

Dr. Valentina Marginean, M.D. '16 Young Alumni Award

The Ohio Wesleyan Alumni Association Board of Directors proudly presents **Valentina Marginean '16** with the Young Alumni Award in celebration of her extraordinary achievements in medical research, clinical advocacy, and humanitarian service.

Valentina built her foundation at Ohio Wesleyan as a pre-professional zoology major with minors in chemistry and sociology. During her time at OWU, she secured a Theory-to-Practice grant to investigate structural violence in Haiti. This early exposure to the systemic barriers of the Haitian public health system directly informs her current work. The same critical lens she applied to international health disparities now drives her advocacy for marginalized populations in the United States. By integrating her nursing background with her medical training, she translates her research on structural violence into a clinical practice dedicated to health equity and addiction care. Today, she shares her knowledge with OWU students as a career volunteer.

A commitment to marginalized populations defines her professional career. She directed Operation Smile surgical programs in Malawi, Brazil, India, and Madagascar, managing care for over 1,000 patients. Valentina also leads research on the cardiovascular risk in midlife Latinas and post-traumatic stress recovery.

Valentina is an active leader in the field of harm reduction. She directed the Student Health Action Coalition's Harm Reduction division. She currently provides critical education and care through the eKim Syringe Exchange. Her expertise in addiction medicine earned her the prestigious Scaife Fellowship and the ECU Pirate Service Award. A prolific researcher, Valentina contributes extensively to medical literature, publishing in journals such as *BMC Women's Health* and the *Journal of Nursing Scholarship* on the intersections of acculturation, substance use, and maternal health.

Valentina balances her academic and clinical rigor with a passion for the outdoors. She often plays rugby, rock climbs, or manages her farm in North Carolina. Driven by the conviction that medical excellence is inseparable from

social justice, Valentina focuses her advocacy on maternal health and the unique challenges facing immigrant communities.