

AAPL EXAMINER



American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law

Charles C. Dike Scholarship Award

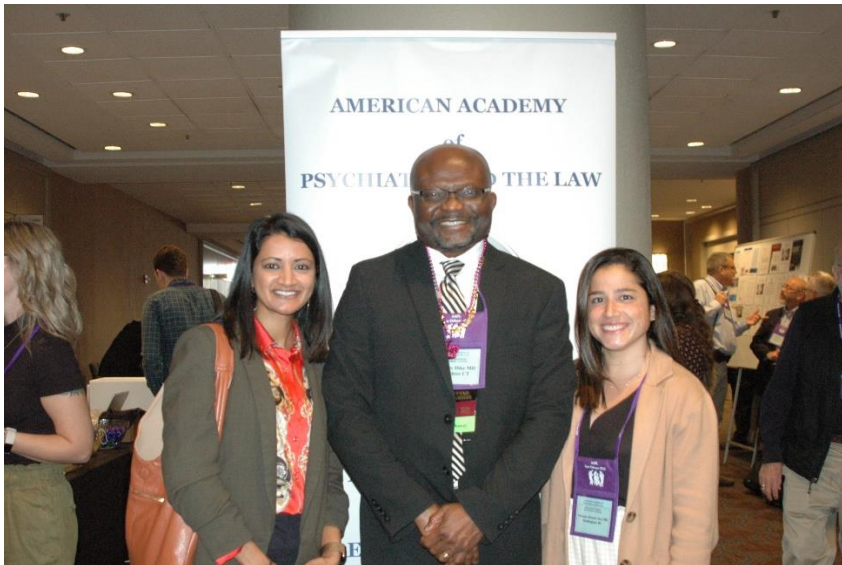
Myrline Rose Belzince, MD, Diversity Committee

The Charles Dike Scholarship Award was proposed by AAPL Past President, William Newman, MD (2019-2020), to honor current AAPL President Charles Dike, FRCPsych, MBChB, MPH for his many years of active service to AAPL, including four years as assistant to the Editor of the *AAPL Journal*; eight years as Editor of the *AAPL Newsletter* (now the *Examiner*); six years as Chair of the Ethics committee; Founding Chair of the Forensic Hospital Services Committee; Founding Chair of the Diversity Committee; Program Chair; and service on AAPL Executive Council, as well as on numerous committees and workgroups.

The purpose of the scholarship is to increase membership of forensic psychiatrists from underrepresented ethno-racial groups in AAPL by creating a welcoming and supportive environment. In addition, the award seeks to support and enhance the growth of underrepresented ethno-racial early career forensic psychiatrists to remain active AAPL members. Individuals designated as underrepresented within AAPL include Black, Hispanic/Latinx, American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian, and Asian-American. The eligibility criteria for the award include completion of forensic psychiatry fellowship training in the last three years, current AAPL membership, demonstrated activity in AAPL, and contributions to the field of forensic psychiatry. Examples of activity within AAPL include being on an AAPL committee, or presentation at the annual meeting, including a poster. Documented scholarship related to forensic psychiatry – publication in *JAAPL* or any other peer-reviewed journal – would be a bonus.

Applicants submit a brief statement stating their interest in remaining active in AAPL, plans regarding forensic psychiatry, and two letters of reference from senior forensic psychiatrists familiar with their work and character. The scholarship is to be awarded to two candidates yearly, each of whom will receive a stipend to attend the AAPL Annual Meeting. They will also be assigned a mentor to coach them and guide their forensic career. The scholarship was first awarded in 2022; this article introduces the awardees to date.

2022 Awardees



Viviana Alvarez-Toro, MD

Dr. Viviana Alvarez-Toro is an inpatient forensic psychiatrist and Associate Program Director, Saint Elizabeths Hospital forensic psychiatry fellowship program. She completed her medical school training at the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine. She then pursued her psychiatry residency at the University of Maryland/Sheppard Pratt Psychiatry Residency Program and later completed her forensic fellowship at the Yale University Law and Psychiatry fellowship program. Dr. Alvarez-Toro also has a private forensic psychiatry practice where she specializes in both criminal and civil matters.

Reema Dedania, MD, MPH

Dr. Reema Dedania is Associate Program Director, forensic psychiatry fellowship program at Emory University in Atlanta, GA. She is medical director of the Fulton County Jail/Emory Competency Restoration pod, a jail-based restoration unit. She supervises fellows who perform pre-trial and mental health evaluations at both the Fulton County Jail and the Atlanta City Detention Center. She is a guest editor for the Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health as well as JAAPL. Her areas of interest include immigrant and refugee mental health, medical education, and women's mental health.

2023 Awardees



Myrline Rose Belzince, MD

Dr. Myrline Belzince is a pediatrician, as well as a general, child and adolescent, and forensic psychiatrist. She completed all her training at Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana. Currently, she is Assistant Professor of psychiatry and behavioral health at Tulane University School of Medicine. She works at Juvenile Detention Centers in New Orleans, and at the Louisiana state forensic hospital. In addition, she evaluates pre-trial detainees for competency to stand trial. Her areas of interest include mental health of juveniles with history of delinquency, medical education, and women's mental health.

Sanya Virani, MD, MPH

Dr. Sanya Virani is a forensic psychiatrist at Worcester Recovery Center and Hospital, and Associate Program Director of the Addiction Psychiatry Fellowship Program at the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School. She is a graduate of the forensic psychiatry fellowship program at Brown University, addiction psychiatry fellowship program at Yale University, and adult psychiatry residency program at Maimonides Medical Center. She completed an MPH program (Administration and Policy) at the University of Minnesota. She has been a recipient of the Aga Khan Foundation International Scholarship; American College of Psychiatry's Laughlin Fellowship; and the American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training's Francis Lu and Nyapati Rao IMG fellowship awards. She has served as Resident Fellow Member, Representative, and Deputy Representative on the APA's Assembly for Area 2 (New York State) and on the APA's Board of Trustees. She has also been a member of two APA Presidential Task Forces, Structural Racism and Social Determinants of Mental Health. She is director and host of the podcast "Finding Our Voice" which brings viewpoints and opinions of both younger and senior groups of psychiatrists to the fore.