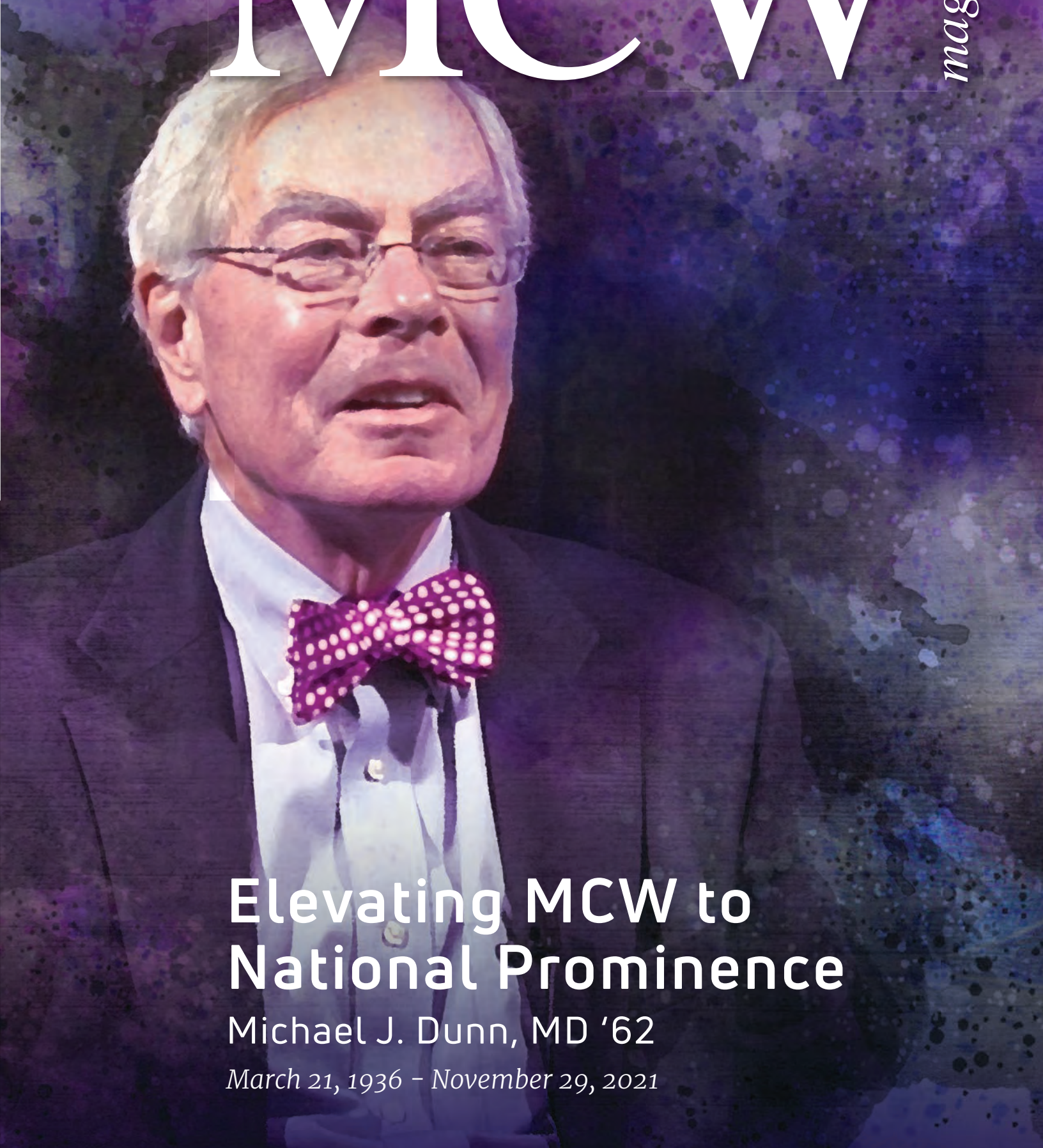




knowledge changing life

SPRING 2022

# MCW *magazine*



## Elevating MCW to National Prominence

Michael J. Dunn, MD '62

*March 21, 1936 - November 29, 2021*

# MCW

magazine

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**LEADERSHIP MESSAGE**

## Honoring Two MCW Deans

In this issue of *MCW Magazine*, we are pleased to recognize the outstanding contributions to the Medical College of Wisconsin by two long-serving deans of the School of Medicine: Michael J. Dunn, MD '62; and Joseph E. Kerschner, MD '90, FEL '98.

Dr. Dunn, MCW's executive vice president and dean of the school of medicine emeritus, passed away on November 29, 2021, at the age of 85. Dr. Dunn led MCW's medical education, research, patient care and community engagement programs from 1995 to 2008 and is credited with guiding MCW's emergence as one of the nation's premier medical schools and prestigious academic medical centers. We pay tribute to Dr. Dunn's life and legacy in the cover story on pages 16–21, including excerpts from his interviews and speeches, as well as reminiscences from colleagues and friends.

Dr. Kerschner, MCW's current provost and executive vice president, and The Julia A. Uihlein, MA, Dean of the School of Medicine, recently completed his first decade in this critical leadership role. We celebrate this meaningful achievement in the story on pages 12–13, which includes a question-and-answer session with Dr. Kerschner and a timeline of milestone events at MCW during his tenure.

Last month, following almost two full years of remote work for many members of the MCW community in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, our three campuses began to reopen more fully. I speak for all of our executive leaders in expressing our pleasure in seeing colleagues and learners in person once again!

For the past two years we have delayed in-person observances of milestone events that are meaningful to our students, alumni, faculty and staff, and believe it is important now to resume some semblance of normal celebration of these significant occasions. We returned to in-person activities at 50 percent (through April 30) and will move to 100 percent capacity as of May 1 – although it is likely that we still will require masking and other mitigation measures.

To that end, I am pleased to welcome back to Milwaukee our alumni who are celebrating milestone reunions in May and June (the 50-year Classes of 1970, 1971 and 1972, and the classes who would have celebrated in 2020 and 2021). We also expect to host the 2022 Alumni Weekend for classes with reunions this year in September. *Please see the sidebar on page 6 for more information on alumni reunions.*

Thank you again to the thousands of MCW alumni around the globe who continue to protect the health and safety of our patients, families, loved ones and communities. ■

**John R. Raymond, Sr., MD**  
 President and CEO

“We are pleased to recognize the outstanding contributions of two long-serving deans of the MCW School of Medicine.”



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MCW IS COMMITTED TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION INCLUDING COMPLIANCE WITH TITLE IX. PLEASE SEE [MCW.EDU/TITLEIX](http://MCW.EDU/TITLEIX) FOR MORE INFORMATION.

FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHERS: Greg Calhoun; James Peck, Michelle Schaefer, David Szymanski

**ON THE COVER:** Michael J. Dunn, MD '62, MCW's executive vice president and dean of the school of medicine emeritus, died on November 29, 2021, at the age of 85. Dr. Dunn led MCW's medical education, research, patient care and community engagement programs from 1995 to 2008 and is credited with guiding MCW's emergence as one of the nation's premier medical schools and prestigious academic medical centers.

# STAT REPORT



## Planning Continues for a New School of Medicine Curriculum

A major milestone was achieved in the planning of MCW's new School of Medicine curriculum, as the Curriculum Evaluation Committee recently approved the initial plan of the Curriculum Innovation proposal.

The current curriculum follows the traditional two years of biomedical science and two years of clinical medicine, and is siloed in its approach. The new approach will be more meaningfully integrated, give students increased flexibility and ensure that students are developing the competencies needed for a successful transition to residency. The new curriculum will allow for longitudinal relationships between faculty and students through

inquiry-based cases and coaching, and will retain some components of our current curriculum including hands-on labs such as anatomy and the Pathways program.

The new curriculum will provide students with opportunities to develop skills to pursue specific career goals. To support student excellence in the evolving healthcare environment, it is important that MCW engages in continuous improvement to ensure delivery of high-quality curricular experiences that support student success in graduate medical training.

The five principles for MCW's curriculum redesign include:

- ▶ Integration of foundational and clinical science learning throughout all years of the curriculum.
  - ▶ A systematic approach and focus on assessment that drives learning and assures that students achieve desired competencies.
  - ▶ Individualized approaches to learning that are ultimately tailored to student interest and career goals.
  - ▶ A student-centered, inclusive culture with a focus on wellness.
  - ▶ An evidence-based instructional approach that is inquiry-driven and utilizes active learning.
- The new curriculum is expected to launch with the matriculating students in August 2023. ■

## Dr. Kerschner and Research Team Receive Patent for Novel Technology to Treat Otitis Media

Joseph Kerschner, MD '90, FEL '98, provost and executive vice president, The Julia A. Uihlein, MA, Dean of the School of Medicine, and professor of otolaryngology and communication sciences and microbiology & immunology, and Amit Joshi, PhD, MCW associate professor of biomedical engineering and vice chair for research and clinical affairs in the department of biomedical engineering, have received a US patent for a novel technology they developed that enables noninvasive, local drug delivery across the tympanic membrane to treat otitis media. Dr. Kerschner is the first dean of the MCW School of Medicine to receive a patent.

The work leading to this patent highlights the value of interdisciplinary research, as basic medical research, engineering research and clinical research all contributed to the development of this novel technology.

Otitis media is a leading cause of infections requiring children to be



treated with antibiotics. It also is the most common cause of hearing loss in children in the US. Current otitis media treatment options are limited because oral administration of antibiotics results in inefficient delivery to the middle ear, many unwanted side effects and, often,

ineffective treatment of the infection.

The new technology overcomes these problems by allowing medication to easily cross the tympanic membrane, enabling a simple route of administration and elimination of the systemic side effects of antibiotics. ■

## MCW Investigative Teams Receive Coveted Research Awards

Two MCW investigative teams have received 2021 Falk Medical Research Trust Catalyst Awards. These highly competitive grants seek to fund high-risk, high-reward translational research in therapeutics for disease. Only a select list of institutions are permitted to submit up to two nominations for the Catalyst Award. Successful Catalyst awardees can later



Dr. Quinn Hogan



Dr. Nikki Johnston



Dr. Hongwei Yu

pursue the Falk Transformational Award – a \$1,000,000 grant for premier translational investigators to continue their breakthrough research.

In 2021, MCW put forth two advanced projects: *Aerosolized HIV Inhibitors for the Treatment of Laryngopharyngeal Reflux (LPR)*, under Nikki Johnston, PhD, and *A Novel Analgesic Approach for Chronic Pain: Small Peptide Inhibition of Nav1.7 in Anatomically Targeted Sensory Neurons*, under Hongwei Yu, MD, and Quinn Hogan, MD. The teams were notified in early November that their highly innovative projects would each be awarded a Catalyst grant of up to \$300,000 to support the planning and development of projects, teams, tools, techniques and management infrastructure necessary to lay the foundation for a subsequent Transformational Award proposal. ■

# NEWS

## FOR ALUMNI

The year 2022 began with a stark reminder that we are still navigating an unprecedented global pandemic. Our MCW alumni continue on the front lines of the COVID-19 crisis, helping those most in need. Please know your alumni community stands with you – confident that your MCW training prepared you to lead compassionately and effectively.

“This institution remains the foundation upon which we have built our careers...”

George M. Lange, MD '75



MCW continues to elevate its role as a strong voice of trustworthy, accurate health and science information, led by Dr. John Raymond and many other MCW faculty who are trusted experts. They all are helping to guide fellow leaders and our entire community through the unpredictable realities of the pandemic.

This institution remains the foundation upon which we have built our careers, and the MCW/Marquette Medical Alumni Association works to ensure that MCW continues as a trusted collaborator, keeping over 19,000 alumni connected to the school, each other and the students who will follow as future physicians, scientists, pharmacists and healthcare providers. I hope you visit the alumni website often to learn more.

Alumni are making a difference for our learners – from philanthropic initiatives to providing meaningful and practical career guidance through our Mentor Connections on [mcwengage.com](http://mcwengage.com).

In my President's Message in MCW's 2021 Annual Report, I invited you all to register on ENGAGE. That challenge continues, as do my posts, most recently about a fantastic presentation I was able to participate in. **In each issue of**

the Alumni E-Newsletter, you can discover opportunities for lifelong learning. Throughout my career, I have been a strong advocate for Advance Directives, so in honor of National Healthcare Decisions Day, celebrated each April 16, you will see another one of my posts on ENGAGE. I would like to encourage all to include discussions about plans for care in case of medical emergency or serious illness as a part of your routine patient care.

I am thrilled to share **REUNIONS ARE BACK in 2022!** This spring, during Commencement (May 20-21), we have three classes celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> reunions: 1970, 1971 and 1972. Two were postponed, but milestones are important to celebrate, even if belated. We also will be hosting a Catch-Up Reunion for the classes who would have celebrated in 2020 and 2021 (June 10-11), and, finally, the 2022 Alumni Weekend for the classes with reunions this year (Sept 9-10). We look forward to bringing so many MCW alumni back to the Milwaukee campus this year. For more information, see [www.mcw.edu/alumni](http://www.mcw.edu/alumni).

Your partnership in the work we do is deeply appreciated! ■

### UPCOMING ALUMNI EVENTS

#### 50-Year Reunions and Golden Anniversary

Friday, May 20 and Saturday, May 21, 2022

Celebrating the Medical School Classes of 1970, 1971 and 1972

#### Catch-Up Reunions 2022

Friday, June 10 and Saturday, June 11, 2022

Celebrating the Medical School Classes of 2010, 2011, 2005, 2006, 2000, 2001, 1995, 1996, 1990, 1991, 1985, 1986, 1980, 1981, 1975, 1976, 1965, 1966, 1960, 1961

#### Alumni Weekend 2022

Friday, September 9 and Saturday, September 10, 2022

Celebrating the Medical School Classes of 2012, 2007, 2002, 1997, 1992, 1987, 1982, 1977, 1967, 1962

# From “No Way” to Leading the Way

*Alumna Credits MCW with Changing the Course of her Professional Life*

Be-coming an OB/GYN was the last thing on the mind of Mia Cowan, MD '02, GME '06, MBA, when she matriculated at MCW – yet this award-winning author, highly experienced physician and specialist in gynecology, wellness, weight management and intimacy credits the institution with changing the course of her professional life in a matter of days.

“When I entered medical school, I was 100 percent sure about two things: I was definitely not going to be an OB/GYN, and I was definitely not going to be a psychiatrist. But the very first day I went on rotation, I knew that I was meant to be an OB/GYN because I liked the diversity that the field offered: seeing pregnant and non-pregnant women, being able to operate, delivering babies – while still doing prevention and wellness,” Dr. Cowan shares.

Born and raised in Birmingham, Alabama, Dr. Cowan was drawn to math and science as a young girl. Her mother, a nurse, encouraged her daughter’s interest in these two fields and suggested that she become a doctor. “I liked math and science, I liked people and I liked solving problems, so it was a perfect option for me,” Dr. Cowan recalls.

Dr. Cowan remained at MCW for her residency and believes it offered her many opportunities that she would not have had if she had trained elsewhere. “Training at Froedtert and the outlying hospitals provided me with significant experience in surgery and within the medical field. When I moved back home and started in practice, I was at a huge advantage from the education and training I received at MCW.”



*Dr. Mia Cowan, 2002*

Dr. Cowan returned to Birmingham after residency and worked as an OB/GYN for four years at Cooper Green Mercy Hospital. Concurrently, in 2008, she began a Physician Executive MBA Program to prepare her to practice on her own.

In 2010, Dr. Cowan opened MiBella Wellness Center, which now includes a team of experts in women’s and men’s health and wellness who provide compassionate patient care with traditional and holistic treatment options. Through its customized innovative approach and total wellness clinical programs, the center’s goal is to ensure that its patients “Live Well. Age Well. Experience Everlasting Intimacy.”

“What satisfies me most about having my own business is being able to give everyone top-notch care. I have a very



diverse group of patients – female, male, white, black, brown, seniors and LGBTQ. I am most proud of the services I offer in hormone balance and total wellness,” Dr. Cowan shares.

Dr. Cowan has a particular affinity for Milwaukee – since it was there that she met Joseph W. Brown, Jr., whom she married in her third year of residency. He recently became CEO of the center after a career as a home inspector. They have two children, Marley CowanBrown, 13, and Jamil Brown, 29.

In 2017, Dr. Cowan published *A Woman’s Guide to Total Wellness*, in which she breaks down common health challenges. She and Brown recently authored *Everlasting Intimacy: Til Death Do Us Part*, which helps the reader maintain a strong marriage through hard work, effective communication, everlasting intimacy and total wellness.

“I’ve changed a lot of women’s lives by listening to them,” Dr. Cowan says. Thankfully for them, Dr. Cowan has listened to her own heart to follow a unique path as a beloved practitioner and wellness champion. ■ – SARA L. WILKINS

# Providing a Heightened Level of More Meaningful Quality Care

School of Pharmacy inaugural class alumnus, Gary Karagodsky, PharmD '20, knew he wanted to pursue a career in ambulatory pharmacy after his education at MCW. His pursuits have led him to practice in both rural and urban underserved areas.

“There are a lot of unique challenges that arise from providing care within a rural population, much of which is commonly linked to barriers to access for needed services and resources. As I am now more immersed within an urban setting, the more I find how this barrier of access to needed services and resources is unfortunately similar across healthcare landscapes,” shares Dr. Karagodsky.

After receiving his PharmD degree, Dr. Karagodsky completed a post-graduate year one (PGY-1) residency in ambulatory care at the Marshfield (Wis.) Medical Center, serving a rural population. He is now doing a post-graduate year two (PGY-2) residency in ambulatory care and academia at Oregon State University and Oregon Health and Science University. He also practices at a primary care family health center in southeast Portland which caters largely to the underserved population in the area.

“At MCW, it was instilled that patients were consistently diverse – from their backgrounds and values to their mosaic of

clinical problems – and to how their own environment plays a role in their health. This mantra has helped me immensely to provide more patient-centered care,” says Dr. Karagodsky.

Oregon was an early adopter of legislation that recognizes pharmacists as non-physician providers and permits them to receive reimbursement for patient care services. Wisconsin passed similar legislation last year (2021 Wisconsin Act 98), which requires the Wisconsin Medicaid program to cover clinical services provided by a pharmacist, including medication administration, comprehensive medication management, smoking cessation services and the ability to order and interpret lab tests.

“I was extremely excited for Wisconsin when I saw that this legislation had passed, as I have seen the benefits of providing a heightened level of more meaningful, quality care,” Dr. Karagodsky adds. “This will better allow our profession to have the freedom to be more heavily relied upon by our colleagues, which I know Wisconsin pharmacists are more than ready for.”

Jake Dyer, PharmD '20, agrees. “The next year will likely carry drastic changes for pharmacist roles, expanding both the job market and providing access to care for vulnerable populations,” he says. Dr. Dyer is completing the MCW

Academic Fellowship in Primary Care and currently practices at The Bread of Healing Clinic in Milwaukee, a neighborhood-based clinic for individuals with financial or other barriers to quality healthcare. “Especially in rural areas, the utilization of pharmacists will play a key role in tackling healthcare access problems for vulnerable populations. Tackling the access and education problems will probably be the first steps toward pharmacists providing health equity.”

Faculty in the School of Pharmacy, including Founding Dean George E. MacKinnon III, PhD, MS, RPh, advocated for passage of the legislation. “Two out of three Wisconsin counties are considered medically underserved – the majority of which are within the state’s extreme urban and rural populations,” he says. “Roughly 90 percent of Americans live within five miles of a pharmacy. Pharmacists are well-positioned to expand access to care for patients.” ■ – MICHELLE SCHAEFER



While a pharmacy student at MCW, Dr. Karagodsky (at right) participated in numerous interprofessional education activities with MCW medical students.



# Overcoming Dyslexia in Med School

Sarah Benett, a Bay Area native now studying medicine at MCW, has always been a top-tier student. But for some reason, she says, she always struggled on tests.

“In elementary school, the PSATs, the SATs, all of that,” Benett recalls. “I always thought I was just a nervous test taker.”

Feeling like her test scores were lower than she wanted them to be, she compensated by being active in extra-curricular activities: the student council, soccer at Johns Hopkins University, research projects and more.

“It wasn’t necessarily to offset my test scores, but to show that I’m good with my clinical skills and good with my community,” Benett says.

Finally, it was time to take her Medical College Admission Test, referred to by students as the MCAT. After three tries, she settled for a final score that she admits she wanted to be higher. While Benett’s MCAT score and other accomplishments were more than enough to gain her a spot at MCW, she couldn’t shake a lingering doubt about whether she belonged where she was.

As she navigated MCW, Benett did well in her classes but still struggled with the occasional test, including her first set of board exams, Step 1. She thought her struggles on that test were the result of anxiety from COVID-19 and the civil unrest that was shaking the nation, which she shared with her therapist.

Her therapist recommended neuropsychology testing, something Benett hadn’t considered before.

Nine hours of testing later, the examinations revealed something that helped Benett, who was 27 at the time, finally make sense of her lifelong struggle with tests. She was dyslexic, a disorder that involves difficulty learning to read or interpret words, letters and other symbols, but does not affect your intelligence.

“I read a question and my brain processes it in a different way, so I answer the wrong question,” Benett explains. “It was a life-altering moment, but in a good way.”

It also helped her friends she often studied with and even her parents understand her better.

“My friends told me that it makes so much sense, and it was a big ‘aha’ moment for my parents,” Benett shares.

But learning she was dyslexic was one step. Now Benett needed to figure out what to do about it.

“I was still trying to process what this meant and what I should do now,” she shares. “I was questioning everything.”

Benett sought out counselors who had experience working with adults with dyslexia as well as a few other physicians who have it. They showed her techniques that worked for them, such as changing fonts on computers and where to

find software that reads text to you, and directed her to other helpful resources.

Much of what she did then was trial and error, Benett admits, but it did help her develop a strategy of how to approach questions and test-taking. She asked for and received accommodations when possible, such as additional test time. Her confidence level soared, and her test scores drastically improved between her first and second set of board exams.

In addition to testing, the techniques she learned after being diagnosed have helped Benett, now a fourth-year student, during her rotations in the pediatric emergency department at Children’s Wisconsin.

“If anything, it gives me more of an understanding and more context into how to deliver health information,” Benett shares. “The biggest role of being a pediatrician is the health education component, so knowing different ways I can describe or explain health information helps people be fully aware of what’s going on and feel confident in that information.”

As Benett continues her journey toward becoming a physician – she is applying into a pediatric residency – she hopes that universities create more resources to help students navigate learning challenges.

“This is still a problem, and there are a lot of medical students who deal with learning disabilities, whether that’s dyslexia or ADHD, or anything else,” she says. “Just be more cognizant that it might be helpful to have people in positions that know the system or know more about it so they can really help us.”

Benett also hopes to serve as a role model for children who face challenges like hers: “I want to remind them that if they’re not succeeding or they feel like they’re not neurotypical or something, it’s normal and it’s OK.” ■

– MCW MAGAZINE STAFF



*Sarah Benett, a fourth-year medical student at MCW, is living with and succeeding with dyslexia.*

# Master of Public Health Alumnus Returns to Pursue Doctoral Degree

**M**axwell Roy, MPH '17, fondly remembers beginning his Master of Public Health (MPH) program at MCW in 2014. It happened to be the exact same day he started working with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Washington County (Wis.). Over the next several years, Roy would contribute unique and innovative ideas to the clubs' outcome-driven programming focused on healthy lifestyles, academic success and character-building. "Whether it be public health management or administration concepts, or program development concepts, ideas for funding and fundraising, and so on, I was able to take my learning experiences and apply it all to my work," he shares.

When it came time for Roy to identify a field placement – which is the culminating experience of the MPH program – he found himself working with strategists from the Washington Ozaukee Health Department to create a county-wide mental health awareness program. "The idea was to provide better resources and access to education and services in the hope that we would see a reduction in the negative outcomes associated with mental health," he says.

Roy used the model he built from his field placement to create the Healthy Minds & Body Initiative, which supports youth involved with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Washington County to grow into confident adults who can be leaders and positively contribute to their community. The initiative received recognition and funding by Froedtert West Bend Hospital and was recognized as the "2021 Program of the Year" by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Wisconsin state alliance.



*Dr. David Nelson continues to serve as a mentor to Maxwell Roy.*

Roy attributes much of his success during and since his MPH program to its faculty and staff, particularly David Nelson, PhD, MCW associate professor of family and community medicine, who continued to serve as a mentor following Roy's graduation. "Dr. Nelson fueled my focus on how to incorporate



*Maxwell Roy is the director of operations at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Washington County, Wis. He currently is pursuing a doctor of public health degree at MCW.*

public health into my work," Roy notes. It was this relationship that led Roy back to MCW in 2021 – this time as part of the Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) program's inaugural cohort of students.

MCW's accredited, online DrPH program consists of 46 credits including 10 dissertation credits. The curriculum is delivered using a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities including three summer visits to campus. Students participate in a cohort model, and the program is designed to be completed in three years.

Roy now seeks to better understand how to provide leadership within public health practice, something he feels especially passionate about since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. "I saw that if I didn't provide the proper leadership for my team during this time, we wouldn't be able to carry out our mission." Similar to the MPH program, Roy has found the DrPH program to be flexible, focused and engaging. "I feel invigorated, I feel excited and I've been really happy with it so far," Roy remarks. ■

– ANTHONY J. PEREZ

# MCW Congratulates New Faculty Leaders



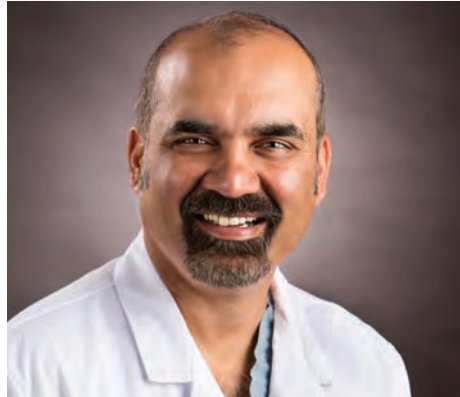
**Christine M. Everett, PhD, MPH, PA-C**

Founding Director, PA Program

**C**hristine M. Everett, PhD, MPH, PA-C, was appointed founding director of the MCW PA program, effective February 1, 2022. Dr. Everett also was named professor of medicine and inaugural chief of the division of PA studies in the MCW department of medicine.

MCW's new PA program will offer an interprofessional team approach that annually will prepare 25 students per class. The first class of students is expected to matriculate in July 2023.

Immediately prior to joining MCW, Dr. Everett served as director of research, division of physician assistant studies, department of family medicine and community health at the Duke University School of Medicine (DUSOM). Additionally, Dr. Everett was an associate professor in the department of family medicine and community health and the department of population health sciences at DUSOM. Dr. Everett was a clinical instructor and director of research in the PA program at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health from July 2011–2012. From 2007–2009, Dr. Everett worked clinically in emergency departments in rural Wisconsin. Before becoming a physician assistant, Dr. Everett worked in research at the National Institutes of Health and public health policy at the Food and Drug Administration. ■



**Shekar N. Kurpad, MD, PhD, GME '01**  
Founding Director, Neuroscience Institute

**S**hekar N. Kurpad, MD, PhD, GME '01, the Sanford J. Larson, MD, PhD, Professor and chair of neurosurgery at MCW, has been appointed as the founding director of the newly created joint MCW/Froedtert Health/Children's Wisconsin Neuroscience Institute, effective January 7, 2022. Dr. Kurpad also serves as co-director of the Center for Neurotrauma Research at MCW; medical director of the neurosciences service line at Froedtert Health; and clinical director of SpineCare.

Dr. Kurpad has served as chair of neurosurgery at MCW since March 31, 2017. He joined the faculty of MCW as assistant professor of neurosurgery in 2002. He was promoted to associate professor in 2007 and achieved the rank of professor with tenure in 2014. Dr. Kurpad served as acting chair of neurosurgery from September 2015–March 2016, and interim chair from March 2016–March 2017. Dr. Kurpad will continue to serve as chair of neurosurgery until he is succeeded by an interim chair.

The new Neuroscience Institute is a collaboration among MCW, Froedtert Health and Children's Wisconsin to harness the vast clinical expertise and world-renowned research talent in neurosciences, synergize advancements in treating disorders affecting the brain, spine, spinal cord and peripheral nervous system, and, importantly, further premier programs and discovery. ■



**Nita H. Salzman, MD, PhD**

Director of the Medical Scientist Training Program

**N**ita H. Salzman, MD, PhD, professor of pediatrics (gastroenterology) and microbiology & immunology at MCW, has been appointed as director of the Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP), effective January 1, 2022.

Dr. Salzman had served as an associate director of the MSTP since 2014, and also serves as director, Pediatric GI and Nutrition Laboratory, department of pediatrics (gastroenterology); founding director, Center for Microbiome Research; and co-leader, immunology, inflammation and infection research unit, Children's Research Institute, Children's Wisconsin. Dr. Salzman joined MCW in 2001 as assistant professor of pediatrics (gastroenterology), receiving a secondary appointment in the department of microbiology & immunology in 2004. In 2009, she was promoted to associate professor, achieved the rank of professor in 2014 and was awarded tenure in 2017.

Dr. Salzman's research interests include antimicrobial peptides and innate mucosal immunity, host-microbe interactions in the GI tract, and the role of the intestinal microbiota in health and disease.

The MSTP was established in 1983 with the mission to support medical and research training culminating in the receipt of both an MD and PhD degree. The program matriculates approximately eight students annually; its current community of 58 trainees come from 39 different undergraduate institutions across 20 states. ■

—SARA L. WILKINS

# Dr. Joseph Kerschner Reflects on 10

Joseph E. Kerschner, MD '90, FEL '98, was named the tenth dean of the Medical College of Wisconsin's School of Medicine, and executive vice president, in November 2011, following 11 months as interim dean. At the time of his interim appointment, Dr. Kerschner was CEO of Children's Specialty Group (a joint venture of MCW and what is now Children's Wisconsin). He assumed the additional role of provost in 2017 and in late 2020, was named The Julia A. Uihlein, MA, Dean of the School of Medicine.

Dr. Kerschner also is a professor in the departments of otolaryngology and communication sciences, and microbiology & immunology. He has held numerous leadership roles in organized medicine, including chair of the board of directors for the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), chair of the AAMC Council of Deans, president of the American Society of Pediatric Otolaryngology and president of the International Society for Otitis Media.

In honor of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dr. Kerschner's formal installation as dean on February 15, 2012, he sat down for a question-and-answer session with the executive editor of *MCW Magazine* to reflect on his past decade in this critical leadership role. The answers below were edited for length, but the full version can be found online at [www.mcw.edu/departments/mcw-magazine](http://www.mcw.edu/departments/mcw-magazine). The timeline below includes some of MCW's milestones achieved during Dr. Kerschner's tenure as dean.

## What are the most important lessons you have learned during your tenure as dean, School of Medicine (SOM)?

Know your values and leadership style and stay true to those principles – for me, that has included the 5Ps (PEOPLE, PROGRAMS, PLANNING, PRACTICE and PARTNERSHIPS), servant leadership and bringing superior effort every single day.

When I entered the Dean's Office, I was somewhat surprised to realize the level of infrastructure-building that was required for MCW to become a "modern" \$1 billion+ organization. As some examples, there was no central tracking system to allow leaders to follow their team's performance, and some units in the SOM did not provide annual reviews for staff and faculty to discuss their progress, accomplishments and goals. Given my belief that our PEOPLE are MCW's greatest asset, it was clear that we needed a significant cultural change. This

has required enormous effort, but we now invest in our PEOPLE and develop them in a much different way than a decade ago.

I also learned how some important things related to developing a sustained and successful future in the SOM. For our faculty leaders, this has meant breaking away from the traditional "one package per leader" that was meant to last them for their entire tenure as a leader at MCW and, instead, giving them an opportunity to reboot their investments every five years.

In addition, this has meant crafting an endowment to support our academic strategy. In the past 10 years, I have worked with faculty leaders, President Raymond, our trustees and finance team to create more than \$1.4 billion worth of endowments in the SOM. This has placed MCW as one of the best-endowed medical schools in the country.

## How do you feel your ongoing work as both a clinician and a researcher helps connect you to the faculty?

I believe it has been a critical part of my deanship that I have continued to balance all of my responsibilities as dean and still see patients and have an NIH-funded research laboratory. It's important that faculty and staff in the clinical and research missions recognize that the dean fully understands their work and does it along with them. I have been a funded investigator with peer-reviewed grants since I started at MCW as a faculty member. Maintaining my lab and securing more than \$15 million in research funding over my career has solidified that I completely understand their scientific world.



**NOV. 11, 2011**  
Dr. Kerschner appointed executive vice president and dean of the School of Medicine

**FEB. 15, 2012**  
Dr. Kerschner installed as dean of the School of Medicine and executive vice president



**JUNE 25, 2012**  
Board of Trustees authorizes MCW to develop community-based medical education programs in Green Bay and Central Wisconsin

**AUGUST 2012**  
School of Medicine launches the new Discovery Curriculum



**MAY 29, 2015**  
Board of Trustees approves the creation of a School of Pharmacy

**JULY 1, 2015**  
MCW-Green Bay matriculates inaugural class of 26 medical students

**JULY 5, 2016**  
MCW-Central Wisconsin matriculates inaugural class of 26 medical students



**JUNE 8, 2017**  
MCW creates the Robert D. and Patricia E. Kern Institute for the Transformation of Medical Education



**JUNE 23, 2017**  
Dr. Kerschner named MCW's first provost

# Years as Dean, School of Medicine

## What do you feel have been your greatest accomplishments as dean, SOM?

In general terms, much of what I am most proud of falls into the PEOPLE category:

Mentoring PEOPLE at MCW along all levels of their career continues to be a high priority for me. This includes pre- and postdoctoral students who are on their way to wonderful academic careers, junior faculty to become leaders at MCW and elsewhere, and senior faculty to become national leaders at MCW and elsewhere.

I have worked with many others to help MCW become a much more diverse organization. In the SOM, we have more than tripled the number of women leaders and have substantively increased the diversity of our leaders. The medical school class diversity has grown in so many ways.

By working with others, we developed psychiatry residencies in our regional campuses. Mental health issues are some of society's most significant issues, and access to professionals in many parts of Wisconsin was almost nonexistent. These new residencies will completely change the landscape for access in our state. We've increased the number of psychiatrists training in Wisconsin by 40 percent, and many of our providers are staying in areas of the state that are the most underserved.

## What do you feel have been your greatest challenges as dean, SOM?

Without question, my greatest challenge as dean has been leading in the SOM during

some real times of tragedy. First on this list (and related to the mental health comments above) occurred when there was a loss of a student to suicide. One positive outcome was elevating the conversation about these issues and substantive changes in the way in which we provide mental health services to our learners. There have been other losses of faculty and staff and also loved ones of faculty and staff. Each one of these stays with me, and all affected remain in my thoughts and prayers.

Second has been the COVID pandemic and the enormous strain and difficulty this has caused all at MCW and throughout the world.

## How do you feel your national leadership positions have benefited MCW?

When I took the dean's role, it was pretty common for people to get MCW confused with the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. That rarely happens anymore, and certainly not in the fashion that was previously common. In part, because of these national roles, virtually all medical school deans and leaders of our academic health systems know about MCW and what makes us unique. But also, importantly, these national leadership roles have allowed for the development of professional relationships and friendships with some of the most prominent leaders in academic medicine around the

country – enhancing the exchange of ideas and best practices and establishing collaborations at the national level.

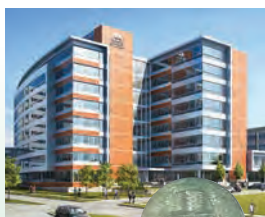
One truly critical example occurred during the pandemic involving federal CARES Act monies. Partly due to my work with the AAMC, MCW was able to elevate early on in the pandemic that medical schools or physician practices like we have at MCW were not being considered for support from these funds.

In working with the AAMC leadership, we were able to get MCW and similar institutions considered for significant support and receipt of CARES Act funds to help cover the losses sustained due to the pandemic's impact on our physicians' ability to treat patients.

## What would you like your legacy as dean, SOM, to be?

As I have mentioned above, the 5Ps have guided what I have done in the Dean's Office over the past decade, and by far, the most important is the PEOPLE aspect of this. I would hope that students, staff and faculty would say that Dean Kerschner cared deeply for the PEOPLE of MCW and worked as hard as possible to create avenues for the PEOPLE to reach the best version of themselves. ■

–SARA L. WILKINS



**AUG. 2017**  
School of Pharmacy matriculates inaugural class of 48 pharmacy students

**DEC. 2017**  
New Hub for Collaborative Medicine opens



**OCT. 2018**  
MCW establishes the Center for the Advancement of Women in Science and Medicine



**NOV. 2019**  
Dr. Kerschner becomes chair of the board of directors of the AAMC

**JUNE 2019**  
Board of Trustees approves 2020-2025 School of Medicine Research Strategic Plan

**NOV. 2020**  
Dr. Kerschner named The Julia A. Uihlein, MA, Dean of the School of Medicine

**APRIL 2021**  
New affiliation agreement among MCW, Children's Specialty Group and Children's Wisconsin approved



**JUNE 2021**  
LCME votes to continue full accreditation to MCW's medical education program

**DEC. 2021**  
Dr. Kerschner and research team receive patent for novel technology to treat otitis media

# MCW Responds to the Waukesha Holiday Parade Tragedy

On November 21, 2021, tragedy struck in Waukesha, Wisconsin. The city was holding its annual holiday parade, and a man in a red Ford Escape deliberately plowed through the parade route, initially killing five and injuring almost 50. Within an hour after the incident, far from the chaos playing out in that Milwaukee suburb, members of the MCW faculty who provide patient care at Children's Wisconsin (Children's) and Froedtert Hospital (Froedtert) jumped into action to make sure they could treat the injured and help a community begin to heal.

Both hospitals activated their respective trauma surge plans – something they train for regularly. The plans require additional staffing and provide protocols for how to evaluate and care for an abrupt surge in patient volumes while simultaneously prioritizing needed resources. Despite the event happening on a Sunday afternoon, additional staffing came together quickly.

“Nurses, therapists, techs, support staff and doctors came in because they felt they were needed. When I called people, all I heard was, ‘I’m on my way,’” says Michael Meyer, MD, FEL ’01, MCW professor of pediatrics and chief of pediatric critical care and medical director of the Children’s intensive care unit. “Even people who were out of town asked if they should return to relieve their colleagues the next day. Some came back, and we utilized them. People put aside their shock and anger over the incident and asked how they could help the community.”

Dr. Meyer was referring specifically to the individuals who came to the hospital to help in the ICU, but he could have been referring to any of the patient care areas. Throughout Children’s, the feeling



*Dr. Michael Meyer says that nurses, therapists, techs, support staff and doctors all responded to the emergency call to treat children injured during the Waukesha holiday parade. He adds that these individuals put aside their shock and anger over the incident and asked how they could help the community.*

Photo courtesy of WISN 12 News

was the same – they had never seen so many faculty, advanced practice providers, trainees and staff show up so quickly to care for patients, sometimes even individuals who hadn’t been asked. To help their colleagues. To contribute.

And it was needed. Children’s emergency department received 18 patients that Sunday night, all between the ages of 3 and 16 – including three sets of siblings. Injuries ranged from facial abrasions to broken bones to serious head injuries. Six patients went into surgery the same night and two others the next day. Those first six required the assistance of 62 staff members during 15 hours of combined surgical time.

Some of the patients came directly to Children’s, either brought by their families or by ambulance. Others came via ambulance from community hospitals, having been initially triaged, assessed and stabilized there. Depending on their injuries, some patients underwent IVs, blood transfusions, immobilization,

imaging – or, if a head injury, CT scans – before being transported to Children’s.

“The assessments and stabilization the patients received by the first responders and the teams at community hospitals helped immensely,” says Amy Drendel, DO, FEL ’05, MS ’05, professor of pediatrics (emergency medicine) and medical director of the Children’s emergency department and Level 1 Trauma Center. “We were much better prepared before the patients arrived, which helped us coordinate care to provide the best possible outcomes. This enabled us to prepare each room and team for a specific patient need.”

With so many patients coming in at once, there were many details to which faculty and staff needed to lend their expertise, such as initial patient evaluation and prioritization and patient flow among the emergency department, the operating room and the ICU.

And then there was reuniting families with their children. Some parents were

unsure if their child was at Children's – or even alive. Some knew their child was at the hospital but not sure where. Children's social workers helped reunite families with their children.

The morning after the incident, MCW pediatric psychologists began working with the social workers and chaplains to address the emotional and mental health needs of the patients and their families. Because of the nature of the tragedy, they assigned one psychologist to each patient/family.

Jacquelyn Smith, PhD, MCW assistant professor of pediatrics (psychology and developmental medicine), works with a team of pediatric psychologists who provide inpatient emotional and mental healthcare to patients and their families. She says that the team handled 24 consults the day after the incident, most of which were parade-related.

"People respond in different ways after an event like this," Dr. Smith shares. "They can be anxious, unable to concentrate or may relive the experience. One of our goals is to provide education about trauma and give them the tools to reduce the likelihood of developing long-term symptoms of traumatic stress. It's important for people to understand that healing is possible even in the wake of such tragedy, but also that many different emotional responses are common after a traumatic incident."

Dr. Smith adds that her team partnered with Terri deRoon-Cassini, PhD, MS, MCW associate professor of surgery

(trauma and critical care), and her team to provide counseling to adult family members at Froedtert if needed.

Children's also set up a help line for anyone in the community who might have been struggling mentally or emotionally because of the parade tragedy. Staffed by psychologists, the line received around 100 calls. Additionally, a Children's bereavement counselor visited Waukesha schools in the following days to provide counseling where needed.

"I am proud of our organized response. Each family received medical and behavioral health support, the community could connect through a help line and adults could get the help they needed as well," remarks Dr. Smith. "Everyone in the system takes the approach of treating patients and their families like they would want to be treated if the tables were turned."

The way the teams responded was noticed. "We have never seen that magnitude of need in such a short period of time. Considering the devastation that took place, there was no chaos in our facilities. It was orderly," says Michael Gutzeit, MD, GME '88, chief medical officer at Children's. "Our teams responded with their hearts and heads in a caring and compassionate way to address the needs of the patients and their families, as well as the community's physical, mental and emotional needs. I have never been more proud of our team. There was collaboration, innovation, integrity and purpose."

Jason A. Jarzembowski, MD '02, PhD, chief executive officer for Children's Specialty Group, MCW senior associate dean for clinical affairs – pediatric practice and professor of pathology, shares similar accolades. "Our response to traumas are organized and scripted. Everyone knows what to do and what is going on," he shares. "I am proud of the people involved and amazed by their dedication and the focus they had to take care of these kids and work together as a team."

Jose Salazar, MD, MCW assistant professor of surgery (pediatric) who was the trauma surgeon on call the night of the tragedy, also shares his pride. "That night, the help we got made it feel like we were one big team. There were OR staff, surgeons, emergency department faculty and staff. Lots of people came in and worked on a Sunday night without being asked. They just showed up," he remarks. "We are used to taking care of a single patient, but that night, it felt like we were a hospital taking care of the community."

First Lady Jill Biden, Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff and US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, MD, visited Children's on December 15, in part to thank those who had provided care to the victims of the Waukesha tragedy. Before leaving, they met with two of the injured children and commended the dedication and compassion shown by the care teams who helped them and the other victims to heal. ■ – ANTHONY BRAZA

## Froedtert Hospital Activates Surge Plan in Response to Parade Tragedy

Unsure of what to expect that night, Froedtert Hospital activated its surge plan, notes David Milia, MD '04, FEL '10, MCW associate professor of surgery (trauma and critical care) and medical director of the Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin Level 1 Trauma Center at Froedtert Hospital. Dr. Milia was working that night, directing the trauma area, and Amy Zosel, MD, '03, MSCS, associate professor of emergency medicine, was directing the emergency room. As part of their surge plan, Jason Liu, MD, MPH '09, professor of emergency medicine and medical director of Milwaukee County's EMS Disaster/Emergency Preparedness, was brought in to coordinate the response at a higher level.

Extra residents, surgeons, nurses, APPs, anesthesiologists and the other specialties and staff members who might be necessary were called in and assessed all available resources, such as ICU beds and ORs. Froedtert Hospital's main campus received three patients from the Waukesha parade tragedy, and four other patients were sent to Froedtert Hospital Menomonee Falls. "Everyone showed up the night of the tragedy, had a role and handled their role well. And each of the teams and departments involved collaborated very well. It was obvious we train for events like this," Dr. Milia says.



Dr. David Milia



Dr. Amy Zosel

# Michael J. Dunn, MD '62, Guided MCW's

By Richard N. (Dick) Katschke

“It takes an exceptional individual to elevate the missions, programs and facilities of an institution as vast as the Medical College of Wisconsin. We were fortunate to have found such a person in Michael J. Dunn, MD '62,” says John R. Raymond, Sr., MD, president and CEO of MCW.

Dr. Dunn, MCW's executive vice president and dean of the school of medicine emeritus, died on November 29, 2021, at the age of 85. Dr. Dunn led MCW's medical education, research, patient care and community engagement programs from 1995 to 2008 and is credited with guiding MCW's emergence as one of the nation's premier medical schools and prestigious academic medical centers.

## Destined to be Entwined with MCW

“It seems it was destined that Dr.



Dunn's life would be entwined with MCW,” says Joseph E. Kerschner, MD '90, FEL '98, MCW provost, executive vice president and The Julia A. Uihlein, MA, Dean of the School of Medicine. “He followed in the footsteps of his father, Cornelius Dunn, who graduated from the Marquette University School of Medicine in 1931.” The Marquette University School of Medicine is MCW's predecessor institution.

We are fortunate that Dr. Dunn shared his memories in a videotaped interview with MCW's then-archivist and faculty member, Walter Gager, MD '63, GME '67, in 2012. Some of Dr. Dunn's reminiscences and quotations noted below have been culled from that session and from several media interviews.

As a young boy, Dr. Dunn's family's home was located at 87<sup>th</sup> Street and Bluemound Road in Wauwatosa, mere blocks from today's Milwaukee Regional Medical Center campus. Dr. Dunn recalled, “As a rambunctious youth, I roamed the vegetable fields of the county farms, which provided food for the patients at the Milwaukee County Hospital. My recollection is that the Medical College of Wisconsin is presently situated in a former cabbage field.”

Dr. Dunn was a member of an informal group known as the “3-M Club” – those young men who graduated from Marquette University High School, Marquette University (where he received

his undergraduate degree in philosophy) and the Marquette University School of Medicine.

“From my medical school days, I clearly remember the Cramer Building, which housed the medical school on 15<sup>th</sup> Street on the Marquette campus,” Dr. Dunn said. “That was the era of John Hirschboeck [MD '37] as dean, and the powerful clinical and basic science leaders such as [Drs.] Engstrom in medicine, Ellison in surgery and Kerrigan in pediatrics. Basic science leaders included [Drs.] Quick in biochemistry, Beckman in pharmacology, Kappus in microbiology, Smith in physiology and Walter Zeit in anatomy.”

Thomas Russell, MD '62, MCW emeritus professor of dermatology, reminisces, “I got to know Mike Dunn well when we entered the Marquette University School of Medicine as classmates in 1958 – when we paid total tuition and fees in archeologic and prehistoric terms of \$1,075 for the year.”

As a medical student, Dr. Dunn was mentored in physiology by Alvin Rieck, PhD, who stirred his passion for academic medicine and kidney physiology.

Upon graduation from medical school in 1962, Dr. Dunn was the recipient of the *Millmann Award*, MCW's highest honor for a graduating medical student. His medical school classmates honored him by creating the *Michael J. Dunn, MD, Class of 1962 Achievement Award*, which



# Emergence as a National Leader

recognizes the senior medical student graduating with the most distinguished academic record. The Class of 1962 currently is raising funds to establish an endowed chair in Dr. Dunn's name. Please see the sidebar on page 21 for more information.

## Establishing a Career in Academic Medicine

Dr. Dunn served an internship and residency in internal medicine at Johns Hopkins University Hospital in Baltimore, Md. He then took a nephrology fellowship at the University of North Carolina and spent three years of military duty as a malaria researcher at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Bethesda, Md.

Dr. Dunn began his career in academic medicine at the University of Vermont College of Medicine, where he rose to the position of professor and associate chair of medicine.

Before returning to his medical school alma mater in 1995 as MCW's eighth dean and executive vice president, Dr. Dunn was the Hanna Payne Professor of Medicine and director of the nephrology division at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in Cleveland, Ohio. He also served as associate director of the department of medicine and acting chair of medicine at both Case Western Reserve and the University Hospitals of Cleveland.

## Creating a Foundation for the Next Generation of Physicians and Scientists

Dr. Dunn's 13-year tenure as MCW's dean (1995–2008) was one of the longest among US medical schools.

Allen Cowley, Jr., PhD, the James J. Smith and Catherine Welsch Smith Professor Emeritus, the Harry and Gertrude Hack Term Professor Emeritus of Physiology, and former chair of the department of physiology, led the MCW dean's search committee and recalls, "It was apparent that Dr. Dunn had high aspirations for MCW and intended to move us forward from the middle of the national pack into the top tier of US medical schools. By every measure, he achieved that goal."

At his installation ceremony as dean in 1995, Dr. Dunn said, "Medical schools are the engine in our society that provide the human and intellectual resources for our healthcare system. Thus, we have a major role to play in the future. I think the school has a bright future for a number of reasons. We have the advantage of being the only [academic medical center] in a large metropolitan area. We have the advantage of being in an ideal location; we're not locked in downtown. We're in an area where we can build. We have relatively young and dynamic faculty and good community relations. And we have three terrific hospitals."

He continued, "We are at a critical juncture in academic medicine, in a time of transition. I want to use my experience, knowledge and judgment to help create a new foundation for the next generation of physicians and scientists."

Dr. Dunn immediately forged a strong partnership with T. Michael Bolger, JD, then MCW's president and CEO, as they led Wisconsin's only private academic health sciences center into a new millennium. *Milwaukee Magazine* observed in 2008, "[Michael] Dunn and



[Mike] Bolger have perfected the inside/outside partnership, which is often difficult to achieve. Bolger oversees fundraising, government affairs, alumni affairs and community relations. This leaves the dean free to run the medical side: academic programs, clinical programs, research, relationships with hospitals and recruiting of faculty. Indeed, the long tenure and happy partnership of Bolger and Dunn provided the perfect recipe to grow the institution."

"What I enjoyed most was being a leader on behalf of the faculty and students," Dr. Dunn shared in his interview with Dr. Gager. "I liked the idea of being able to work with them to formulate new ideas about clinical care, education or research, and then helping them to get the assets needed – whether it be space or money or new faculty to implement it."

"I always felt that my job was to work for the faculty," Dr. Dunn continued.

"When I met with faculty members, it was

*Continued on page 20*



*Mike was a personal hero of mine and a mentor to me early in my scientific career, like he was to so many clinician-scientists who were studying the basic mechanisms of kidney cell function. Later, Mike became a mentor and a friend to me.*

– John R. Raymond, Sr., MD, president and CEO of MCW

**Mike knew how critical it was to support and recruit creative-thinking men and women if we were to be considered among the top medical institutions.** He was very approachable and an outgoing individual with a charming, charismatic personality, gracious, with quick wit and a wonderful sense of humor.

– Allen W. Cowley, Jr., PhD, former chair of physiology

**He was a mentor – not just in medicine, but also in life.** Wendy and I cherished each and every minute we got to share with Mike, Pat and their family.

– Kenneth B. Simons, MD, senior associate dean for graduate medical education and accreditation and professor of ophthalmology and pathology

**Mike Dunn and Mike Bolger were a terrific team.** We all benefited from their sustained and complementary leadership. So grateful that Mike Dunn decided to return home and serve his alma mater.

– Edmund Duthie, MD, GME '79, MCW professor of medicine

**I can tell you personally that the trajectory and success MCW has had in our research mission, and as we've created knowledge to change lives here at MCW, could not have been possible without Dr. Dunn's leadership, his vision and his strategic planning.**

– Joseph E. Kerschner, MD '90, FEL '98, provost, executive vice president, and The Julia A. Uihlein, MA, Dean of the School of Medicine

**Dr. Dunn had a wonderful twinkle in his eye and dry sense of humor which always kept things even-tempered yet focused!**

– Hershel Raff, PhD, professor of medicine

*I joined MCW as chair because of Mike Dunn and Mike Bolger. **Mike Dunn was an extraordinary leader, a warm and wonderful person, a mentor and an inspiration.** His love of science, people, food and wine ensured many, many wonderful times! Mike had a great impact on my professional life. He brought out the best in people and created a superb culture at MCW.*

– Paula Traktman, PhD, dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Hirschmann Endowed Professor, Medical University of South Carolina, who served as chair of the MCW department of cell biology, neurobiology and anatomy from 1997–2015



Dr. Dunn (top left) and his wife, Patricia (top right), enjoyed the Fourth of July holiday with nine of their 10 grandchildren at their home on Nagawicka Lake, Wis., in 2008.

never with idea that I had the right ideas and they should follow. It was with the idea that we should jointly articulate our programs and then I'll help you get the resources."

### Energizing the Academic Enterprise Through Research

Often referred to at that time as MCW's "research dean," Dr. Dunn fostered a climate of collaboration and commitment to the advancement of medical knowledge. Under his leadership, MCW was identified as one of the nation's fastest-growing biomedical research institutions – as MCW expanded its cancer, cardiovascular and digestive disease research centers while creating new multidisciplinary centers of research in genetics, biotechnology and imaging.

"Research is absolutely vital to our academic mission," Dr. Dunn said. "Our research programs invigorate our teaching, introduce potential cures for clinical research testing and energize the entire academic enterprise of the Medical College."

Dr. Dunn led the design and development of MCW's more than \$200 million investment in new research and medical education facilities on the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center campus, including MCW's Health Research Center and the Translational and Biomedical Research Center.

National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding to MCW increased more than 200 percent during Dr. Dunn's tenure as dean; MCW rose to top third of all US

medical schools for NIH funding. "The NIH, in the aggregate, spends \$30 billion on research [grants]," Dr. Dunn noted. "They're the hardest to win, have the most prestige, create national leverage and visibility." While he was dean, MCW's total research revenue grew from \$49 million to more than \$125 million.

"The trajectory and success that MCW has had in our research mission could not have been possible without Dr. Dunn's leadership, his vision and his strategic planning," Dr. Kerschner remarks.

In recognition of Dr. Dunn's passion for scientific discovery, MCW's department of medicine created the *Michael J. Dunn Award for Research Excellence and Contribution*. The award is presented annually to an established investigator in the department who exhibits all aspects of research contribution: scholarly excellence, mentorship, collaboration, education and institutional enthusiasm.

Through national searches, Dr. Dunn appointed all of MCW's senior associate deans and most center directors, as well as 22 academic department chairs. Five new departments were established during his tenure (biophysics, otolaryngology and communication sciences, plastic surgery, population health and urology). Dr. Dunn told the *Milwaukee BizTimes* in 2007, "The biggest impact I've had at the Medical College has been to recruit chairmen and center directors – the leaders of the school who share my vision that this can be a great school and we can be competitive on the national scene."

### Doing What's Right for Medical Education

Under Dr. Dunn's leadership, MCW's academic programs were awarded the maximum accreditation in the 1990s and again in the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century from both the Liaison Committee for Medical Education and the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities. MCW began updating its medical school curriculum with a focus on utilizing new technologies to enhance clinical skills. One major initiative was the development in 2002 of MCW's Standardized Teaching and Assessment Resource Center, better known as the STAR Center.

Kenneth B. Simons, MD, senior associate dean for graduate medical education and accreditation, designated institutional official and director, Medical College of Wisconsin Affiliated Hospitals, Inc., and professor of ophthalmology and visual sciences, and pathology, and former senior associate dean for academic affairs, shares, "Mike was committed to doing what was right for our medical students' education despite all of the competing pressures placed upon him. It was obvious that Mike Dunn was much more than just MCW's 'research dean.' He was truly a dean for all of MCW's missions."

### Clinical Care Based on Education and Research

In the clinical arena, Dr. Dunn worked with leaders from Milwaukee County and Froedtert Hospital to close the county's John Doyne Hospital in 1995 and seamlessly transfer the county hospital's patient care programs to Froedtert Hospital. MCW launched a primary care initiative to help support MCW's faculty specialists.

As dean, Dr. Dunn worked closely with MCW's three major teaching hospitals – Froedtert Hospital, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin (now Children's Wisconsin) and the Zablocki VA Medical Center – as the hospitals developed national reputations as leading academic tertiary care facilities. William Petasnick, former president of Froedtert Hospital, remembered Dr. Dunn by saying, "His strong and effective leadership at the Medical College championed the integration of discovery, clinical research, education and expert patient care –

leading to hundreds of applications that saved or improved the quality of life for multitudes of people.”

Dr. Dunn also worked with faculty leaders to establish two physician group practices: Medical College Physicians and Children’s Specialty Group. With almost 1,000 physicians, MCW was home to one of the nation’s largest academic medical group practices. During Dr. Dunn’s tenure as dean, the number of patient visits to MCW physicians increased from 700,000 to more than one million patients annually.

He said, “I want to emphasize that we MUST preserve our academic orientation as we address healthcare reform and a unified practice. We are not simply a medical clinic. We are an educational and research institution with a large commitment to clinical care. I want education and research to permeate everything we do.”

### Elevating the Stature of Community Service

In 1997, under Dr. Dunn, the stature of community service was elevated as one of MCW’s four core missions. Within a decade, the mission gained national recognition. In 2005, the Association of American Medical Colleges bestowed its *Outstanding Community Service Award* to MCW for implementing innovative public and community health programs to meet the needs of underserved inner-city and rural populations.

Dr. Kerschner notes, “Many medical schools are just catching up to the Medical College of Wisconsin in having community engagement as one of the pillars of their medical school.”

### A Distinguished Career Recognized by His Peers

Over the course of his career, Dr. Dunn published 183 original papers and authored or co-authored 54 chapters or textbooks on nephrology and hypertension. He was a past president of the American Society of Nephrology, one of the nation’s few medical school deans to maintain an active research lab and received continuous NIH funding for more than 35 years.

Dr. Raymond shares, “Mike was a personal hero of mine and a mentor to

me early in my scientific career, like he was to so many clinician–scientists who were studying the basic mechanisms of kidney cell function. Later, Mike became a mentor and a friend to me.”

Dr. Dunn’s honors include his selection as a Master of the American College of Physicians – American Society of Internal Medicine and as a Markle Scholar in Academic Medicine by the John and Mary R. Markle Foundation of New York. He was named a Fogarty Senior International Fellow and served as a visiting scientist at the Institut Pasteur in Paris and the Centre de Biochemie at the Universite de Nice in France.

Dr. Dunn was honored by every institution for which he was an alumnus. He was elected to the Johns Hopkins Society of Scholars, named Marquette University’s Distinguished Alumnus in the Arts and Sciences, was recipient of Marquette University High School’s *Alumni Merit Award* and the recipient of MCW’s *Distinguished Service Award* – the institution’s highest honor for a faculty or staff member. Dr. Dunn also was the recipient of the Medical College of Wisconsin/Marquette Medical Alumni Association’s *Alumnus of the Year Award*.

Upon his retirement in 2008, MCW named Dr. Dunn as dean emeritus and distinguished professor of medicine.

### Making a Broad and Deep Impact

As he prepared to retire as dean in 2008, Dr. Dunn said, “This has been the most rewarding part of my professional career. It’s the most senior position and the biggest leadership position, and it’s given me the opportunity to have the broadest and deepest impact.”

He also reflected on the importance of a career in medicine saying, “The human needs for cure and healing persist. The call to meet those needs has been answered by society’s best and brightest for thousands of years. Whatever its socioeconomic situation, each generation of physicians has been committed to instill a love for and dedication to medicine in its successors, and to transmit Hippocrates’ code of professional values. Ours can do no less.” ■

### Celebrating Dr. Dunn’s Legacy

If you would like to contribute to the Class of 1962 Fund in honor of Michael J. Dunn, MD, please visit [mcw.edu/giving](http://mcw.edu/giving).

You can also mail a gift to:  
Office of Development  
Class of 1962 Fund in honor of  
Michael J. Dunn, MD  
Medical College of Wisconsin  
8701 Watertown Plank Rd.  
Milwaukee, WI 53226



(l-r) Dr. Dunn, Steven J. Smith, former chair of the MCW board of trustees, and T. Michael Bolger, JD, former president and CEO of MCW, shared a light moment in 2006.

# When Prostate Cancer Returns

*MCW Physician-Scientists Test New Treatment for Advanced Prostate Cancer*

Prostate cancer, as one of the most common forms of cancer, affects approximately one of every nine men in the US. While surgical and radiation treatments are very effective if the cancer has not spread beyond the prostate, approximately 25,000 men in the US are diagnosed with biochemical recurrence each year. This diagnosis means that the cancer is returning; however, it grows at very different rates in each patient, so progression monitoring and treatment must be highly individualized. Scientists at MCW identified that treatment of biochemical recurrence of prostate cancer has significant room for improvement. In 2021, the MCW Cancer Center and the MCW Prostate Cancer Center of Excellence launched a new clinical trial to test a potential treatment for this condition.

“This trial is the result of many years of collaboration between my lab and Dr. Deepak Kilari,” says Marja T. Nevalainen, MD, PhD, MCW Eminent Scholar, professor of pathology, pharmacology and toxicology and director of the Prostate Cancer Center of Excellence.

“We met at a national meeting before Dr. Nevalainen joined MCW,” adds Dr. Kilari, MCW associate professor of medicine (hematology and oncology). “When I learned she was bringing her lab here, I was very excited because she was a fellow physician-scientist and a proven innovator with research interests aligning with mine.”

Drs. Nevalainen and Kilari began working together in 2016 to continue advancing basic science and preclinical cancer research from Dr. Nevalainen’s lab, including noteworthy findings



*Deepak Kilari, MD*

regarding a series of interacting proteins that significantly influence the growth and spread of prostate cancer. Her team discovered that Jak2, a specific type of enzyme known as a kinase, is primarily responsible for activating the Stat5 protein, a transcription factor which reads DNA in order to create RNA strands that serve as the basis for making new proteins. When activated, Stat5 moves into a cell’s nucleus, where it binds to DNA and increases expression of genes that influence cellular growth, division and death.

Cancerous cells expand and multiply into tumors by eschewing the normal checks and balances that govern the natural growth rate and lifecycle of healthy cells. Dr. Nevalainen and her team have demonstrated that an abnormally high activity of Stat5 accelerates both growth and the metastatic progression of prostate cancers and can be used to predict patients who will have a poor response to surgical removal of the prostate

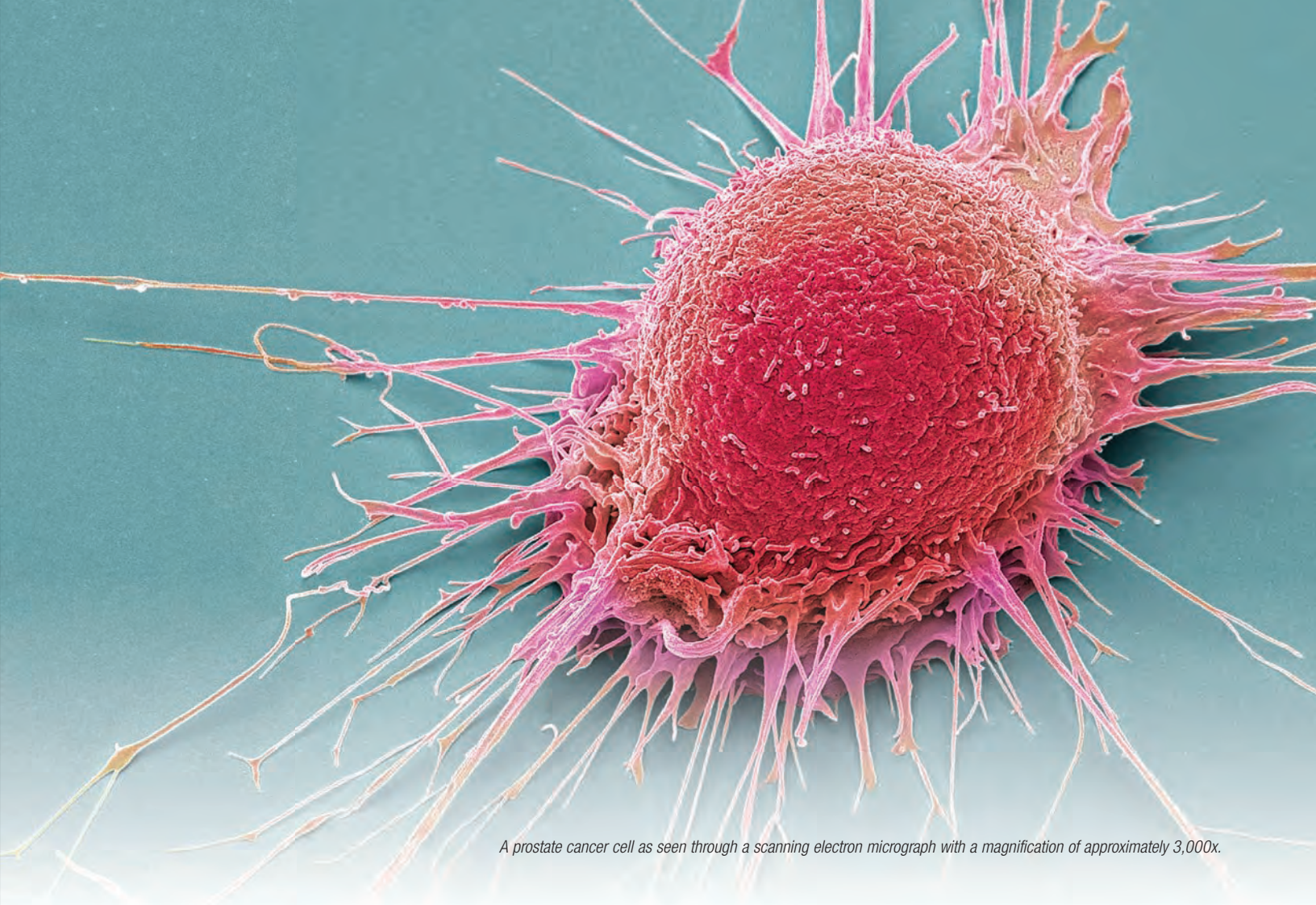


*Marja T. Nevalainen, MD, PhD*

gland (known as radical prostatectomy).

“We’ve taken these findings into preclinical studies to also show that blocking Stat5 and Jak2 activity kills prostate cancer cells, suppresses tumor growth and reduces metastasis,” says Dr. Nevalainen. To block the activity of these proteins, the scientists used drugs known as inhibitors. These medicines carry molecules designed to disrupt the communication between Jak2 and Stat5 by binding to – and thus blocking – Jak2 to prevent activation of Stat5.

“About five or six years ago, there was a wave of new Jak2 inhibitor drugs in development by the pharmaceutical industry that are safer and more effective in patients. Armed with Dr. Nevalainen’s promising preclinical data, we’re focused on bringing these drugs to clinical trials to test their efficacy in biochemical recurrence of prostate cancer,” says Dr. Kilari. Drs. Kilari and Nevalainen were co-authors on a scholarly review of these second-generation Jak2 inhibitor



*A prostate cancer cell as seen through a scanning electron micrograph with a magnification of approximately 3,000x.*

drugs published in October 2021 in the journal *Cancers*. Pacritinib, one of the drugs discussed in their article, is the investigational drug they are studying in their new clinical trial.

“The drug, which is made by a small pharmaceutical firm named CTI-BioPharma, already has successfully completed phase I and II clinical trials in patients suffering from myeloproliferative neoplasms, a form of blood cancer,” notes Dr. Kilari. “We brought Dr. Nevalainen’s data to them, and they agreed to support our trial in prostate cancer.”

The trial opened in June 2021 with the enrollment of its first patient after completing many regulatory and logistical steps, including approval by the MCW Institutional Review Board and the FDA. Drs. Nevalainen and Kilari credit the MCW Cancer Center and the center’s Clinical Trials Office for their support in getting the trial approved, implemented and available to eligible

community members. The physician-scientists intend to recruit more than 40 patients by June 2025. After reaching their first 10 participants, they will look at the preliminary data to determine if they should proceed with the full trial.

All participants in the study will be treated with pacritinib, and prostate-specific antigen (PSA) will be monitored using blood tests. Physicians track the levels of PSA circulating in a patient’s blood to determine the effect of pacritinib on prostate cancer growth. The study team’s main objective is to learn if pacritinib can inhibit prostate cancer growth and thereby decrease PSA levels.

“Ultimately, by studying the efficacy of inhibiting Jak2 and Stat5 with pacritinib, we’re evaluating a potential alternative to the current standard of care for advanced prostate cancer, which is androgen deprivation therapy,” mentions Dr. Nevalainen.

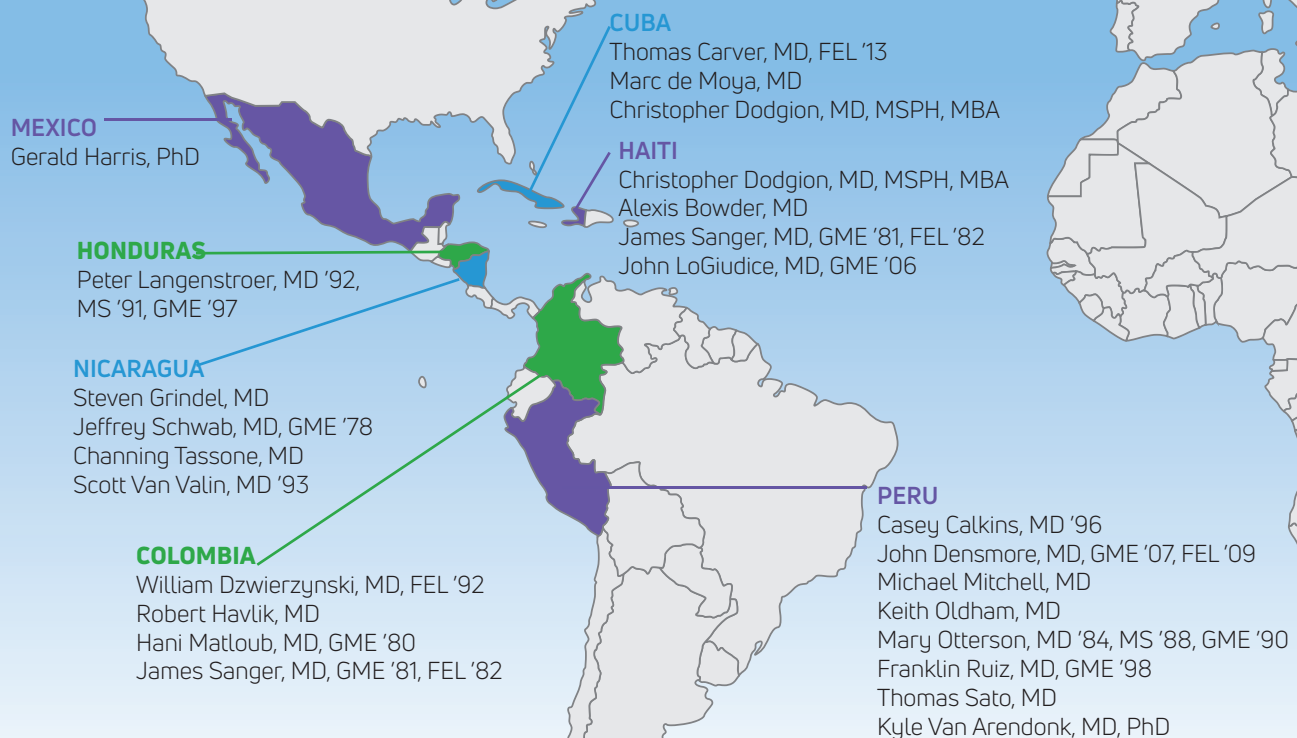
Androgens are male hormones, with testosterone being the most notable example. Drugs that reduce the levels of testosterone and other male hormones can shrink prostate cancers or slow down their growth for a time but are associated with a multitude of adverse events, including reduced sexual desire, impotence, muscle loss, bone fragility and fatigue.

“Pacritinib and the other second-generation Jak2 inhibitors do not target testosterone but rather the receptor for testosterone, so we hypothesize that they will be more effective, while also causing fewer side effects that negatively influence quality of life,” notes Dr. Kilari.

“We’re committed to finding and testing innovative ways to better treat this incredibly common disease and deliver improved outcomes for our patients and their families,” says Dr. Nevalainen. ■

– GREG CALHOUN

# Advancing Surgery



**M**ore than five billion people in the world lack access to basic essential and emergency surgical care, according to The Lancet Commission on Global Surgery. The World Health Organization has indicated that more than a shortage of material, the lack of trained surgical workforce is critical.

To address this challenge, MCW surgeons in various subspecialties are engaging in partnerships with countries throughout the world to advance global surgical care.

“Growing and developing long-term partnerships is an important part of what we do at MCW as a member of the global community, as well as a key component of academic medicine,” says Marc de Moya, MD, the Milton and Lidy Lunda/Charles Arahamian Professor of Trauma Surgery at MCW.

Franklin J. Ruiz, MD, GME '98, MCW assistant professor of

anesthesiology, says the COVID-19 pandemic has shown this even more. “We are global citizens, and we should work in global terms,” he shares.

“Thinking broadly makes the entire world a better place.”

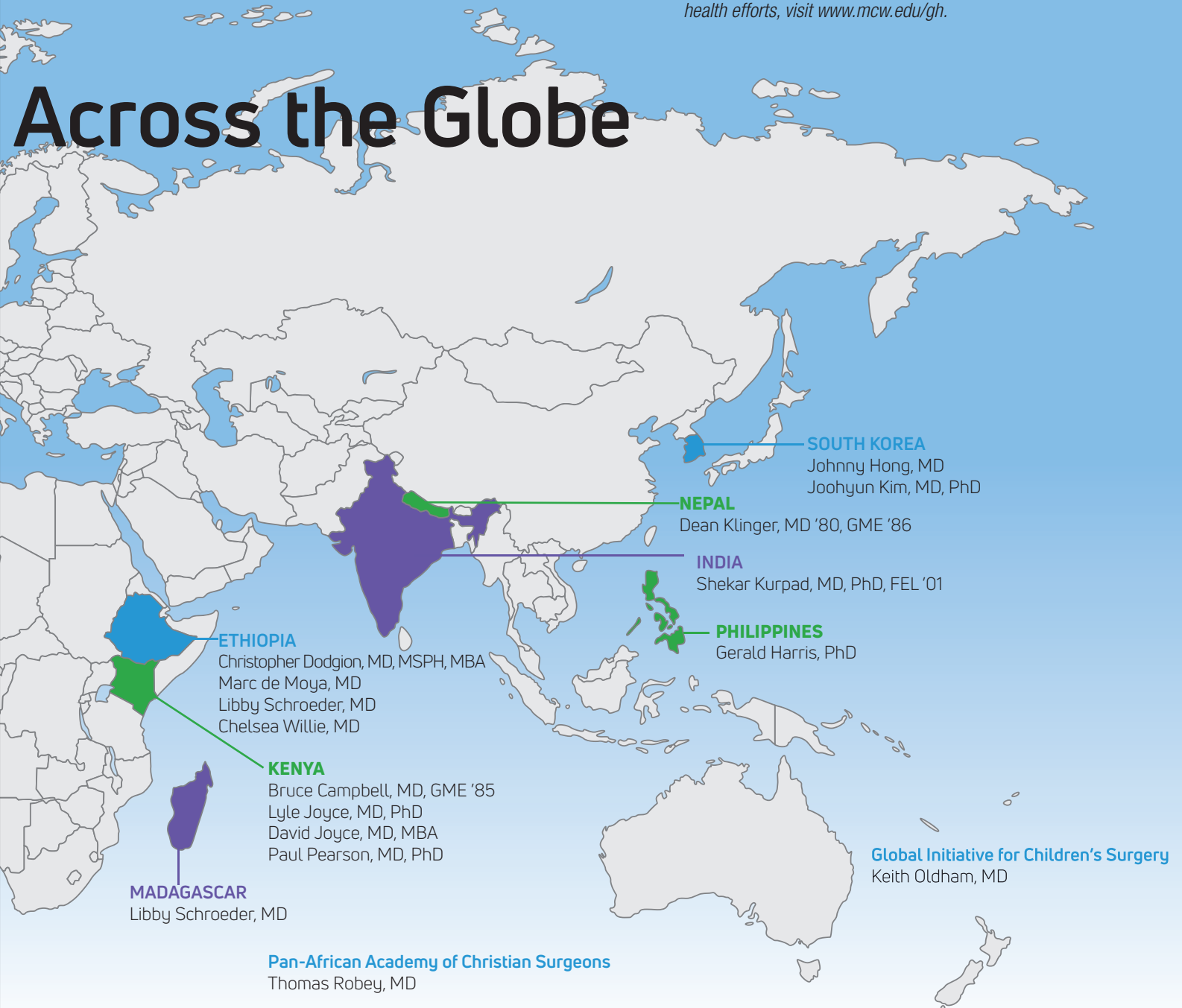
That is one reason Drs. de Moya and Ruiz are two of dozens of MCW faculty and medical teams who work with nonprofits and hospitals worldwide to provide both training and patient care. Expertise that MCW shares covers every surgical subspecialty and is focused on capacity-building of global surgeons to improve safe surgery.

Dr. Ruiz is part of a team with Michael E. Mitchell, MD, professor and chief of congenital heart surgery at MCW and medical director of cardiothoracic surgery at Children’s Wisconsin, who has developed a partnership with the National Institute of Child



MCW faculty provide training on various surgical subspecialties in dozens of countries. To learn more about them and other global health efforts, visit [www.mcw.edu/gh](http://www.mcw.edu/gh).

# Across the Globe



Health in Lima, Peru, to help their surgical professionals improve complex pediatric cardiac surgery training.

“Our full cardiac OR team travels and then works side by side with the teams in Lima,” explains Dr. Ruiz. “We are privileged in the US to have been trained to this degree, and other individuals in different parts of the world don’t have those same opportunities. So we educate and share our knowledge.”

“And you can really see major changes while we’re there each time through all different levels of providers, from the nurses to the cardiac surgical team to the perfusionists and the anesthesiologists,” Dr. Mitchell adds.

These efforts are equally beneficial to MCW providers as it enhances their character, competency and caring abilities to serve a diverse patient population at home.

“The trips build a huge amount of comradery among our MCW and Children’s team,” says Dr. Mitchell. “The challenges we face in places like Peru make us stronger. We take some of the things we learn from how we must adapt in those settings and bring those tricks back to Wisconsin, which makes us better in our roles here.”

Many of these partnerships also expose the providers to rare cases, which provides a concentrated experience in certain procedures. “Ebstein’s anomaly, a rare congenital heart defect, is maybe one to two cases per year in Wisconsin, but it can be four cases in a week in Lima,” Dr. Mitchell explains. “These patients, their families, the institutions and their providers need our help, but we also benefit. The whole experience is extremely rewarding.” ■ —KARRI STOCK

# Science Needs More Physicians

Physician-scientists have long been a driving force for the advancement of biomedical research. Nearly 80 percent of the Nobel laureates in physiology or medicine from 1901–1935



Dr. Mary Eapen



Dr. Michael Widlansky

were clinicians. In addition to leading or contributing to momentous discoveries in history, contemporary physician-scientists are credited for playing a key role on multidisciplinary research teams – including by representing patients' needs and understanding how healthcare is delivered.

Unfortunately, these roles have been threatened by a documented reduction in the physician-scientist workforce. In 2012, a team sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to analyze the biomedical research workforce found that only about one-third of all principal investigators on NIH grants were physician-scientists. Follow-up studies have uncovered additional evidence regarding the decline of US physicians conducting research.

As one solution to help address the current and projected shortages, the NIH created the R38 grant mechanism – also known as the Stimulating Access to Research in Residency program. MCW faculty members Michael Widlansky, MD, MPH, Northwestern Mutual Professor of Cardiology, professor of medicine and pharmacology and toxicology, and Mary Eapen, MD, MS, professor of medicine and senior scientific director for research in the Center for International Blood and Marrow Transplant Research, thought that this NIH program provided an opportunity to enhance research offerings in the MCW department of medicine's internal medicine residency program. Their successful application made MCW one of the first seven institutions funded to develop an R38 program through support from the NIH's National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute.

"The NIH created this program because the rate of physician-scientists has plummeted," says Benjamin Hofeld, MD, GME '19, MCW cardiovascular medicine fellow and R38 program participant. "The purpose is to reintroduce physicians to science during residency training and support the development of their future research careers."

Drs. Widlansky and Eapen designed the two-year research immersion program with a number of components they

considered crucial for physicians launching successful academic research careers, including: individualized development plans; a dedicated multidisciplinary mentoring team; protected research time; research support including dedicated time for learning new skills; and an environment with many integrated clinical and research experiences.

"In building this new program at MCW, we looked at the factors that cause research-intensive students to fall away from scientific endeavors during their graduate medical education years," notes Dr. Widlansky.

Two participants already have completed their training in MCW's physician-scientist immersion program. Another participant will begin in 2022 and a fourth in 2023.

"My experience in MCW's R38 program has been wonderful," shares participant Kate Cohen, MD '17, GME '20, also an MCW cardiovascular medicine fellow. "I gained an amazing mentor in Dr. Julie Freed [MD '11, PhD '08, GME '16, FEL '17], who has been very generous with her time."

Dr. Hofeld agreed on the importance of mentorship to his success within the program. "I'm so grateful to have Dr. Widlansky as a mentor. I can hardly believe I'm preparing a submission to the MCW Institutional Review Board and an Investigational New Drug application to the FDA for a new clinical study."

"We're very pleased with the progress of our first two participants," adds Dr. Widlansky. "They've met all benchmarks, published first-author scholarly articles in the literature and presented their work at national meetings."

"Participation in this program will shape my career in significant and meaningful ways," says Dr. Cohen. "I have a much clearer path forward, and I intend to draw upon this experience when it is my turn to mentor aspiring physician-scientists one day." ■

– GREG CALHOUN

There was a  
greater than 5%  
decline in physician-  
scientists from 2003-2012



Fewer than 5% of  
NIH-funded physician-scientists  
were ages 31-40 in 2012

# Kerchia Asia Lee Wins Inaugural Mary Jane Shanks Trailblazer Award

**M**CW pharmacy student Kerchia Asia Lee is a first-generation Hmong-American and Milwaukee native. Growing up, Lee always saw a disconnect between the elders of her community and Western medicines. This led her to pursue a career in pharmacy to be a bridge for that gap.

“I want to be able to help those within my community – whether it be Hmong or non-Hmong patients – understand the importance of Western medicines and the impact they have on our health. I had the opportunity to shadow various healthcare occupations during my junior year of high school. When I shadowed the pharmacy unit, there was an instant spark igniting my interest,” shares Lee.

Lee currently is completing her third and final year of the MCW School of Pharmacy Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) program. She is passionate about pediatrics and caring for children and their families. Following a rigorous application and interview process, Lee was selected for one of only two spots in the Longitudinal Advanced Practice Experience (LAPPE) program at Children’s Wisconsin. In the LAPPE program, students complete five of their seven APPE clerkship rotations at Children’s and complete a longitudinal research project within the hospital’s pharmacy department.

In June 2021, during final exam week, Lee gave birth to her first child. Only a few short weeks later, she started her first clerkship rotation of the LAPPE program. “The staff and faculty of the MCW PharmD program have been a great support system throughout and after my pregnancy. Everyone believed in me and helped me through my pregnancy with balancing the workload. It has definitely been difficult juggling being a new mother and completing schoolwork, but I also would not be able to fulfill my duties without the support from my family and husband. I am still thriving today because of my support system,” Lee shares.

This past fall, Lee was the inaugural recipient of MCW’s Women in Science *Mary Jane Shanks Trailblazer Award*, a memorial scholarship which was established by the family of Mary Jane to recognize the strengths of nontraditional students who thrive despite barriers to success. It is their hope that this award can provide both financial relief and well-deserved recognition to the other “Mary Janes” who are poised to make great contributions in their careers.

“Throughout her time at MCW, Asia has excelled in the classroom, served as a trailblazing leader of the Student



*Third-year MCW pharmacy student Kerchia Asia Lee, a first-generation Hmong-American and Milwaukee native, received the inaugural Women in Science Mary Jane Shanks Trailblazer Award, which recognizes non-traditional students who thrive despite barriers to success.*

Society of Health-System Pharmacists and conducted research exploring health disparities and inequities in the Hmong population,” says Brianne Bakken, PharmD, MHA, assistant professor with the MCW School of Pharmacy. “As her faculty mentor and LAPPE rotation preceptor, I have been so impressed with Asia’s fortitude and continued work ethic.”

Lee plans to pursue additional postgraduate training in ambulatory care after graduation. “Long-term, I want to work in an ambulatory care clinic helping underserved patients optimize their health and wellness,” she shares.

“MCW has taught me how to be an efficient individual as well as excelling as a professional. Not only has MCW’s program enhanced my knowledge, it also has enhanced my skills in interacting with patients through our Patient Care Labs,” she adds. ■

– MICHELLE SCHAEFER

# MCW Faculty Take on New Roles During Pandemic

When the COVID-19 pandemic began, most of the world looked to medical professionals to guide them through this public health crisis. They were suddenly thrown into the spotlight, taking on additional roles of communicators and spokespersons, asked to answer the question: “Can you be an expert in something you don’t know much about?”

Many medical professionals at MCW found themselves in this situation and now, some two years later, have had the chance to reflect on those unique roles.

“The challenges of staying informed, prepared and flexible have remained common threads throughout the past two years,” says Joyce Sanchez, MD, MCW assistant professor of medicine (infectious diseases). “Conveying information with clarity, but also with nuance and acknowledgment of my limitations in that knowledge, isn’t something that comes naturally.”

To limit the spread of the virus, many medical professionals were faced with the challenges of bringing work home.

During the pandemic, the role of Zeno Franco, PhD, assistant professor in MCW’s department of family and community medicine, has been heavily focused on working with community health workers leading mask distribution, crisis management and vaccine education – mostly from his home. “Helping to manage the community-based response meant more meetings than ever. There were days when Zoom was on in the house for 14 hours straight,” he says.

MCW medical professionals also became experts on the first treatments and clinical trials for COVID-19.

“My biggest and ongoing leadership win was successfully incorporating monoclonal antibodies into our outpatient COVID-19 treatment arsenal,”

says Jane Njeri Wainaina, MD, FEL ’12, MCW associate professor of medicine (infectious diseases) and vice chair.

“The moments that stick out the most have been my interactions with our hospitalized COVID-19 patients,” says Mary Beth Graham, MD, MCW professor of medicine and associate chief of infectious diseases. “Early in the pandemic, there was little to offer patients from a therapeutic standpoint. For months, convalescent plasma was a front-line therapy for hospitalized COVID patients, and I believe that the treatment may have made the difference in the outcome for some of them.”

Perhaps the most unique shift to the medical professionals’ roles was becoming public communicators tasked with explaining scientific processes, providing updates and clearing up medical misconceptions.

For Ben Weston, MD, MPH, FEL ’15, MCW associate professor of emergency medicine, his role shifted significantly during the pandemic to include responsibilities as chief health policy advisor for Milwaukee County, as well as a key communicator to the public and interview source for media.

“With each new development in the pandemic, communications remained a challenge, as did providing useful

information to a varied audience while keeping the message focused, yet universal,” he says.

Laura Cassidy, MS, PhD, professor and director of epidemiology, MCW Institute for Health & Equity, has joined Dr. Weston to provide updates at virtual meetings and on the radio regarding COVID-19 in the region, and to highlight ways MCW has helped communities and businesses during the pandemic.


Although the newfound leadership of these medical professionals may have been both a surprise and a willing commitment, they all stepped up when they were needed most.

“I think this is one of the key elements of leadership – recognizing people with talent, skill and the right intention,” says Dr. Franco. “Initially we all thought it would last maybe a month or two, but it has become clear that part of leadership is the ability to just keep going.” ■ – HANNAH THULIN



**TODAY'S TOPIC:**  
**DEXAMETHASONE AND COVID-19**

Jane Njeri Wainaina, MD  
 Associate Professor of Infectious Disease, Department of Medicine



**DR. BEN WESTON**  
 Associate Professor, Medical College of Wisconsin

**DR. MARY BETH GRAHAM**  
 INFECTIOUS DISEASE SPECIALIST



Continuing Medical Education

**VIRTUAL TOWN HALL MEETING** **NOV 18**

**SARS-CoV-2 CME Series**

**Communicability and Public Health Response**

Laura D. Cassidy, MS, PhD, Professor and Director, Epidemiology Division, Medical College of Wisconsin




# MACC Fund: The Power of Collaboration



*In September 2019, the MACC Fund announced a pledge of \$25 million to MCW and Children's Wisconsin. The gift will help accelerate medical discovery and clinical care advancements to continue to improve survival rates and quality of life for kids diagnosed with cancer or a blood disorder. Speaking at the news conference were (l-r) Peggy Troy, Children's president and CEO; Dr. John R. Raymond, Sr., MCW president and CEO; Jon McGlocklin, MACC Fund co-founder; and Becky Pinter, MACC Fund president and CEO.*

**T**he Children's Wisconsin MACC Fund Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders is known across the country for both excellent patient care as well as innovative, cutting-edge research," says Peggy Troy, president and CEO of Children's Wisconsin – and she's grateful to those donors who have made it possible. "Patients and families have access to the very best clinical trials because of the research infrastructure that donors have helped us build."

Since its creation in 1976, the MACC Fund (Midwest Athletes Against Childhood Cancer) has garnered a high profile and contributed more than \$79 million in contributions to fight childhood cancers. Over the years, it also has become much more than athletes and medical professionals. Today's MACC Fund comprises an ever-growing team of schools, groups, volunteers, sponsors and individuals – all dedicated to the battle against childhood cancer and related blood disorders.

John R. Raymond, Sr., MD, president and CEO of the Medical College of Wisconsin, credits the powerful partnership and potent combination of MCW and Children's.

"By working so closely together, both organizations are able to gain an added advantage that enables us to bring the highest quality of care – on a national and international level – to the kids in our region," he says. "I can't think of an investment that's more important to us and our society than our children."

The five-year survival rate for kids with cancer was 20 percent when the MACC Fund was founded, and now stands at more than 80 percent. However, fighting cancer is an

ongoing battle – but one that is tilted in the direction of hope and health for young patients and our community.

Working together on the front lines of care and research, the MACC Fund, Children's and MCW, along with the community, are a united force in the fight. For Children's, it is this alliance that brings unparalleled strength. "We are proud of the program that we've built in partnership with community support – support in expertise and effort, as well as crucial financial support," Troy notes.

"Collaborations and partnerships are critical to our success. There are many things we can do here at Children's and many things we can achieve with our partners. But we also need the investment dollars in order to have access to the very best research and evidence-based care for our kids," Troy adds.

Dr. Raymond recognizes that the MACC Fund has a reach that stretches beyond Milwaukee and even the state. "When I travel around the country and talk with my colleagues, they're intrigued by the engagement of the MACC Fund and the success that we've been able to have in getting our superstar athletes – people who are very visible – to invest so deeply in the health and well-being of our kids, and they'd like to know how they can do the same," he shares.

The MACC Fund always has said its goal is to cure itself out of existence. With formidable allies such as the Medical College of Wisconsin and Children's Wisconsin, that goal is closer and closer to becoming a reality. ■

– JAMES PECK

# ALUMNI NOTES

## 1970s



**E. Christopher Ellison, MD '76**, was elected the 2021–2022 president-elect of the American College of Surgeons, the world's largest organization of surgeons. Dr. Ellison is the Robert M. Zollinger Professor of Surgery Emeritus at The Ohio State University College of Medicine. He was previously the president and CEO of The Ohio State University Physicians Practice Plan, an organization of which he also was a founding member.

Dr. Ellison has published more than 160 peer-reviewed articles. His primary research interest is Zollinger-Ellison Syndrome. He is principal author, with Robert M. Zollinger, Jr., MD, FACS, of the 10<sup>th</sup> Edition of Zollinger's *Atlas of Surgical Operations* and an associate editor of Fischer's *Mastery of Surgery*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. He is considered an authority on surgical workforce issues and co-author of *The Coming Shortage of Surgeons*. Dr. Ellison has served as associate editor and editorial board member of the *American Journal of Surgery* and is currently deputy editor of the *Journal of the American College of Surgeons*.



**Joseph D. Zuckerman, MD '78**, received the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons' 2021 *William W. Tipton, Jr., MD, Leadership Award*. The award is

presented to academy members who have benefited the American public, the orthopaedic community and its patients. Dr. Zuckerman is chair of the department of orthopedic surgery at New York University Langone Health, where he oversees day-to-day operations including orthopedic

\*MCW faculty member

surgery, rheumatology and rehabilitation, as well as a group of nearly 200 orthopedic surgeons.

## 1980s



**Brian Peterson, MD '80**, is chief medical examiner for Milwaukee County (Wis.). His office investigates about two-thirds of the nearly 10,000 deaths in the county each year. Dr. Peterson and his team conduct about 1,200 autopsies annually to confirm or determine cause of death or to retrieve criminal evidence. Dr. Peterson has led the county's medical examiner's office since 2010, following similar work in California and earlier stints as a medical officer in both the Navy and Marines. A major goal of Dr. Peterson is to upgrade the medical examiner's cramped and outdated headquarters in downtown Milwaukee. A new, state-of-the-art teaching and medical facility on the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center campus is undergoing planning with Milwaukee County, Froedtert Hospital and MCW.

**James Munns, MD, GME '82**, a board-certified cardiothoracic and vascular surgeon, has joined Baxter Regional Heart Clinic in Mountain Home, Ark.



**Judy Olson\*, MD, GME '82**, retired after a 35-year career as a pediatric rheumatology faculty member at MCW. Since 1992, she also served as pediatric rheumatology program director for Children's Wisconsin, and was MCW's pediatric rheumatology section chief from 1992–2002. Dr. Olson was an author or co-author of more than 60 peer-reviewed publications and was a site principal investigator for several juvenile arthritis clinical trials.

**Robert B. Anderson, MD '83, FEL '89**, is co-chair of the National Football League's musculoskeletal committee, overseeing all orthopedic injuries and research in professional football. Dr. Anderson serves as an assistant team physician to the Green Bay Packers and is a partner at Bellin Health Tittletown Sports Medicine and Orthopedics in Green Bay, Wis.



**Arthur R. (Art) Derse\*, MD, GME '83, JD**, was a 2021 recipient of the Medical College of Wisconsin's *Distinguished Service Award*, MCW's highest faculty and

staff honor. Dr. Derse, the Julia and David Uihlein Chair in Medical Humanities, tenured professor of bioethics and emergency medicine, and director of the Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities, joined the MCW faculty in the department of emergency medicine in 1983. He gained an additional appointment in bioethics in 1989 and has led the Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities since 2009.

Dr. Derse has led, participated in or overseen more than 1,000 clinical ethics consultations over more than 30 years. He has published more than 130 manuscripts, including articles in peer-reviewed literature, invited journal publications, editorials, book chapters, project publications and books. He also has delivered more than 250 national and international presentations. Dr. Derse is co-author of the *Code of Ethics of the American College of Emergency Physicians* and *Practical Ethics for Students, Interns and Residents: A Short Reference Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*.

He is past president of the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities and served as chair of the Veterans Health Administration's National Ethics Committee for 10 years. In 2019,

Dr. Derse was elected as a fellow at the Hastings Center, the world's first and most esteemed bioethics research institute.

**Joseph Pace, MD '87**, and his wife of 33 years, Claudia, are living in Eagle River, Alaska. Dr. Pace is a locum psychiatrist at the Alaska Psychiatric Institute. He served 20 years in the United States Air Force (USAF) followed by 13 years at the Alaska VA in Anchorage. He was psychiatry clinic chief with both the USAF and VA.



**James P. (Jim) Thomas\***, PhD '89, MD '91, GME '95, a professor of medicine (hematology and oncology) at MCW, was a 2021 recipient of MCW's

*Distinguished Service Award*, MCW's highest faculty and staff honor. Since joining the MCW faculty in 2010 as associate director of translational research and medical director of the Clinical Trials Office in the MCW Cancer Center, he has led a transformation of the cancer clinical trials enterprise at MCW. Dr. Thomas developed, planned and orchestrated the creation of a consolidated clinical cancer research model at MCW that reflects the National Cancer Institute's expectations of designated cancer centers.

Dr. Thomas also serves as a medical oncologist with a focus on gastrointestinal cancers and is section chief for solid tumor oncology in the department of medicine's division of hematology and oncology. He was interim co-director of MCW's Cancer Center from 2018–2020.

**MCW MAGAZINE** wants news of your accomplishments and activities. We encourage you to send updates through ENGAGE, MCW's online platform for alumni. You also can send updates by email to [alumni@mcw.edu](mailto:alumni@mcw.edu).

## 1990s



**Col. Michael Borkowski, MD '90**, was named the 2021 "Doctor of the Year" by the *Milwaukee Business Journal*. Dr. Borkowski is an occupational medicine

physician with the US Department of Veterans Affairs and a flight surgeon with the Wisconsin Air National Guard. He also serves as medical director of occupational health for the Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin health network.

**Mark Dy-Liacco, MD '92**, was appointed as clinical associate professor of surgery at the University of Buffalo's Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. Dr. Dy-Liacco's research focuses on liver, kidney and pancreas transplantation, hepatobiliary surgery and surgical critical care.

**Gustavo D. Heudebert, MD, GME '92**, has been named editor-in-chief of a new digital, open access, peer-reviewed journal, *Annals of Internal Medicine: Clinical Cases*. Dr. Heudebert's appointment was announced by the American College of Physicians and the American Heart Association, co-publishers of the new journal. He is professor emeritus of general internal medicine at the University of Alabama Heersink School of Medicine, where he previously served as dean of the medical school's Montgomery campus and as associate dean of graduate medical education.

**Arthur Arena, MD, GME '94**, who is board-certified in obstetrics and gynecology, is in private practice in Milwaukee, Wis., where he serves on the staff of Ascension Wisconsin St. Francis Hospital.

**Bruce Cohen, MD, FEL '97**, is CEO of OrthoCarolina in Charlotte, N.C. He is past president of the American Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Society and was appointed to the board of the Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Foundation.

**Yoon Hang Kim, MD '97**, is medical director of integrative medicine for WellMed Medical Management in San Antonio, Texas. He also is the author of *Tao of Healing: A Story of Georgia Integrative Medicine*.

**Jeff Bahr, MD '98, GME '01**, is chief medical group officer and president of the Advocate Aurora Medical Group at Advocate Aurora Health, headquartered in Downers Grove, Ill., and Milwaukee, Wis. Dr. Bahr oversees operations for a group of more than 3,600 physicians and nearly 2,000 advanced practice clinicians for the largest nonprofit healthcare organization in both states. He also is accountable for Advocate Aurora Health's Research Institute and academic programs. Dr. Bahr serves on the board of the Wisconsin Hospital Association and chairs the board of directors for Open Arms Free Clinic in Elkhorn, Wis.

**James McGovern, MD '98**, has been promoted to chief medical officer for PeaceHealth Oregon in Eugene. He also serves as the medical network's vice president of medical affairs. He previously served as system vice president of medical affairs at ThedaCare in Wisconsin's Fox Valley.

**Lyle Ignace, MD, GME '99**, has followed in his father's footsteps as medical director of the Gerald L. Ignace Indian Health Center, a healthcare resource for Native people in Milwaukee, Wis. His father, Gerald Ignace, MD '65, GME '72, was one of the founders of the health center in 1973. It is one of more than 40 urban Indian health organizations

*Continued on page 32*

nationwide that contract with the Indian Health Service, part of the US Department of Health and Human Services.

## 2000s



**Bruce (BJ) Miller, Jr., MD, GME '03**, is a professor of neurology and a hospice and palliative care specialist at the University of California San Francisco.

While a sophomore at Princeton University, he survived electrocution from a powerline that resulted in the amputation of both his legs below the knee and his left arm below the elbow. Dr. Miller said that as an intern at MCW he took an elective in hospice care that changed his career. Dr. Miller was the keynote speaker at MCW-Milwaukee's Commencement Ceremony in 2019.

**Shawn Bartel, MD, GME '04**, a board-certified pediatric and internal medicine physician, has joined the Huron (Mich.) Regional Medical Center medical staff. During residency training at MCW, Dr. Bartel served as chief medical officer for the 118<sup>th</sup> Medical Bravo Company in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom with the Wisconsin National Guard.

**Joseph Shea, MD '04**, has joined Kingman Regional Medical Center in Kingman, Ariz., as a board-certified obstetrician/gynecologist.

**Heman Dave, MD '07**, completed a musculoskeletal radiology fellowship at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Fla. in 2013. He is currently a musculoskeletal radiologist in private practice in Melbourne, Fla. He reports that he has three beautiful children and loves spending time with them and his wife.



**Dawn Borromeo Beaulieu, MD, FEL '09**, is the director of Vanderbilt University Medical Center's Functional Medicine

Inflammatory Bowel Disease Clinic and Inflammatory Bowel Disease Pediatric Transition Clinic in Nashville, Tenn.

## 2010s



**Karri Adamson, MD '11, GME '17**, a plastic surgeon with a special interest in advanced breast reconstruction, has joined BayCare Clinic's Plastic Surgery and Skin

Specialists in Green Bay, Wis.

**Sarah Parker, PhD '11**, is a researcher at the Smidt Heart Institute at Cedars Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, where she is studying molecular signatures of atherosclerosis.

**Kevin Chen, MD, FEL '14**, is a member of the Illinois Bone and Joint Institute in Des Plaines, Ill.

**Sheldon Garrison, PhD, FEL '14**, joined Rogers Behavioral Health in Milwaukee, Wis., as a research scientist for Rogers Research Center. Dr. Garrison's research has focused on rare diseases and drug development.



**Peter Henning, MD '15**, has joined OrthoSouth medical group as an upper extremity orthopedic surgeon. He sees patients at the group's clinics in

Tennessee and Mississippi. He has authored a number of research papers on hand issues, including arthritis of the thumb and carpometacarpal arthroplasty (joint replacement).

**Jacqueline Watchmaker, MD '16**, joined US Dermatology Partners in Phoenix and Scottsdale, Ariz., as a board-certified dermatologist.

**Brian Robertson-Dick, MD, GME '17**, has been named medical director of the newly opened Milwaukee Rehabilitation Hospital in Greenfield, Wis. He is board-certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation and brain injury medicine.

**Meredith Buck, MD '18**, a native of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, has joined Marquette (Mich.) Family Medicine.

**Franklin Chang, MD '18**, a family medicine physician, has joined the Elmhurst (Ill.) Memorial Medical Group.

**Martha Grace Courtright, MD '18**, has joined Essentia Health-Hayward Clinic (Wis.), where she specializes in family medicine with obstetrics.

## 2020s



**Vijay Bandhakavi, MD, FEL '21**, has joined South Georgia Medical Center in Valdosta, Ga., as a pulmonary care specialist.

Previously, Dr. Bandhakavi was a pulmonary, critical care and sleep physician at Gundersen Health System in La Crosse, Wis.



**Ryan Stever, MD, GME '21**, has joined the Gundersen Health Clinic in Decorah, Iowa, as a staff psychiatrist. He completed his residency training

through MCW's psychiatric residency program in Central Wisconsin.



**Kelly Walker, MD, FEL '21**, has joined Posterity Health in Parker, Colo., as medical director. Posterity Health is a digital male fertility management platform designed to help assess,

evaluate and treat male fertility. Dr. Walker completed her fellowship in male fertility and microsurgery at MCW. Her research focuses on quality improvement and telehealth to deliver male fertility care.

**CORRECTION:** On page 12 of the Fall 2021 issue of *MCW Magazine/Annual Report*, Dr. Nicole Lohr was erroneously listed as "PhD '06." She earned her PhD at MCW in 2004.



# IN MEMORIAM

## 1940s

**Harland C. Dangle, MD '44**, of Middleton, Wis., died on March 26, 2021, at the age of 100. Dr. Dangle received accelerated medical training at the Marquette University School of Medicine in the early 1940s in preparation to serve in World War II. Following his military service, he became a pathologist practicing at various hospitals and clinics for the next 40 years.

## 1950s

**Alfred Edgar Kritter, MD '55**, died on January 30, 2022, at the age of 93. Dr. Kritter was the first orthopaedic surgeon in Waukesha (Wis.) County and was founder of Orthopaedic Associates of Wisconsin. Dr. Kritter was an assistant clinical professor of orthopaedic surgery at MCW and founded the Juvenile Amputee and Congenital Limb Deficiency Center at Children's Wisconsin, as well as the Milwaukee County General Hospital Adult Amputee Clinic (now located at Froedtert Hospital).

**Donald J. Carek, MD '56**, of Davidson, N.C., died on February 6, 2021, at the age of 89. He initially served as a pediatrician in the US Army from 1956–1959 and then as a child and adolescent psychiatrist. He served for more than 30 years as a faculty member at MCW and later at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston.

**Paul W. Dishart, MD '59**, died on November 5, 2021, at the age of 88. Dr. Dishart practiced family medicine in Pittsburgh, Pa., for 62 years. He was the founder and director of medical education at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center's St. Margaret Hospital, where in 1965 he established one of the nation's first family medicine residency training programs.

## 1960s

**Edward Francis Banaszak, MD '60, PhD**, of Naples, Fla., died on January 27, 2022, at the age of 86. Dr. Banaszak was an internist specializing in pulmonary medicine. During his career, he served as chief of staff at Milwaukee's St. Mary's Hospital.

**William Moskalik, MD '61**, died on January 17, 2022, at the age of 90. He was an obstetrician/gynecologist in Canfield, Ohio.

**William Joseph Pier, Jr., MD '61**, died on August 27, 2021.

**Thomas P. Straub, MD '62**, died on January 17, 2022, at the age of 85. Dr. Straub, who was an obstetrician/gynecologist in Toledo, Ohio, said he was inspired to become an obstetrician during his last clinical rotation at the Marquette University School of Medicine.

**Louis H. Weiland, MD '64**, of Rochester, Minn., died on March 17, 2021, at the age of 88. As a pathologist at the Mayo Clinic, he authored or co-authored more than 200 papers on clinical pathology. When Mayo Clinic opened a facility in Scottsdale, Ariz., Dr. Weiland was named head of surgical pathology there.

**Peter Hansen, MD '67**, died on November 27, 2021, at the age of 81. Dr. Hansen served for 33 years as an anesthesiologist at Elmbrook Memorial Hospital in Brookfield, Wis.

**Stephen C. Elliott, MD '69**, of Loveland, Colo., died in November 2021. Dr. Elliott began his medical career serving through the US Public Health Service and providing medical care at the Blackfeet Reservation, located just outside Glacier National Park in Browning, Mont. Following his service, Dr. Elliott continued to practice as an emergency department physician at St. Vincent's Hospital in Billings, Mont.,

where he was a founding member of the hospital's flight-for-life team. He retired from medicine to become a noted wildlife artist.

## 1970s

**Alan B. Spacone, MD '72**, of Mesa, Ariz., died on August 9, 2020, at the age of 76. Dr. Spacone worked as an emergency physician and was a chief medical officer for the Tuba City (Ariz.) Regional Health Care Corporation.

**Thomas C. Schneider, MD '74**, died on January 3, 2022, at the age of 75. For more than three decades, he treated burn center patients at Milwaukee's St. Mary's Hospital, where he also served as medical director and chair of the department of surgery. He also was an assistant clinical professor of surgery at MCW. Dr. Schneider was a founder of the Wisconsin Association for Fire Safety's Camp for Burn Injured Youth.

**Timothy Lechmaier, MD '77**, died on September 15, 2021. He practiced general internal medicine at the Dean Clinic in Madison, Wis., from 1980 until his retirement in 2014. He was a clinical adjunct professor of medicine at the University of Wisconsin, assistant medical director of Dean Health Plan, co-director of quality improvement at Dean Medical Center and served on the boards of directors at Dean Health Plan, Dean Health Systems and BSP Free Clinic in Madison.

**Michael E. Gates, MD '78**, died October 28, 2021. He was an emergency medicine physician at Coldwater (Mich.) Community Health Center from 1980 until his retirement in 2005.

*Continued on page 34*

# IN MEMORIAM

## 1980s

**Mark A. Beilke, MD, FEL '87**, died on November 26, 2021. He was a former professor and chief of MCW's division of infectious disease from 2006–2013. Throughout his time at MCW, Dr. Beilke was involved in clinical trials focused on HIV and research studies on Human T Cell Leukemia Virus Type 2 (HTLV-2), in addition to his infectious disease clinical practice specializing in the treatment of people living with HIV. Dr. Beilke retired from MCW in 2017 and remained an adjunct faculty member.

**Robert Chad Wisco, MD, GME '87**, died on September 5, 2021, at the age of 64. Dr. Wisco was in private practice in rheumatology in Milwaukee from 1990–1995. He then relocated to Sioux City, Iowa, where he practiced until his retirement in February 2021.

## 1990s

**Robert Salvador Conte, MD, MPH '95**, died on August 6, 2021. He was board-certified in both occupational medicine and internal medicine. He was in private practice in Houston, Texas, from 1975–1989. In 1989, he became corporate medical director of Halliburton and other energy-related companies, with worldwide responsibilities. In 2016, he became a cattle rancher in College Station, Texas, where he also served on the board of directors of Baylor Scott & White Hospital.

**Robert Manz, MD '97**, died on November 9, 2021, at the age of 50. An orthopedic surgeon, he started his own private practice, M-Ortho, in 2015 in Cedarburg, Wis. He also served on the medical staff of Ascension Wisconsin Columbia St. Mary's Hospital Ozaukee.

## Special Remembrances

**Ellis D. Avner, MD**, died on December 25, 2021, at the age of 73. Dr. Avner was founding associate dean for pediatric research at MCW, founding director of the Children's Research Institute of Children's Wisconsin, and director of the multidisciplinary program for childhood polycystic kidney disease in the division of nephrology at the Children's Hospital and Health System of Wisconsin. He retired in 2015 as emeritus professor of pediatrics and physiology at MCW.

Dr. Avner held leadership positions in numerous professional organizations including the Society of Pediatric Research, the International Pediatric Nephrology Association, the American Society of Transplantation, and the Polycystic Kidney Disease Foundation. He also served as president of the American Society of Pediatric Nephrology and the Council of American Kidney Societies.

After retiring, Dr. Avner received lifetime achievement awards from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Society of Pediatric Nephrology and the International Society of Pediatric Nephrology. Dr. Avner served on the editorial boards of 15 major journals in the areas of nephrology and developmental biology. He was an editor of the last five editions of the standard global textbook of his subspecialty, *Pediatric Nephrology*. He was the author of more than 340 original articles, invited reviews, chapters and books on renal developmental biology, polycystic kidney disease and pediatric nephrology.

**Suzanne Torcivia Haskell\*** died in Scottsdale, Ariz., on December 30, 2021. A major benefactor of MCW, she was married to MCW alumnus David S. Haskell, MD '68, for 53 years. Additionally, she was the daughter of MCW alumnus Santo Torcivia, MD '32. In 2013, Suzanne and David Haskell established the David S. Haskell, MD, Endowed Chair in Orthopaedic Education at MCW.

**John C. Koss\*** died on December 21, 2021, at the age of 90. He was the founder and former chair of the Koss Corporation of Milwaukee, Wis. In 1958, Mr. Koss co-developed the world's first high-fidelity stereo phone. In the 1980s, Koss and the Koss Corporation established the Koss Auditory Center for Research and Treatment in MCW's department of otolaryngology and communication sciences. He later funded the Koss Cochlear Implant Program at MCW. In 2000, he endowed the John C. Koss Chair in Otolaryngology and Communication Sciences.

**James Wigdale\*** died on January 26, 2022, at the age of 85. He was an MCW Trustee Emeritus and served on MCW's board of trustees from 1992–2006, including as chair from July 1997 to June 2000. Wigdale was CEO and chair of the board of Milwaukee's Marshall & Ilsley Bank (now BMO Harris) during the 1990s and early 2000s. In 2019, Wigdale and his wife, Libby, established the Wigdale Professorship of Microbiome Research at MCW to support a scientist who studies the microbiome and its impact on human health.

— RICHARD N. (DICK) KATSCHKE

\*MCW is grateful to these individuals for their Legacy Society memberships.

# Kenneth B. Simons, MD



Kenneth B. Simons, MD, is the senior associate dean for graduate medical education and accreditation, executive director and designated institutional official of MCWAH, Inc., and professor of ophthalmology and pathology.

## What Drives You?

I was driven by the desire to make the world a better place through the words of Robert Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and understood that education was essential to accomplish that. My father instilled in me the importance of love of all humanity, and the lyrics of his favorite song, “Eve of Destruction,” serve as constant inspiration to work with others to keep moving forward in making our communities safer and healthier.

## What Has Been the Highlight of Your Career?

While I have been truly blessed to have had numerous roles in shaping academic medicine and medical regulation, the highlight has to be my leadership roles at MCW. I have been fortunate to have helped shape the learning environment of thousands of medical students and housestaff as they become the current and future healthcare workforce, providing competent, compassionate medical care to patients around the globe for years to come.

## What Do You Still Hope to Accomplish Over Your Career?

I still have many miles to go in continuing to make a positive difference in the learning environment for our MCWAH trainees, program coordinators and colleagues that will hopefully contribute to an even healthier, safer and better world for the communities we serve while ensuring the well-being of our healthcare workforce and those who support it.

## What Would You Like Your MCW Legacy to Be?

Despite my flaws, I served MCW with kindness but with candor. The words of Seneca remind us that every person we meet provides an opportunity to practice kindness, and that kindness will ripple through the universe and into eternity. And as for candor, failing to speak up for the things in which you believe is when your own freedom ends.

## What One Piece of Advice Would You Like to Share With Your Colleagues?

I would base my counsel on the words of the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Aung San Suu Kyi: “You should never let your fears prevent you from doing what you know is right.” And just to take it a step further, remember that as Dr. King noted, “The time is always right to do the right thing.”

For more than 30 years, Dr. Simons has helped shape medical education not only at MCW but also throughout Wisconsin, the nation and around the globe.

He was recruited to the MCW Eye Institute in 1989 to establish its comprehensive ophthalmology service as well as to direct its residency program. In 1995, he became the senior associate dean for academic affairs to oversee all aspects of undergraduate medical education.

In 2010, Dr. Simons transitioned his leadership to graduate medical education and has since overseen the education of thousands of residents and fellows as they complete one of the more than 100 training programs through the Medical College of Wisconsin Affiliated Hospitals (MCWAH), Inc.

Beyond MCW, Dr. Simons served on the Wisconsin Medical Examining Board (MEB) and was elected chair of the MEB eight times by his peers. He also has served as a site visitor and board member for the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, and as chair of the American Medical Association Section on Medical Schools Governing Council. He is a past board member of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), the National Resident Matching Program and past chair of ACGME-International Hospital based/Surgery Review Committee.

Most recently, Dr. Simons was installed as chair of the Federation of State Medical Boards in May 2021, becoming only the second person to represent Wisconsin in this role. ■

— KARRI STOCK

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