campaign to Transform the College. The goal for the campaign is \$25 million to support “People, Programs, and Place.” The major priority areas are endowed leadership staff positions, endowed programming and exhibitions, and an improved physical space with an expanded Mütter Museum and a new Rare Book Exhibition Gallery. Earlier this year, the campaign reached close to \$14 million, but with the surge of Covid-19, the College and Board of Trustees made the difficult decision to put the campaign on hold for a year, beginning November 2020. Following the pandemic, President & CEO will work with the board and staff to consider the path forward for the campaign and transformation initiative, evaluating the financial support and the challenges of physical space in a historic building.