



[RP Presents Preview: Representation in Radiology - Our Diverse Future](#)

Radiology practices continue to recognize the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion in medicine, but recruiting a diverse physician workforce can be a challenge—particularly as Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) medical students often choose other specialties.

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Dr. Andrea Birch

We recently spoke with Dr. Andrea Birch ([@ABirch0741](#)) and Tina Chatterjee ([@tinachatterje3](#) | [LinkedIn](#)) on this topic as we prepare for our upcoming webinar “[RP Presents: Representation in Radiology - Our Diverse Future](#).” Dr. Birch, the webinar’s moderator, is a diagnostic radiologist and Professor of Clinical Radiology and the Radiological Sciences at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, and she serves as Director of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion for Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Tina is a medical student at Meharry Medical College with a strong interest in radiology, and she currently serves as the President of the Radiology Interest Group at Meharry Medical College, co-leads the Annual American College of Radiology (ACR) Medical Student Symposium and serves as a PIER Scholar for the ACR. Tina will be a panelist at the webinar.



Tina Chatterjee

Q: What interested you initially in radiology?

Dr. Birch: Radiology brought the patient to life for me – imaging coupled with clinical context to provide answers and information that sometimes aren’t thought of first and that often make an immediate impact on the patient’s care and outcome. I observed an obstetrical ultrasound and discovered how radiologists interact with patients with compassion, I was hooked.

Tina: My interest in radiology was sparked by my father. He practiced as a diagnostic radiologist in India before our family immigrated to Canada. He was unable to practice in Canada as a radiologist, and due to family responsibilities, he did not repeat the entire medical school and residency journey. Instead, he did complete his ARDMS certification and started working as a diagnostic medical sonographer. Growing up, my dad noticed my interest in the sciences, and he shared his stories of the subjects he studied in school – how he made it into medical school in India and how he discovered that radiology was his passion. To this day, he speaks of how essential radiology is to the field of medicine and the immense potential it has to take healthcare to new heights with emerging technology. His strong passion for radiology increased my desire to research more about the field and learn what the role of a radiologist is in medicine. The more I learn about it, the more my interest grows.

Q: From your perspective, why is it important to recruit more BIPOC medical students to the radiology specialty?

Dr. Birch: Recruiting BIPOC medical students ensures that our profession will be able to meet the demands of caring for an increasingly diverse population and improve health outcomes for all patients.

Tina: Radiology is integral to medicine. With more people of various backgrounds and cultures entering the country, the population demographics will continue to change and diversify. It is essential to recruit providers who will be able to understand the patients of this changing population, connect with them in several ways to help facilitate and strengthen the doctor-patient relationship and provide the best care to them.

Q: Dr. Birch, based on your career and experience, what would you say to a student considering the specialty?

Dr. Birch: Radiology is more than imaging and new technology. Radiologists have the opportunity to see patients, listen to their stories, examine and treat them and make recommendations that influence their health outcomes. We add value to a patient's health experience. Additionally, we are in a unique position to address healthcare disparities, climate change and other concerns that impact our society.

Q: Tina, you are a medical student pursuing radiology now. How would you describe your experience so far?

Tina: My experience so far has been great. I came into medical school with the desire to learn more about radiology and work as a radiologist in future. I'm so happy to say that I've had the opportunity to meet many amazing leaders in the field who are not only passionate about radiology but are encouraging and welcoming, too. I was honored to be an ACR PIER scholar in the summer of 2020, where I learned of the numerous subspecialties within radiology I never knew existed. I met many diagnostic and interventional radiologists, learned about them, their work and also worked with them

on a few projects. After that summer, I took every opportunity I saw to explore radiology and share my experiences with my medical student colleagues. I became a part of our radiology interest group at Meharry and organized talks with pre-medical classes in local universities across the state of Tennessee to share cases and answer questions about medical school and radiology. I also started a mentorship program in collaboration with radiology interest groups at other Tennessee medical schools to mentor several minority pre-medical students, help them in their journey to medical school and teach them a little bit about radiology. I also became a part of the Medical Student Subcommittee of the ACR where I co-led the inaugural ACR Medical Student Symposium in January 2021, which was a huge success and I am excited to co-lead it again for the next year!

Want to learn more?

If you are interested in learning about how radiology leaders seek to transform the specialty's workforce for the next generation, join us Tuesday, November 16, at 7 p.m. ET | 6 p.m. CT | 5 p.m. MT | 4 p.m. PT for the webinar "RP Presents: Representation in Radiology – Our Diverse Future." During this timely conversation, our expert panelists will discuss their personal paths that led to radiology and offer important insights for rising physicians to consider when choosing a specialty. The panel discussion will include a Q&A session. [Register now.](#)

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