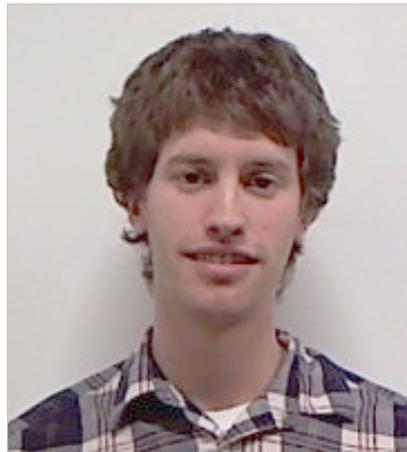


## Two NYCPM Students Identify Potentially Life-Threatening Condition and Take Action

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Barbara Resseque, DPM ('80), Professor of Pediatrics at NYCPM, relates this story of students who most likely saved a life in FCNY last spring:

Kudos to students **Lauren Murphey** and **Brian Wolff** (both Class of 2019), for their prompt diagnosis of a patient with a potentially life-threatening condition. On May 15, 2018, a 38-year-old male presented to the Foot Center of New York with a chief complaint of pain in his left leg. The pain had started three days earlier. He stated that he had no leg pain when sitting but had terrible pain when walking. The patient stated that he could not put his heel on the ground when walking because the pain was so severe.

History reveals that two weeks earlier, he had flown to Mexico and then taken a five-hour bus ride. A few days later he made the same bus and airplane trip back to New York. When the students asked if the patient had any chest pain or shortness of breath, he admitted that two days earlier he started to have left-sided chest pain upon inspiration and shortness of breath when laying down. The previous night he could not sleep well because of the chest and calf pain and shortness of breath.

Physical examination revealed acute pain upon palpation of the proximal left calf. Dorsiflexion of the ankle with the knee extended also elicited pain. The painful area of the calf felt firm but it was not warm or swollen. When the patient inhaled deeply, he pointed to the left side of the thorax as the site of pain. The students tentatively diagnosed possible venous thromboembolism (deep vein thrombosis of the left calf with complication of pulmonary embolism). The students presented their findings to Dr. Resseque and the patient was

## **Two NYCPM Students Identify Potentially Life-Threatening Condition and Take Action (continued)**

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quickly sent to the Mt. Sinai Hospital Emergency Department. Suspected pulmonary embolism is a matter of clinical urgency due to its high rate of mortality and morbidity. The patient underwent blood work up, radiographs, ultrasonography of the left calf, and CT pulmonary angiography.

The hospital concurred with our suspicions. The CT scan revealed two emboli of the left lung and the ultrasound revealed a deep vein thrombosis of the left calf. The patient was promptly treated with anticoagulation therapy. The hospital also recommended follow up with a cardiologist. The thorough work up by Lauren and Brian led to a prompt diagnosis and successful outcome in a potentially life threatening condition. Congratulations to both students!