Family Medicine Moments
February 8, 2024

Introduction: As we reflect on Black History Month, honoring the contributions, triumphs, and struggles of African Americans throughout our history, this is a timely submission.

Ashley Street and Daniel Mbssa, who are both starting medical school in the fall (congratulations!), are participating in the Scribe Fellowship/PRISM’s academic enrichment sessions coordinated by Linda Cragin and Dr. Mariann Manno. During a recent session on Reflective Medicine with Dr. Bronwyn Cooper, they all discussed Maya Angelo’s poem, Still I Rise. Daniel and Ashley share what this poem means to them.

On a personal note, my wife and I saw Maya Angelou speak when we were in our informative years and were so moved, we gave our youngest daughter her name as a middle name. Her words are a powerful reminder of what many endure and overcome. The words below are inspiring as the next generation learns from Maya’s message and prepares for their own path forward. Our future is bright with physicians like them – we wish them well.

What Still I Rise Means to Me

By Ashley Street and Daniel Mbssa

To rise means to overcome. As an immigrant you're already behind the starting line.
To rise means to overcome the hurdles of gender, race, and SES. To be considered a respected peer.
To rise means making your own progress whoever you define moving forward.
To me rise means achieving more than the generation before me and moving beyond stereotypes.
  • Ashley Street, Scribe Fellow, Hahnemann Family Health Center

To rise is to have hope
and believe in a better tomorrow.
I rise when I treat challenges and failures as opportunities for growth.
I rise when I stand up for myself and others or go after my dreams despite my circumstances or what I don't have.
To rise is to live free.
  • Daniel Mbusa, Clinical Research Coordinator II, Kapoor & McManus labs