

Doctor chose Rutgers MBA to broaden her influence in healthcare

As the chief of pediatric rehabilitation medicine at Atlantic Health System, Dr. Hannah Aura Shoval relishes the personalized, multidisciplinary healthcare she provides for children and families. To expand her reach, she is now pursuing a Rutgers MBA.

“I’m currently operating in this small microcosm to improve the health of people in the community. Every day, I hear why families struggle to get their children the care they need. I am hoping to leverage my MBA to have a much greater scope of influence,” said Shoval, a part-time MBA student with concentrations in finance and strategy. “If you understand the financial aspects of running a business, then you can find alignment between providing the best healthcare and something that is financially feasible.”

As the mother of four children (ages 1-and-a-half, 11, 13, and 15) working full time in a demanding job, Shoval needed a part-time MBA program. “I knew I needed to go to a strong MBA program, and Rutgers has an amazing reputation academically as well as for providing many networking opportunities. It is amazing what ideas and opportunities emerge from a conversation,” Shoval said. “There are many healthcare-related businesses in New Jersey, and Rutgers is very well connected to a large network of executives nationally and globally.”

She also praised Rutgers professors for taking topics to a deeper level and using their vast business experience to share real-life examples.

“I think the more you surround yourself with the sad realities of the world, the more you begin to appreciate what you have, and you want to give what you have to other people,” said Shoval, who has a joint bachelor’s degree from Barnard College and Jewish Theological Seminary, where she triple-majoring in Neuroscience, Dance, and Bible.

When Shoval learned about corporate social innovation at Rutgers, she was particularly excited. “This is exactly why I came to business school,” she said, arguing that the best approach is to provide a business case for how targeting societal good can be lucrative. “The purse strings,” she said, “often control the decisions.”

Shoval serves in a volunteer role as the Health Equity Medical Advisor at the Rutgers Institute for Corporate Social Innovation (RICS), where Jeana Wirtenberg is the executive director. Wirtenberg also taught Shoval in two classes: Organizational Behavior and Intro to Corporate Social Innovation.

“She was a superb and exemplary student – always prepared, engaged, curious, eager to learn, and constantly adding value to class discussions,” said Wirtenberg, associate professor of professional practice in the Department of Management & Global Business. “Now that Dr. Shoval is the Health Equity Medical Advisor for RICS, we are grateful to benefit from her clinical and medical knowledge and experience. We value her many contributions to our work in promoting a more equitable and healthy future for all.”

In addition to her full-time work with Atlantic Health System, Shoval is a clinical associate professor at Rutgers School of Medicine, where she is a faculty lead for quality improvement initiatives and mentors students and residents in clinical research.

Shoval expects to complete the MBA program next year but has already seen results from her courses. She was recently selected to be on the board of Atlantic Health System’s accountable care organization, which provides people with coordinated, high-quality care.

“I’m already applying the knowledge in positions that allow me to utilize these new skills, definitely a good return on investment,” she said.

- Sharon Waters

The business concepts Dr. Hannah Aura Shoval is learning in her MBA classes combined with her medical knowledge will enable her to better help families access quality, affordable healthcare.