



Dr. Hannah Aura Shoval

# Physician is earning an MBA to broaden her influence in healthcare

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As the chief of pediatric rehabilitation medicine at Atlantic Health Center, Dr. Hannah Aura Shoval relishes the personalized, multidisciplinary health care she provides for children and families. To expand her reach, she is now pursuing a [Rutgers MBA \(https://www.business.rutgers.edu/mba\)](https://www.business.rutgers.edu/mba).

“I’m currently operating in this small microcosm to improve the health of people in the community. Every day, I hear about why families are struggling 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** (<https://www.business.rutgers.edu/part-time-mba>), student with concentrations in **finance** (<https://www.business.rutgers.edu/part-time-mba/finance>) and **strategy**. (<https://www.business.rutgers.edu/part-time-mba/strategy-leadership>). “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 come out of 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.

When Shoval learned about corporate social innovation at Rutgers, she was 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.

Shoval wants to use her MBA to merge her medical knowledge with business concepts to help all people access quality healthcare. Health equity became a passion early on. Shoval said her parents taught her a sense of duty to care for others. As a student at Tufts Medical School, she was a board member at Tufts’ student-run free health clinic, treating many impoverished individuals, including the homeless and those in shelters. She also created a system to enroll patients in Medicaid as a long-term preventative care strategy.

“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-majored 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, “are often what control the decisions.”

Shoval serves in a volunteer role as the Health Equity Medical Advisor at the **Rutgers Institute for Corporate Social Innovation** (<https://ricsi.business.rutgers.edu/>) (RICSI), where **Jeana Wirtenberg** (<https://www.business.rutgers.edu/faculty/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** (<https://www.business.rutgers.edu/faculty-research/management-global-business>). “Now that Dr. Shoval is the Health Equity Medical Advisor for RICS I, we are grateful to benefit from her clinical and medical knowledge and experience, and value her many contributions to our work in promoting a more equitable and healthy future for all.”

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In addition to her full-time work at Atlantic Health Center, 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 she is already seeing results from her courses. She was recently selected to be on the board of Atlantic Health'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

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