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FALL / ANNUAL REPORT 2024

MCW *magazine*



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MCW

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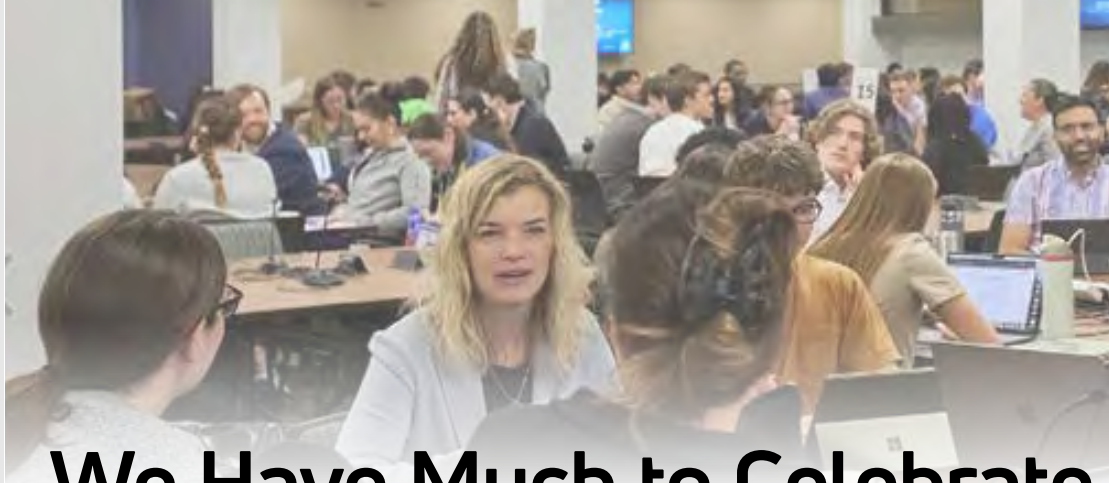
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We Have Much to Celebrate

Throughout 2024, we have been celebrating our institution's many wonderful assets, successes and new initiatives – several of which we have shared in the past two issues of *MCW Magazine* and others that we are highlighting in this publication.

In the Spring 2024 issue, the cover story featured a 20th anniversary tribute to the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin (AHW) Endowment, which provides funding and resources to researchers, organizations and communities to improve the health and people of our state. Since 2004, AHW has invested more than \$338 million into more than 600 projects reaching all corners of Wisconsin, focused on community health improvement, research and health workforce education.

The cover story in our Summer 2024 issue celebrated the ribbon-cutting ceremony to commemorate the completion and occupancy of the administrative floors of ThriveOn King – a milestone achievement of the ThriveOn Collaboration, a joint venture among MCW, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and Royal Capital. The issue also highlighted the beam-signing event and progress on the new MCW Cancer Research Building, anticipated to be completed in 2025.

In this issue we are pleased to share several new initiatives and ongoing endeavors that underscore our growth, positivity and optimism for a sustainable future for our institution.

The cover story (pages 16-21) provides a comprehensive overview of the new MCWfusion™ Curriculum, which launched in July 2023 following more than four years of planning and development. This new phased curriculum integrates foundational science and clinical medicine, and features clinically applicable, fully integrated basic science teaching; active, small group and inquiry-based learning methods; patient

care and healthcare team experiences; and individualized, differentiated training.

The goals of the new curriculum are to produce competent well-rounded physicians who will be excellent clinicians in any specialty and are prepared to practice in the rapidly evolving future healthcare environment and become life-long learners; and to provide students with opportunities to develop skills for specific career goals. The curriculum is delivered in three phases: integration of foundational science and early clinical training; core clinical experiences; and individualized training differentiating toward the students' specialty residency choices.

Additional stories in this issue that highlight innovative initiatives include the Health Equity Scholars Program aimed at increasing the number of physicians who practice in Milwaukee and care for the city's at-risk populations (page 9); and new rural clinical rotation opportunities for MCW pharmacy students in their third (and final) year of the curriculum to complete rotations at rural sites in central or northeast Wisconsin (pages 10-11). We also share a story about MCW cancer investigators who recently treated the 100th patient in a cutting-edge CAR T therapy clinical trial for patients with B-cell malignancies (page 23).

Philanthropy supports our efforts to drive health innovation, improve the health of our communities and train a new generation of highly skilled healthcare professionals. In this issue we share stories that highlight funding for crucial startup funds for multiple brain tumor research projects (page 12), for early-stage investigators conducting research related to cardiovascular health or disease (page 13) and for major support for the Uecker Chair in Pancreatic Research (pages 14-15).

During the past two years we have worked diligently to improve MCW's financial position following several years



at MCW!

of COVID- and macroeconomic-related disruptions. Our fiscal year 2024 margin faced challenges for the first three quarters, but better-than-expected productivity, payment rates and payor mix in the fourth quarter, central cost savings and Froedtert Health’s positive fiscal year performance and subsequent variable fund distribution elevated MCW’s projected margin of 2.2–2.3 percent above the FY24 forecast target of under 1.6 percent (see FY24 Finance Report on page 35). We are grateful to all in the MCW community for this essential work.

Our strong financials and a solid balance sheet support consistent annual investments in facilities and technology as well as help deliver excellence across our four missions. We are pleased to report that MCW’s bond ratings were reaffirmed in 2024 by both S&P and Moody’s and have been maintained since 2019. And we received record funding of nearly \$132 million from the National Institutes of Health during this past fiscal year (see pages 4–5 for one such grant renewal) and are a top 80 research institution (out of more than 20,000) in the US according to the National Science Foundation.

Also in this issue we say a hearty “thank you!” to Joseph E. Kerschner, MD ’90, FEL ’98, MCW’s executive vice president, provost and the Julia A. Uihlein Dean of the School of Medicine (SOM), who will step away from his executive leadership roles at the end of the calendar year and transition to become dean emeritus of the SOM as of January 1, 2025. Dr. Kerschner will return to the faculty on a full-time basis as a professor in the departments of otolaryngology and communication sciences, and microbiology & immunology,

continue his work in the Kerschner Laboratory and maintain his pediatric otolaryngology practice at Children’s Wisconsin. Additionally, Dr. Kerschner will direct the newly formed Center for Otologic Drug Discovery at MCW and will have deeper involvement with MCW’s Institute for Health & Equity.

It is impossible to encapsulate the full span of Dr. Kerschner’s contributions and accomplishments during his almost 14 years as an executive leader, which have had a transformative impact on MCW’s four missions. He has brought an infectious enthusiasm, energy and work ethic to his many roles at MCW. Further, he has helped to elevate MCW’s missions, support our people, enhance our visibility – throughout the state, country and globally – and enrich our partnerships across multiple venues and entities. We are pleased to share a tribute to Dr. Kerschner’s lasting legacy on pages 6–7 of this issue.

We are deeply grateful to our alumni, donors, partners, faculty, staff and learners for your continued dedication and commitment to MCW during 2024. We believe we can create a bright future together through shared ideas, meaningful collaboration and thoughtful investments.

Elizabeth (Betsy) Brenner, Chair, MCW Board of Trustees

Joseph E. Kerschner, MD ’90, FEL ’98, Provost and Executive Vice President, and the Julia A. Uihlein, MA, Dean of the School of Medicine

Daisy Sahoo, PhD, Dean, School of Graduate Studies

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

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On the Cover: Phase 1 new curriculum students train on a high-fidelity physiological mannequin in the Standardized Teaching Assessment Resource (STAR) Center. Clockwise from left bottom: Anuja Samant, Jimmy Dowd, Miracle Powell, Tasnim Mahi. (Photo courtesy of Melissa Behling.)

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

This publication is a hybrid – joining together some of the content of a fall magazine with the broader focus of an annual report. On pages 24-29 we share special content for alumni including award recipients and new MCW/Marquette Medical Alumni Association board members, as well as photos from Alumni Weekend and Class Reunions. Pages 30-33 are devoted to sections on Alumni News and In Memoriam. Our fiscal 2024 financials are included on the inside back cover (page 35).

STAT REPORT

Anthony J. Perez, MEd, Named Executive Director of the MCW/Marquette Medical Alumni Association



Anthony J. Perez, MEd, was named the executive director of the MCW/Marquette Medical Alumni Association, effective October 1, 2024.

Perez already has built strong relationships with many alumni, having served as interim director of the Alumni Association from February 2019 to March 2020. He also has deep connections to MCW leadership, faculty, staff and current students through nine years of leadership positions in student recruitment, enrollment marketing and national outreach.

“Most of my professional experiences have been focused on building and maintaining relationships, and this will continue to be a strong focus of mine in my new role,” Perez says. “I’m excited to build upon the strong foundation that the Alumni Association has created and to enhance the ways in which we engage with alumni from our schools and programs. My ultimate goal is to further elevate MCW’s standing and impact as a changemaking institution.”

Perez, a key leader in attracting students to the MCW Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy and Graduate Studies, has an extensive background in organizational strategy, budgeting, educational marketing and boosting MCW’s national reputation as a leading educator of healthcare professionals. He earned both his undergraduate and master’s degrees from Northern Illinois University.

He continues, “I was first drawn to MCW because of the positive educational experience that my spouse had while enrolled as a graduate student. It continues to be a great honor to represent the institution that has given my family and me so much in the way of professional preparation and support. I can’t wait to support our strong alumni community in this new role.” ■

Research Training Program in Vision Science Renewed by NIH

MCW’s Research Training Program (T32) in Vision Science has been approved for another five-year term by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The program, which began in 2002, will offer four NIH-supported predoctoral positions, up from three during the most recent five-year term.

The goal of the NIH T32 program is to prepare qualified trainees for careers that have a significant impact on the health-related research needs of the nation. Since the program’s inception, MCW has supported 40 predoctoral trainees.

Program graduates have active careers in medicine and science, and many continue to be actively involved in the field of vision.

More than 60 percent of program graduates hold faculty-level positions at various prestigious institutions or have developed successful nonacademic biomedical science careers, with more recent graduates continuing their training via various postdoctoral fellowship programs.

“We are thrilled to continue the long-standing success of our T32 training program,” says Elena Semina, PhD, director of MCW’s Research Training Program in Vision Science and professor of ophthalmology and visual sciences. “Our goal is to prepare trainees for research careers in ocular and vision research in both academic and nonacademic routes. Our faculty group of mentors is well-

MCW-Green Bay Student Group Receives National Honors

The Family Medicine Student Association at MCW-Green Bay received a pair of awards from the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) that recognized the group's exceptional efforts to foster interest in careers in family medicine.

The two AAFP Program of Excellence Awards, distributed at the academy's 2024 National Conference of Family Medicine Residents and Medical Students, include one for *First-Time Applicants* and another for *Excellence in Exposure to Family Medicine and Family Physicians*.

The *First-Time Applicants* award honored the group as newcomers who showed a high level of commitment to advocating for the specialty. The *Excellence in Exposure* award recognized the many activities that the MCW-Green Bay student group has held to support and encourage interest in the specialty, including meet-and-greets, community service opportunities, workshops and panel discussions.

The national conference, which took place August 1-3 in Kansas City, Mo., is dedicated to strengthening family physicians and their communities through decades of effective representation, leadership and advocacy. ■

(l-r) Elizabeth Glynn, Hannah Wheeler and Allison Eierman, members of the MCW-Green Bay Class of 2025, accepted two awards on behalf of the campus's Family Medicine Student Association at the National Conference of Family Medicine Residents and Medical Students in August 2024.



positioned to provide students a broad appreciation of the major features of the visual system, a contemporary understanding of the diseases that impact vision, and modern research skills and technologies for experimental work in the visual system.”

The mentor group for MCW's training program has increased to 12 faculty members, including six new participants with highly innovative and dynamic research programs. The mentors span several departments, including ophthalmology and visual sciences, biomedical engineering (a partnership with Marquette University), cell biology, neurobiology and anatomy, and biophysics. ■



Thank You, Dr. Kerschner!

Joseph E. Kerschner, MD '90, FEL '98, MCW's executive vice president, provost and the Julia A. Uihlein Dean of the School of Medicine (SOM), is stepping away from these executive leadership roles effective December 31, 2024. He has been named dean emeritus of the SOM as of January 1, 2025.

As Dr. Kerschner returns to the faculty on a full-time basis as a professor in the departments of otolaryngology and communication sciences, and microbiology & immunology, he will continue his work in the Kerschner Laboratory, which has been continuously funded by the National Institutes of Health for more than two decades and has, among other successes, developed patented drug delivery systems for the treatment of middle and inner ear diseases.

Further, Dr. Kerschner will continue to practice as a pediatric otolaryngologist at Children's Wisconsin, where his clinical focus is on otitis media, voice disorders and vascular anomalies in children. Additionally, he will direct the newly formed Center for Otologic Drug Discovery at MCW and will have deeper involvement with MCW's Institute for Health & Equity – continuing the work he has emphasized as dean of the SOM.

An MCW faculty member since 1998, Dr. Kerschner was named the tenth dean of the MCW SOM and executive vice president in November 2011 (following 11 months as interim dean) and was installed in these roles in February 2012. Prior to his interim appointment, Dr. Kerschner was CEO of Children's Specialty Group. Upon his leadership transition, Dr. Kerschner will have served in the dean's role for 14 years, which is one of the longest tenures of any current medical school dean in the country.

Dr. Kerschner 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.

It is impossible to encapsulate the full span of Dr. Kerschner's contributions and accomplishments during his almost 14 years as an executive leader, which

Dr. Kerschner with a medical student, 2011



Dr. Kerschner upon his receipt of the Alumnus of the Year award from the MCW/Marquette Medical Alumni Association, 2015



have had a transformative impact on MCW's missions. Several of the most substantive achievements at MCW during Dr. Kerschner's tenure are noted below.

The SOM substantially expanded its education programs – increasing the number of medical students on its Milwaukee campus and opening regional campuses in Green Bay and Central Wisconsin.

Dr. Kerschner led two successful accreditations for the SOM by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education and substantively transformed its curriculum, most recently with the launch of a new curriculum in 2023 (see cover story on pages 16–21).

MCW's graduate medical education program also has greatly expanded, including new training positions for psychiatry and behavioral health, and new residency programs in family and community medicine.

MCW's research grant expenditures have reached the highest level in the institution's history, with NIH funding nearly doubling from 2014 to 2023. In addition, the development of new research and academic areas of expertise have included the formation of a joint Biomedical Engineering Department with Marquette University, a new Data Science Institute and the development of several new centers of research excellence.

Under Dr. Kerschner's leadership, more than a decade-long commitment to the development of a National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated Cancer Center will lead to the submission of the MCW NCI Cancer Center Support Grant this academic year following substantial innovation and growth in cancer research, clinical trials and clinical care.

Renovations and new research facilities have enabled the SOM to create extensive new research space to support its growing research mission, including a new Cancer Research Building that is scheduled to open in mid-2025.

Dr. Kerschner and medical students celebrate during MCW's 125th anniversary gala event, September 2018.



Clinically, Dr. Kerschner's tenure as the leader of MCW's physician specialty practices has represented an era of enormous growth. In 2011, MCW's SOM clinicians provided care through more than 1.6 million inpatient and outpatient visits. In 2023, the school's clinicians provided care through more than 4.8 million inpatient, outpatient and telemedicine visits. Additionally, Dr. Kerschner has led MCW's clinicians in collaborating with MCW's health system partners, resulting in a successful new 30-year affiliation agreement with Children's Wisconsin and tremendous growth in adult healthcare through acquisitions and mergers.

The SOM has invested in its community engagement mission in numerous ways, including more than \$338 million of investment into more than 600 projects statewide focused on community health improvement, research and health workforce education through the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment. In addition, during Dr. Kerschner's tenure, MCW's community engagement mission has grown substantially to include the reformation of the Institute for Health & Equity, the creation of the Center for Advancing Population Science, expansion of the Office of Community Engagement, and the SOM's receipt of the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement – one of only five medical schools in the US to be so designated.

Dr. Kerschner has collaborated with faculty leaders, MCW's trustees and the finance team to create \$1.6 billion in endowments. He also has worked with many others to help MCW become a much more inclusive organization; under his leadership, the SOM has more than tripled the number of women leaders.

Dr. Kerschner has held numerous national leadership roles in medicine, including serving the National Academy of Medicine in its work to address physician well-being; 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

Dr. Kerschner with a patient, 2014



(Top) Dr. Kerschner and Michael Dunn, MD '62, at Dr. Kerschner's installation as dean of the School of Medicine, February 2012

(Bottom): Dr. Raymond and Dr. Kerschner at the installation of Dr. George MacKinnon as founding dean of the School of Pharmacy, April 2016

Society of Pediatric Otolaryngology; and president of the International Society for Otitis Media. His leadership on the national stage has brought to the forefront the achievements and "essentiality" of MCW.

"I have always been grateful for the trust that MCW has placed in me from the earliest times as I journeyed forward as a clinician and scientist," Dr. Kerschner shares. "It has been an enormous privilege to be part of the leadership teams here at MCW as we have achieved tremendous success over the past 14 years, beginning with my interim role as dean of the School of Medicine. I look forward to continuing our important work and supporting MCW and its leaders as we march forward to additional successes as an essential and anchor institution in our region and beyond."

"Dr. Kerschner has been a trusted thought leader and partner since I arrived at MCW in July 2010," says John R. Raymond, Sr., MD, president and CEO. "He has brought an infectious enthusiasm, energy and work ethic to his many roles at MCW. He has helped to elevate MCW's missions, support our people, enhance our visibility – throughout the state, country and globally – and enrich our partnerships across multiple venues and entities."

Effective January 1, 2025, Deborah M. Costakos, MD '98, MS, will serve as interim dean of the SOM, and Cheryl A. Maurana, PhD, as interim provost. Dr. Costakos, who joined MCW in 2009, is chair and professor of the department of ophthalmology and visual sciences – a position she has held since January 2020. Dr. Maurana, who joined MCW in 1995, is the Stephen and Shelagh Roell Endowed Chair, senior vice president for strategic academic partnerships, professor of bioethics and medical humanities, and founding director of the Kern National Network for Flourishing in Medicine.

A national search for the permanent dean of the SOM will launch in early 2025. There will not be an active search for a provost at this time, pending the recommendations of a task force to evaluate the structure of MCW's academic enterprise and chart a pathway to achieve the institution's vision as a health sciences university.

The Spring 2022 issue of *MCW Magazine* (pages 12-13) included a Q&A with Dr. Kerschner as he reflected on his first decade of dean of the SOM as well as a timeline of institutional achievements during his tenure. ■

– SARA L. WILKINS



Dr. Kerschner with a patient, 2022

MCW Welcomes New Leaders



Laura D. Cassidy, PhD, MS
Director of the Institute for Health & Equity



Shelly D. Timmons, MD, PhD
Chair of the Department of Neurosurgery and the
Sanford J. Larson, MD, PhD, Chair in Neurosurgery



Karolyn A. Wanat, MD
Chair of the Department of Dermatology and the
Thomas J. Russell Family/Milwaukee Community
Dermatologists Chair of Dermatology



Michael E. Widlansky, MD, MPH
Director of the Cardiovascular Center



Joni S. Williams, MD, MPH
Director of the Center for Advancing Population Science

MCW Launches Innovative Approach to Improving Health Equity

Underrepresented communities in the Milwaukee area have a higher incidence of serious diseases including diabetes, cancer and heart disease, and also suffer from a shortage of physicians who can connect with them and provide needed medical care.

To improve health outcomes in these locales, MCW launched the Health Equity Scholars Program (HESP), an innovative program aimed at increasing the number of physicians who practice in Milwaukee and care for the city's at-risk populations. The inaugural cohort, launched in July 2024, comprises first-year medical students Gani Ali, Ciara Ayala, Alex Martinez Colindres, Miracle Powell and Dalicia Simpson – four of whom hail from the city of Milwaukee. HESP scholars receive full tuition scholarships from MCW and, once the residential space is completed at ThriveOn King in Milwaukee's Halyard Park neighborhood, will reside on-site for the remainder of their education.



Above: (l-r) The original cohort of HESP scholars includes Gani Ali, Dalicia Simpson, Alex Martinez Colindres, Ciara Ayala and Miracle Powell.

Left: (l-r) Dalicia Simpson, a Health Equity Scholars Program (HESP) scholar, meets with Betty Pace, MD '81, GME '84, an early benefactor of the program, at the launch celebration of the HESP in August 2024 at the ThriveOn King building.

“When designing the program, we looked at how we can support medical students in a different way so they feel welcome and wanted, and can put roots down in the community,” says Michael Levas, MD '05, MS, MCW professor of pediatrics and co-director of the program (along with Catherine Ferguson, MD '04, professor of pediatrics). “We also recognized that the average student leaves medical school with substantial debt. We wanted to remove the financial burden so that the students could follow their dreams, invest in themselves and become service leaders.”

Simpson says she can see the value the HESP brings to the community. “The program will train physicians who can serve the communities that look like them and who are culturally competent, communicative and compassionate. The more the patient can relate to you, the better the doctor-patient relationship will be.”

“Also, the program is going to help so many underrepresented people become doctors, which is what we need,” Simpson adds.

Other unique attributes of the HESP include providing a place-based learning experience to help the students develop a deeper connection to the community surrounding the ThriveOn building;

resources, courses and experiences that stress well-being and self-compassion and help the students thrive; and soliciting input from the community, which includes bringing community members into the selection process.

“It is an honor to be chosen by the Milwaukee community to be a part of the program to become a physician who can one day serve and give back,” shares Powell, a Milwaukee native.

The HESP received funding from the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment and donors including the Green Bay Packers Foundation; Betty S. Pace, MD '81, GME '84; Marlene D. Melzer-Lange, MD '75, and George M. Lange, MD '75; the Herd-Barber family; Mr. and Mrs. Greg Wesley; and The Yellin Center. It is currently funded to support three cohorts of five students.

“MCW has a responsibility to train our future physician workforce to meet the healthcare challenges of our time. Our new Health Equity Scholars Program will boost the number of physicians who desire to stay in Milwaukee to provide healthcare to our neighbors living in historically marginalized communities,” says Joseph E. Kerschner, MD '90, FEL '98, MCW's provost and executive vice president and the Julia A. Uihlein, MA, Dean of the School of Medicine. ■

– ANTHONY BRAZA

Interested in learning how you can impact the HESP?

Please contact Hailey Hennessy, senior director of development, at hhennessy@mcw.edu.

New Rural Clinical Rotation Option

Pharmacy Students to Network Near Their Hometowns

Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) students at the Medical College of Wisconsin now have a new opportunity to build their professional networks and gain experience working in practice sites beyond the Milwaukee area. In fall 2024, the MCW School of Pharmacy launched the Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience (APPE) Rural Health Track, which enables pharmacy students during the third (and final) year of the curriculum to complete all seven of their six-week APPE rotations at rural sites in central or northeast Wisconsin.

The MCW School of Pharmacy's Office of Experiential Education (OEE) meets individually with each pharmacy student several times throughout the three-year PharmD program. Faculty and staff dedicate time to understanding each student's personal career goals and how those goals may evolve as students gain experience working in different practice settings during weekly clinical rotations in their first two years of the program.

"What we offer students as far as individual attention during the clinical rotation selection process is unique. In many other pharmacy schools, students are required to find their own rotation sites," explains Stacy Reid, PharmD, BCPS, MCW assistant dean of experiential education and assistant professor. "Our students really appreciate that the OEE team recommends rotations in specialties that align with their interests, and even some opportunities they've never considered because they weren't aware of the career path."

The MCW School of Pharmacy has a network of more than 500 preceptors who train and mentor students at various practice sites across Wisconsin.



Madelyn Heikkila, 2025 PharmD candidate, verifies prescriptions during clinical rotations at ThedaCare Regional Medical Center in Appleton.

Students can propose their own preferred practice sites, and if there is no existing relationship with MCW, the OEE team will work to create a new affiliation for clinical rotations. This is what the team did for Jennifer Erickson, a 2025 PharmD candidate who completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and hopes to return to the area when she becomes a licensed pharmacist.

Originally from Manitowoc, Wis., Erickson developed a desire to help patients who experience gaps in healthcare – whether it be an issue of access or of hesitancy. For example, she mentions farmers who are less likely to seek care.

As part of the APPE rural track, Erickson has completed a clinical rotation at Stoughton Hospital, a 35-bed critical access hospital just southeast of Madison. She

values the sense of community that exists in the smaller hospital setting.

"We've had patients say that their family members recommended Stoughton Hospital because the pharmacist and doctor will listen to you," recalls Erickson. "That's what the rural clinical rotation track really means to me – providing patients a place where they can feel safe with their care."

Madelyn Heikkila, a 2025 PharmD candidate, is pursuing the APPE rural track in northeastern Wisconsin. She grew up in De Pere, Wis., and is participating in MCW's Undergraduate Dual-Degree Program, which allows her to earn her bachelor's degree from St. Norbert College and her PharmD degree from MCW in a total of six years.

"I really appreciate the accelerated pathway because I wanted to be able to get



If pharmacy students know they want to work in a specific area or pursue residency there, this program allows them to make vital connections while they're still in school.

– Dr. Stacey Reid



Jennifer Erickson, 2025 PharmD candidate, verifies prescriptions at Stoughton Hospital.

into the workforce sooner,” says Heikkila. “The dual-degree program allowed me to cut down on two years of schooling compared to my peers, who traditionally spend four years in undergrad and four years in pharmacy school.”

Heikkila worked as a pharmacy technician at Walgreens when she attended St. Norbert and enjoyed assisting patients with accessing medications or picking out the best over-the-counter options. During an APPE rural rotation at Network Health (an insurance company in Menasha, Wis., owned by Froedtert Health), she experienced a new avenue to help patients.

“During my comprehensive medication review phone calls, some patients would express cost concerns. I would talk with them about patient assistance programs that many manufacturers offer and mail them the application – and they would end up getting the medication at no cost,” recalls Heikkila. “That was a great feeling knowing I was able to provide that supportive care to the patient so they can access the medication that’s going to improve their health without worrying about cost.”

The rural APPE program utilizes MCW’s Green Bay, Wis., location, which is part of the St. Norbert campus. Heikkila returns to her alma mater on the last Friday of each six-week rotation block and participates in a virtual seminar with her classmates who are on MCW’s Milwaukee campus. This conference call allows Heikkila to avoid commuting while still participating in required courses to prepare for the Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Exam and the North American Pharmacist Licensure Exam.

Another perk of the APPE rural track is that students can save money on rent during the final year of pharmacy school by living with their families in their respective hometowns, as Heikkila is doing. The main benefit, however, is building professional networks at those locales.

“If pharmacy students know they want to work in a specific area or pursue residency there, this program allows them to make vital connections while they’re still in school. Every rotation is akin to a six-week job interview,” Dr. Reid often reminds students. ■

– MELISSA BEHLING

Dr. George MacKinnon installed as chair of the AACP Council of Deans



George E. MacKinnon III, PhD, DMSc (Hon.), MS, RPh, founding dean of the MCW School of Pharmacy, was installed as chair of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) Council of Deans (COD) in July 2024 after serving for a year as chair-elect. Dr. MacKinnon will serve concurrently on the COD and the AACP board of directors through 2026.

The COD’s mission is to identify and address major issues related to the conduct of professional, post-professional and graduate education, research and service in pharmacy and the pharmaceutical sciences. As chair, Dr. MacKinnon has appointed 62 COD members to various committees and taskforces for the council for the 2024-2025 year.

AACP works to enhance the quality of pharmacy education, representing 142 accredited schools of pharmacy and more than 6,400 faculty.

Strain for the Brain: Forging Bonds, Creating Memories and Supporting Brain Tumor Research

Sometimes a single moment comes together perfectly to capture the human spirit.

Such a moment occurred this past summer at the 14th annual Strain for the Brain, a 5K run and 1-mile walk event held each year to honor individuals diagnosed with brain tumors, celebrate the family and friends who support them, and advance new research in the field at MCW.

Susan Elliott, diagnosed with an aggressive brain tumor in February 2024, was one of this year’s participants. Although she has physical limitations, Elliott wanted to walk across the finish line on her own. As she neared that point, she got out of her wheelchair and with her family cheering her on, took a few determined steps across the finish line. That moment reflected a personal triumph and the persistence she had

shown throughout. Jennifer Connelly, MD ’03, GME ’08, FEL ’09, MCW professor of neurology, met with Elliott and her family the following day, during which they talked about the cherished memories created at the event.

Strain for the Brain was launched by a brain tumor survivor in May 2010 to raise awareness and help other patients realize they are not alone. The event began as a small gathering along Milwaukee’s lakefront, but steady growth from community support prompted several moves – including to the Harley-Davidson Museum, where this summer’s event was held.

In November 2023, Dr. Connelly took on responsibility for staging the event. She describes the challenge as a cathartic experience. Treating people with such a complex and debilitating disease is

difficult, but “bringing them together into this community event and to be part of it gives me goosebumps every time I talk about it because it’s just inspiring,” she shares.

More than 75 yellow-shirted “warriors” (patients who have brain tumors) and 1,200 supporters participated, raising more than \$121,000 during this summer’s event.

Over the years, Strain for the Brain has provided more than \$600,000 in crucial startup funds for multiple brain tumor research projects at MCW.

For example, funds raised from participants advanced early research by Dr. Connelly’s team concerning the drug gallium maltolate, which starves cancer cells of the iron needed to multiply. This innovative therapy has now reached patients in a phase I clinical trial.

Proceeds from the event provided funds for two \$50,000 grants supporting research in MCW’s department of radiology undertaken by assistant professors Yonggang Lu, PhD, and Samuel Bobholz, PhD.

Relaunched in January 2024 following the pandemic, a monthly brain tumor support group brings patients and their families together to share challenges and successes, and guest speakers discuss topics ranging from emotional wellness to understanding clinical trials.



The annual Strain for the Brain run/walk recognizes the persistence of its “warriors,” patients, families and caregivers striving to heal in the aftermath of a stroke.



Susan Elliott and her family at the 2024 Strain for the Brain event

From its humble beginnings, the community supporting Strain for the Brain has transformed it into a “weekend family celebration,” says Dr. Connelly, noting that some teams comprise as many as 40 family members. It also has become a yearly memorial to those who have passed away, as families who have lost loved ones return to the event to learn what’s new in brain tumor research. ■

— KEVIN ABING

Giving from the Heart, for the Heart

Sally Bentley is no stranger to traveling tough roads. She raised three children while attending Marquette University Law School fulltime and struggling to get a start in a profession with few women. She also faced several serious health episodes along the way, becoming familiar with MCW clinicians and other providers treating patients and families at Froedtert Hospital.

And now, as part of her journey, Bentley is giving back.

In her 30s, Bentley was diagnosed with mitral valve prolapse. Over time, it can lead to blood leaking across the valve, requiring clinical interventions and sometimes surgery.

In 2006, Bentley's daughter Kimberly R. Steiner, MD '09, who was then a medical student, connected Bentley with an MCW cardiologist who determined that she needed immediate open heart surgery. The heart and vascular team used a cutting-edge robotic method to repair the valve, which Bentley credits with saving her life.

Since then, Bentley has undergone several cardiac interventions – including

a Watchman Device (a small, permanent implant placed in the heart to reduce the risk of stroke).

She is grateful for the “amazing, really phenomenal” care she has received from Froedtert Hospital and MCW, including from orthopaedic, colorectal and maxillofacial specialists after she was thrown from a horse in 2014 and survived a terrifying car accident in 2017.

Bentley says that cardiology was her “first love.” She enjoyed learning about the advances in cardiovascular research while serving on the MCW Cardiovascular Center Board, but wanted to do more. In 2011, she made a gift to establish the Sally Bentley ESI Pilot Award to support early-stage investigators conducting research related to cardiovascular health or disease. Her employer, We Energies, matched the gift to honor her many years as the company's legal counsel.

Bentley focused on early-stage investigators because they have a harder time securing funding for their research. “I can't imagine a better place to put money to work than in the hands of young doctors

Sally Bentley and King, 2019



who are doing wonderful things,” she says. “I don't always know what the end result is, but if I can help in the beginning when they have such a need, that makes me feel good.”

The awardees she has met impressed Bentley with their commitment and hopefulness that their research will lead to breakthrough results. Such is the case with the award's 2024 recipient, Elizabeth Sweeny, PhD, MCW assistant professor of biochemistry, whose lab is exploring the role that the signaling enzyme NOX5 plays in regulating cardiomyocytes (the cells responsible for the heart's contraction). Dr. Sweeny's lab uses human cardiomyocytes derived from induced pluripotent stem cells to analyze their electrical properties, beat frequency and contraction dynamics.

Her investigation will provide crucial insights into the heart's normal functioning and understanding of how disruptions are initiated, paving the way for new treatments for arrhythmia, heart failure and cardiomyopathies. Dr. Sweeny's dedication and innovative research reflect the best of what academic medicine offers.

Thanks to the specialized care she has received at the Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin health network, Bentley is living life to the fullest in retirement – spending time in Colorado, horseback riding, hiking with her dog and visiting with her eight grandchildren. ■

– KEVIN ABING

Sally Bentley and her children, from left to right: Todd Bentley, Kimberly Steiner, MD '09, and Lauren Mathelier at a family wedding, fall 2023



Attanasio and Selig Gifts Support Uecker Chair in Pancreatic Research

Dr. William A. Hall Announced as Inaugural Chairholder

Sue and Bud Selig and Debbie and Mark Attanasio are contributing to the Bob Uecker Chair in Pancreatic Cancer Research at the Medical College of Wisconsin in honor of legendary Milwaukee Brewers announcer and Hall of Famer Bob Uecker. Bud Selig is a Milwaukee native and served as Commissioner of Major League Baseball from 1998–2015, and Mark Attanasio is the current owner of the Brewers baseball team.

“Bob has been an incredibly important part of the Milwaukee Brewers family for decades, and we’re honored to call him a friend,” says Mark Attanasio. “Debbie and I wanted to ensure that this legacy, in his name, will support patients and families now and for many years to come.”

William A. Hall, MD, MCW professor of radiation oncology and surgery, and a member of the MCW Cancer Network, has been named the inaugural holder of the Uecker Chair in Pancreatic Cancer Research. Dr. Hall sees patients seeking treatment in the Froedtert & MCW Cancer Network and conducts basic science and clinical pancreatic cancer research.

“We are grateful for the work that Dr. Hall is doing to advance research and accelerate innovative pancreatic cancer treatments,

and we are proud to be able to make this gift in Bob’s name to the Medical College of Wisconsin,” Bud Selig shares.

“I am truly grateful to Debbie, Mark, Bud and Sue for supporting pancreatic cancer research, and am touched that they, like so many of us, are honoring Bob Uecker’s incredible career with the Brewers,” says Dr. Hall. “I am proud to

Academic medicine delivers the best available therapies to the patients of today and provides unlimited hope for the patients of tomorrow. We are very grateful for the opportunity to have the Uecker Chair as a foundation of our pancreatic cancer program.

— Dr. Douglas B. Evans

be the Uecker Chair and am dedicated to finding new treatments and cures for patients and families facing a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer.”

Dr. Hall’s appointment as the inaugural holder of the Uecker Chair was announced at a private event held at MCW in September 2024 that was attended by Uecker and his family, as well as members of the Brewers organization and MCW leaders, physicians and cancer researchers.

All of the photos were taken at a private event at MCW in September 2024 to announce the appointment of Dr. William Hall as the inaugural holder of the Uecker Chair in Pancreatic Research.

Top (l-r): Dr. Douglas Evans, Dr. William Hall, Bob Uecker and Mark Attanasio

Middle left: Bob Uecker and Mark Attanasio

Middle right: Dr. Douglas Evans and Dr. William Hall

Bottom: Dr. William Hall addresses guests

“The Medical College of Wisconsin is grateful to Bob Uecker, Bud and Sue Selig, and Debbie and Mark Attanasio for their leadership and vision in the fight against pancreatic cancer,” says John R. Raymond, Sr., MD, president and CEO of MCW. “Together, we share a common goal to eliminate cancer in our community and beyond. Their generosity speaks to the trust they’ve placed in us to accelerate pioneering pancreatic cancer research discoveries.”

The gift from the Attanasios and the Seligs follows, and supports, a 2022 contribution from Uecker to establish the Bob Uecker Chair in Pancreatic Cancer Research at MCW. Named chairs are among the highest honor an MCW faculty member can receive, providing researchers with critical funds to pursue groundbreaking discoveries and innovations. Named chairs also play a key role in attracting and retaining nationally recognized faculty to conduct their research and care for patients in Milwaukee.

Douglas B. Evans, MD, chair of the MCW department of surgery, the Donald C. Ausman Family Foundation Professor of Surgery, and professor of surgical oncology, thanks the Seligs and Attanasios for their contribution, noting the importance of philanthropy in advancing cancer research. Dr. Evans also leads MCW’s LaBahn Pancreatic Cancer Program and is internationally known for his expertise in treating pancreatic cancer patients.

“Our clinical trials for pancreatic cancer are leading the way in personalized medicine and curing more patients than ever before. The more we invest in research, the more patients will go on to live longer, richer lives despite their diagnosis,” notes Dr. Evans. “Academic medicine delivers the best available therapies to the patients of today and provides unlimited hope for the patients of tomorrow. We are very grateful for the opportunity to have the Uecker Chair as a foundation of our pancreatic cancer program.”

According to the American Cancer Society, Wisconsin has one of the highest incidence rates of pancreatic cancer (14 percent of all new cancer cases) in the nation. It estimates that more than 1,200 new cases of pancreatic cancer will be diagnosed in Wisconsin in 2024 and more than 1,000 will die of the disease. ■

— MICHAEL J. MATHIAS AND COLLEEN McDONALD



Introducing the **MCW FUSION**™ *Curriculum*

By Anthony Braza and Sara L. Wilkins

More than a decade ago, MCW medical students matriculating for the 2012-2013 academic year were the first to participate in what was then the new Discovery Curriculum, which featured a greatly expanded clinical experience in the first two years, deeper integration of basic science and clinical education, innovative interactive learning methods and individualized learning opportunities.

And while the Discovery Curriculum became the hallmark of MCW's medical education, faculty members began to recognize additional innovation was necessary, given that in 2016 and 2017, MCW had launched two regional campuses with a three-year accelerated curriculum. Change was on the horizon as early as July 2019, when leaders in the office of academic affairs convened a 12-member curriculum exploration group and planted the seed for the next iteration of MCW's medical school education.

First-year MCW-Milwaukee medical student Autumn Bell (at left) and first-year Master's in Medical Physiology program student Tasnim Mahi (at right) confer with Lisa Ann Cirillo, PhD, associate professor of cell biology, neurobiology and anatomy, and assistant dean of the basic science curriculum, during a patient-based discussion class, October 2024.





Fast forward to July 2023 with the launch of the MCWfusion™ Curriculum – a new, phased curriculum integrating foundational science and clinical medicine, featuring clinically applicable, fully integrated basic science teaching; active, small group and inquiry-based learning methods; patient care and healthcare team experiences; and individualized, differentiated training.

“When we rolled out the Discovery Curriculum in 2012, MCW hadn’t changed the curriculum in decades. We had started to fall behind other medical schools and reviewed a large amount of data on best practices,” notes José Franco, MD ’90, GME ’93, FEL ’95, MCW professor of medicine (gastroenterology/hepatology), who led the planning process as director of the Discovery Curriculum. “We had always exceeded national levels in the number of students who matched into residencies, so people questioned why we needed to change things. But the best schools are those that are continuously changing to meet the needs of their students.”

Dr. Franco currently serves as MCW’s senior associate dean for education and the MCWfusion™ Curriculum project sponsor, along with Martin Muntz, MD, GME ’05, associate dean for curriculum, vice chair and professor of medicine (general internal medicine).

“Any good curriculum is continuously evolving. Learners are different now than 10 years ago. They have an overwhelming amount of knowledge and resources, as well as different skill sets. Some have held leadership roles and possess advanced experiences in healthcare. So we needed to adapt our curriculum to this new paradigm,” says Alexandra Harrington, MD ’04, GME ’08, FEL ’09, MLS(ASCP)CM, the MCWfusion™ Curriculum’s project co-director and MCW professor of pathology.

“Current trends in medical education emphasize holistic support and learner-centered approaches, so our goal was to develop a new, interactive curriculum focused on student well-being that incorporated personalized data-driven coaching and provided opportunities for individualized learning experiences,” says Amy Prunuske, MCWfusion™ Curriculum project co-director and professor at MCW–Central Wisconsin.

THE NEW CURRICULUM TAKES SHAPE

Throughout the second half of 2019, the curriculum exploration group reviewed curricula of other schools to understand new trends in medical education, created a draft philosophy and aims for a new medical school curriculum, and convened a retreat during

which participants reviewed materials and developed sets of organized principles for curriculum.

From December 2019 through August 2020, a curriculum steering committee finalized five operating principles (*see page 19*) and key questions needed for moving forward. From September 2020 through mid-2023, the new curriculum continued to evolve with input from subcommittees, numerous planning and review meetings, design sprints and informational retreats.

The formal curriculum launch retreat was held on June 12, 2023, to enable faculty to develop a familiarity with innovations and changes within the new curriculum and the variety of student resources used to supplement/augment the learning experience, to review processes for course and program continuous quality assurance and improvement, and more – including a celebratory reception.

Dr. Franco notes, “We learned what worked and didn’t work with the Discovery Curriculum and rolled out MCWfusion with the



(l-r) Second-year MCW–Milwaukee medical students Anika Agrwal, Elena Valentyn and Lauren Cohen attend a patient based discussion class, October 2024.

understanding that we would update it in future years. We learned that students learn best in small group settings, and during the pandemic, we were able to incorporate virtual learning – a format we hadn’t used before. We also learned that we could modify the last two years of the curriculum to incorporate an individualized component. There are common components all students need to learn, but students will be following different career paths, and they will now be able to learn skills specific to their path. We also noticed that most patients receive care in an ambulatory setting, so now the curriculum includes extra time in the ambulatory setting.”

GOALS AND STRUCTURE OF THE MCW FUSION CURRICULUM

The goals of the MCWfusion™ Curriculum are: 1) to produce competent well-rounded physicians who will be excellent clinicians in any specialty and are prepared to practice in the rapidly evolving, future healthcare environment and become lifelong learners; and 2) to provide students with opportunities to develop skills for specific career goals. The new curriculum is aligned with core competencies and incorporates competency-based assessments that drive learning. Additionally, it better integrates basic science and clinical science learning and gives students increased flexibility to ensure that they are developing the competencies needed for a successful transition to residency.

Phase 1 of the new curriculum features integration of foundational science and early clinical learning (see pages 19–20).

Phase 2 features the core clinical experiences (see page 20). During **Phase 3**, students will individualize their training, differentiating towards their specialty residency choice (see page 21).

Doctoring threads are integrated throughout all phases, emphasizing communication skills, health equity, critical thinking, patient care skills, health systems science, character and professional development, and interprofessional education and practice (see below). Students are supported through learning communities, which are designed to foster student well-being and pair students with faculty navigators to provide academic coaching.

Patient-based discussions feature consistent and standardized learning sessions during which students will study cases that apply foundational science concepts to authentic clinical scenarios. Through participation in the Scholarly Concentrations program (formerly known as “Scholarly Pathways”), students will use inquiry methods to identify a focused area of study. A Spiral Week structure (see page 19) is utilized to promote integration and student development and connections throughout all phases.

The new curriculum is aligned with core competencies and incorporates competency-based assessments that drive learning. The MCWfusion Curriculum is based on five principles that were

Doctoring Threads

Seven doctoring threads create opportunities for students to obtain the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to be successful clinicians and are incorporated into all three phases of the curriculum. Thread content is deliberately integrated across all courses and clinical experiences, allowing for spaced repetition.



CHARACTER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THREAD

Aims to spark medical students' curiosity about their personal and professional development, encourages students to actively discover and foster their character strengths, and provides opportunities and experiences foundational to their professional identity formation.



COMMUNICATION THREAD

Trains students to effectively communicate with patients and families by developing relationships with individuals across a broad range of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, trains students how to engage in difficult conversations, and provides patient education that facilitates shared decision-making.



CRITICAL THINKING THREAD

Relies upon critical appraisal, where the medical literature is evaluated using principles of epidemiology and biostatistics, and diagnostic reasoning, where probabilistic reasoning and diagnostic schema are used to guide medical decision-making. Students learn to understand the principles of evidence-based medicine, speak the language of diagnostic reasoning and possess associated tools to utilize in deliberate practice.



HEALTH EQUITY THREAD

Trains students to be caring and competent physicians with a focus on both cross-cultural understanding and cultural humility. Students learn why health inequities exist, why they matter and the roles physicians play in mitigating them. This thread also addresses how to effectively eliminate health disparities and how to advance health equity through coalitions, system improvements and policy advocacy.



HEALTH SYSTEM SCIENCE & PATIENT SAFETY THREAD

Teaches students how to successfully navigate the complexities of the healthcare system and positively impact the quality and safety of their patients' care.



INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND PRACTICE THREAD

Exposes students to key competencies around communication, values/ethics, roles and responsibilities, and teams/teamwork. Students will participate in interprofessional collaborative practice experiences in the healthcare setting with an aim toward delivering high-quality care with health workers from different professional backgrounds.



PATIENT CARE SKILLS THREAD

Trains students in the discreet and observable acts of clinical care, which are fundamental for the basic clinical method. These skills include taking a history, performing a physical examination, interpreting diagnostic tests, performing procedures, documenting patient encounters and selecting and monitoring therapeutics. Students engage in deliberate practice of these skills in the clinical learning environment to achieve proficiency.

“By integrating these seven essential patient-centered skills into our curriculum, we’re ensuring that our graduates are equipped to address complex healthcare challenges from the start of their careers,” says Dr. Prunuske.



(l-r) Second-year MCW-Milwaukee medical students Aaron Kleinertz, Emmanuel Okwudi and Cameron Otto attend a patient-based discussion class, October 2024.



developed by groups of faculty, staff and students at the onset of the planning process.

THE FIVE PRINCIPLES

The five principles for the curriculum redesign include:

- integration of foundational and clinical science learning throughout all years of the curriculum
- a systemic 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

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Throughout the new curriculum, Learning Communities (LCs) provide a longitudinal structure to facilitate coaching and support. LC objectives include:

- foster student well-being
- serve as structure for achieving curricular objectives
- master adaptive learner skills and growth mindset for student lifelong learning through faculty coaching
- provide interface for coordination of other student support systems

Each LC comprises eight students and a faculty navigator.

The LC program is a component of the following courses:

Phase 1: *The Good Doctor*; Phase 2: *Thriving During Clerkships*; and Phase 3: *Preparing for Residency*. The LCs meet weekly/biweekly in Phase 1 and during the Spiral Weeks in Phases 2 and 3.

Small group discussions in the LCs include content from the Character and Professional Development Thread and may include other thread content. Many of these topics require psychologically safe learning environments, which LCs strive to provide. Coaching during Spiral Weeks includes individualized learning plan development and review. LC coaches work with students to help improve performance and unlock potential, establish and meet goals, understand and resolve challenges and focus on growth. Students meet with their respective coaches twice per semester.



First-year new curriculum students attend a patient-based discussion class in the Discovery Classroom, May 2024.

“Learning Communities are like homeroom,” says second-year medical student James (“Jimmy”) Dowd. “You are with the same eight people throughout medical school, which creates community and allows for close-knit connections. The faculty navigator stays with the group the entire time as well. They are never in a position to give you a grade, so they can help with advice and guidance and direct you to resources. They are a coach.”

SPIRAL WEEKS

During Spiral Weeks, students will integrate thread and foundational science content, foster meaningful MCW connections and create individual development plans for excellence and remediation. Additionally, students will participate in required thread sessions, have the opportunity to make up clinic days, complete missing assignments and reassess exams if needed.

As part of the Spiral Weeks, students will develop individualized learning plans (ILPs) to help identify goals and track outcomes relevant to their overall personal and professional goals. Learning Community navigators will review and share feedback regarding students’ ILPs. *(continued on page 21)*



Phase 1 - Foundational Sciences

Phase 1 is designed to expose students to the foundational sciences and replaces the two-year model in the Discovery Curriculum. Phase 1 runs for 18 months on the MCW–Milwaukee campus and 15 months on the MCW–Central Wisconsin and MCW–Green Bay campuses.

Melinda Dwinell, PhD, professor of physiology and eminent scholar, and Theresa Maatman, MD ’11, GME ’14, associate professor of medicine (general internal medicine), serve as Phase 1 integration directors. *(Phase 1 continued on page 20)*

(l-r) MCW–Central Wisconsin first-year medical students Sindu Donepudi, Hannah Kolarik, Bradley Nagel, Autumn Capper and Natasha Neumann, were photographed in May 2024 during Phase 1 of the new curriculum.

Phase 1 courses include:

- 10 Integrated Science Blocks that are organ systems–based and utilize an inquiry–based curriculum with in–person case–based learning
- Early Clinical Learning that comprises four courses: *Launch*, *Climb 1*, *Climb 2* and *Soar*. These courses provide students with early clinical experiences with an assigned preceptor to practice their clinical skills.
- *The Good Doctor*, a longitudinal professional development course that includes Learning Communities (*see page 19*) to facilitate coaching and support
- Scholarly Concentrations (formerly “Scholarly Pathways”), a two–year required component of the curriculum that offers individualized training. These include: Basic to Translational Research; Bioethics and Medical Humanities; Clinical to Translational Research; Clinician Educator; Global Health; Health Systems Management and Policy; Quality Improvement and Patient Safety; and Urban and Community Health.
- Individual Professional Development and time for United States Medical Licensing Examination Step 1

Patient–based discussions (PBD) are standardized case–based active learning sessions in which students apply foundational science concepts to authentic clinical scenarios and integrate doctoring thread objectives. In Phase 1 of the new curriculum, these weekly sessions occur during the 10 Integrated Science Blocks.

Student roles include serving as moderator, reader, searcher, scribe(s), section leader and chat monitor. A facilitator (a foundational science or clinical faculty member) guides each PBD to monitor learning outcomes; helps learners make connections between clinical perspectives and the underlying foundational science concepts; promotes student inquiry; models a growth mindset; and provides feedback.

Notes second–year medical student Jimmy Dowd, “In patient–based discussions, each week there is a clinical scenario in which you are introduced to a theoretical patient that aligns with what you are learning that week. For example, if you are on the neuroscience block, you may have a patient with multiple sclerosis. You then discuss the tests you would order, treatment course and what other disciplines you will need to bring in. You build on relationships and skills through discussions and by taking turns with different group leadership roles.”

First–year medical student Miracle Powell is surprised at how fully integrated the curriculum is into every element of healthcare. “With *The Good Doctor* course, we learn about health disparities in Wisconsin and social determinants of health. I expected to learn about the body in our physiology and anatomy blocks, but I didn’t think I would also be taught about these other facets of healthcare in my first year,” she says. “The course highlights local health disparities in chronic disease, specific to Milwaukee ZIP codes and taught us about the barriers patients are confronted with from a socioeconomic and environmental lens.”

The early integration of clinical experiences has enabled Powell to work with a preceptor in a clinical setting. She currently is rotating with Amanda Brandow, DO, GME ’05, FEL ’08, MS ’08, MCW professor of pediatrics (hematology/oncology) and director of the comprehensive sickle cell disease program at Children’s Wisconsin.

“The early clinical integration helps me to be a better physician,” Powell shares. “I can directly experience how providers interact with an interdisciplinary team and patients. There are social workers, advanced practice providers and fellows present, as well as other doctors, and I get to see how it all works together. I gain perspective on what each person does and what they look at. The early clinical integration has provided context to what we are learning in class and reminds me of why I wanted to go to medical school in the first place.”

Phase 2 – Core Clinical

Phase 2 is the clerkship year of the curriculum and replaces the M3 year in the Discovery Curriculum. Phase 2 comprises 12 months on the Milwaukee campus and begins in January 2025. Phase 2 comprises 10 months on the regional campuses and began in September 2024.

Phase 2 features integrated clerkship experiences with integrated formative knowledge assessments, Spiral Weeks in the *Thriving During Clerkship* course, continuation of Scholarly Concentrations and protected time for student well–being. The Spiral Weeks include concentrated didactic time; workshops preparing students for the upcoming clerkship; integrated problem–based discussions reinforcing foundational science; integration of doctoring thread content; and Learning Community meetings with peers and mentors.

Bipin Thapa, MD, MCW professor of medicine (general internal medicine) and assistant dean for clinical science curriculum, serves as the Phase 2 director. Leslie Ruffalo, PhD, MCW associate professor of family medicine (community), serves as the *Thriving During Clerkship* course director.

Phase 2 on the Milwaukee campus includes

16 weeks each devoted to the following:

- hospital medicine (hospital internal medicine, hospital pediatrics, psychiatry, and emergency medicine and acute care)
- surgery (general and subspecialty surgeries, obstetrics and gynecology, and anesthesia)
- ambulatory (family medicine, outpatient internal medicine specialties, and outpatient pediatrics specialties).

Phase 2 on the Central Wisconsin campus includes

longitudinal integrated clerkships with one– to two–week rotations during which students experience each specialty multiple times. These clerkships span family medicine, general pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, hospitalist medicine, psychiatry, general surgery and anesthesiology.

Phase 2 on the Green Bay campus includes

clinical blocks in general internal medicine, family medicine, emergency medicine and acute care, psychiatry, surgery, pediatrics, anesthesia, and obstetrics and gynecology.



First-year MCW-Milwaukee medical student Miracle Powell (at right) rotates with Dr. Amanda Brandow at Children's Wisconsin, October 2024.



Second-year MCW-Milwaukee medical student James (Jimmy) Dowd walks across the connector between Froedtert Hospital and MCW, October 2024.



(l-r) First-year MCW-Green Bay medical students Tristin Aguiar and Cole Stodola participate in the Disaster Simulation session during The Good Doctor course, April 2024.

Phase 3 – Individualization

Phase 3 is the differentiation and individualization phase of the new curriculum and replaces the M4 year in the Discovery Curriculum. Phase 3 comprises 17 months on the Milwaukee campus (beginning in January 2026) and 10 months on the regional campuses (beginning in July 2025). Phase 3 course requirements include two acting internships; at least one Integrated Science Selective course; and the *Preparing for Residency* course. Elective courses will fulfill remaining credits for completion of Phase 3.

Hershel Raff, PhD, professor in the departments of academic affairs (medical education), medicine, physiology, surgery and the MCW School of Pharmacy, and Matthew Vickery, MD '13, GME '18, FEL '19, MCW assistant professor of radiology (general), serve as Phase 3 directors.

Phase 3 courses include:

- Acting Internships
- Clinical and Research Electives
- Integrated Science Selectives, which will enhance student mastery of foundational science content, especially as it applies to diagnosis and clinical decision-making in the student's specialty of choice. This is a new course category with at least 50 percent focus on foundational science.
- *Preparing for Residency* Course
- Scholarly Project

Phase 3 tracks are guided menus of required experiences for students and include specialty-oriented acting internships, clinical and research electives, integrated science selectives and specialty-specific course sessions in *Preparing for Residency*. Tracks ensure adequate general physician training and support individualization of medical training as students differentiate toward their career specialties.

Phase 3 is in development. Work accomplished to date has included preparing Discovery curriculum courses for transition to the new curriculum; defining graduation requirements for Phase 3; planning curriculum retreats; and creating proposals for Integrated Science Selectives.

As Dowd approaches the end of Phase 1 of the new curriculum, he shares, "Over the past year, I have seen my confidence building. I was working with a trauma surgeon in the surgical ICU and saw what I was able to retain from my courses, and how I was able to connect what I learned from my blocks to the patient's case, and that gave me confidence. I believe the design and structure of the new curriculum will benefit me as a physician because I will have an extra six months of clinical experience where I will be hands-on and learning practically, and applying the skills and foundational knowledge that I learned during Phase 1."

"The people of MCW – the students in my year and other years, faculty and staff – are the reason why I enjoy being a medical student at MCW. I think the new curriculum emphasizes the community culture that is felt on campus and within the school and fosters collaboration that leads to growth for everyone involved," Dowd concludes.

First-year medical student Miracle Powell adds, "I chose global health as my Scholarly Concentration, which allows us to tailor our medical education to our own interests. This makes me feel that I made the right choice coming to MCW. The concentrations give me the chance to maximize my education."

"I am proud of how receptive MCW was to roll out another curriculum nine to 10 years after the last one. We didn't sit on our accomplishments. Our students benefited from the Discovery Curriculum, and they are benefitting even more from the new fusion curriculum," Dr. Franco says. "The support for this was overwhelming. We looked for 25 faculty to work with the small groups, and we received 45 applications. The leaders of the effort are getting the credit, but everyone came together to make this happen. The new curriculum is a success story for the entire MCW community." ■

Integrating Science and Faith to Advance Health

A new first-of-its-kind collaboration in Wisconsin, led by researchers at the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW), will create a platform for the science and faith communities to come together to advance community health and health equity through research and discovery.

The Center for Collaboration of Science and Faith (CCSF) was recently launched by the Clinical and Translational Science Institute of Southeast Wisconsin (CTSI), building on faith-based partnerships that the CTSI has established during the past 10 years to foster the cooperation of faith and science. Advising CCSF are the Council of Faiths, which includes 11 leaders from areas traditionally underrepresented in science and medicine, representing faith communities in Milwaukee including Christian, Muslim, Baptist, Church of God in Christ, Native American and Baha'i faiths.

“By creating this new platform where the scientific and faith communities can unite to collaboratively tackle the unmet health needs of patients and communities through research and discovery, we hope to increase understanding of scientific and operational principles underpinning successful collaborations and, importantly, develop solutions to overcome bottlenecks impeding collaboration,” says Reza Shaker, MD, founding director of the CCSF and MCW associate provost for clinical and translational

research, senior associate dean, director of the CTSI, the Joseph E. Geenen Professor and chief, division of gastroenterology and hepatology.

CCSF also will serve as a national and international resource to facilitate rapid response efforts to urgent public health needs, as well as provide education and training for faith-science partnerships.

“Leveraging our existing successful partnerships with local faith communities for improving public health, and through synergistic priorities, collaborative research efforts and open dialogue, the center hopes to unravel the complexities of health disparities and health inequities, and innovate solutions that resonate with both science and faith-based principles,” says Doriel Ward, PhD, MPH, CCSF co-director, executive director and chief administrative officer of the CTSI, assistant dean and assistant provost of clinical and translational research at MCW.

The CCSF is one component of the CTSI, a unique academic-community partnership formed in 2010 that includes healthcare and academic organizations from the Milwaukee area. The CTSI was established through a Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) from the National Institutes of Health. MCW is one of only about 60 CTSA programs nationwide; fewer than half of all US medical schools have received a CTSA award since the program’s inception in 2003. The CTSI’s main goal is to accelerate the translation of research discoveries into new and improved medical treatments in Wisconsin and beyond.

“Having a mechanism to initiate and promote collaboration between science and faith is unique and important to the community,” says Bishop Charles H. McClelland, leader of the Wisconsin Northwest Jurisdiction of the Church of God in Christ and founder and president of Word of Hope Ministries Inc. His church houses the CTSI’s pilot CommuniCare Unit – part of the CTSI’s Community Care Initiative, Risk and Prevention Program – where MCW researchers work with community members to improve health.

“Our commitment to community engagement depends on creating a seamless intersection of science and faith. This novel center within the CTSI will accomplish that important goal,” remarks John R. Raymond, Sr., MD, MCW president and chief executive officer. ■

– MICHELLE SCHAEFER



Dr. Reza Shaker

(l-r): Cavalier Johnson, mayor of Milwaukee; Bishop Micaiah Young, MDiv, founding pastor of the Life Center Church of God In Christ and program manager II with the CTSI; and Dr. Doriel Ward at the launch event for the Center for Collaboration of Science and Faith



Hope for Blood Cancer Patients: MCW's Cutting-Edge CAR T Therapy Hits Major Milestone



Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) cancer investigators recently treated the 100th patient in an ongoing, multi-arm clinical trial using an in-house manufactured, dual-targeted chimeric antigen receptor T-cell (CAR T) therapy for patients with B-cell malignancies.

Built on decades of research in academic medicine and carried out with patients at the Froedtert & MCW Clinical Cancer Center, the innovative proprietary treatment process enables the team to develop personalized and potentially lifesaving therapies in a matter of days for patients with blood cancers.

Nirav Shah, MD, MCW associate professor of medicine (hematology and oncology), explains that having an onsite manufacturing lab saves critical time for patients who need CAR T therapy. Patients participating in the in-house trial receive their modified T cells within eight to 12 days after extraction, rather than the three to four weeks required to transport a patient's cells to offsite commercial labs for processing. MCW's CAR T-Cell Lab is the only such onsite facility in Wisconsin.

MCW investigators have conducted more than 15 CAR T clinical trials to identify promising new treatments for patients with blood cancers such as lymphomas, leukemias and multiple myeloma. "Treating patients on clinical trials allows us to both learn more about how to treat rare and aggressive cancers while also offering patients opportunities to get cutting-edge treatments that may provide hope when standard approaches have not been effective," observes Dr. Shah. "In this way, we're making meaningful strides in cancer discoveries at an unprecedented pace."

Dr. Shah's team strives to eventually gain approval from the US Food and Drug Administration for the treatment, which would enable MCW to offer CAR T therapy as a standard approach for patients with relapsed blood cancers. "The progress we've seen over the last decade is remarkable. Five years ago, patients with relapsed blood cancers had few options. Now we're seeing durable remissions in patients previously felt to be incurable. Some of our early CAR T patients have been cancer-free for more than five years," he notes.

Nyamwange Keen, the 100th patient to be treated via the in-house CAR T therapy trial, recently spoke on *The Word on Medicine* podcast about his experience. "I was at a dead end, and when



I came here I knew I had nothing else left. CAR T has provided an opportunity of hope and promise for a great future for me. For the first time in all these years I have no detectable CLL [chronic lymphocytic leukemia]," Keen shared. "I was speechless when Dr. Shah told me the good news. I asked him, 'What do I do now?' and he answered, 'Go and live your life.'"

While advancements in CAR T-cell therapy have proven successful for many blood cancers, investigators are hopeful that further research will lead to innovative CAR T therapies for the treatment of solid tumors. Lubna Chaudhary, MD, FEL '15, MCW associate professor of medicine (hematology and oncology), is putting this to the test in a phase I clinical trial for patients with triple negative breast cancer and non-small cell lung cancer. "CAR T-cell therapy holds the potential to help millions more patients if it can be successfully expanded into solid cancers," says Dr. Chaudhary.

In the meantime, CAR T therapy continues to provide a bright outlook for blood cancer patients like Keen. "I feel more optimistic now than ever. I am peaceful, I'm encouraged and I'm stronger because I have a new lease on life," Keen added. ■ – CAROLINE LADD

"I was speechless when Dr. Shah told me the good news. I asked him, 'What do I do now?' and he answered, 'Go and live your life.'" – Nyamwange Keen, the 100th patient to be treated via the in-house CAR T therapy trial

NEWS

FOR ALUMNI



We are tremendously grateful to our alumni who dedicate their time, expertise and resources . . .

– Dr. Thomas E. Palmer

Staying Connected to MCW

As I begin my term as president of the MCW/Marquette Medical Alumni Association, I am honored to follow in the footsteps of the exceptional alumni who have served in this role before me. I want to thank Betty S. Pace, MD '81, GME '84, for her outstanding leadership of the Alumni Association over the last year. As president, I am privileged to represent the more than 20,000 Marquette Medical and MCW alumni living and working in our communities.

At the Alumni Weekend in September 2024, I was greatly inspired by the appreciation and enthusiasm for our alma mater as we celebrated the 2024 reunion celebrants and Alumni Association award recipients. We also welcomed new alumni leaders to the association's board of directors and continue to have board participation across all regions in the country.

Staying connected to MCW remains vital, and the Alumni Association works diligently to ensure that you have every opportunity to stay connected through

the monthly Alumni E-Newsletter. If you are not receiving the Alumni E-Newsletter, please share your contact information with us at alumni@mcw.edu.

We are tremendously grateful to our alumni who dedicate their time, expertise and resources that make a difference in the health of our community and ensure that our institution continues to be a vital partner that contributes to the vibrancy of the MCW learning environment.

One of the most important ways to give back and support MCW's mission to develop the future generations of thoughtful and caring physicians, scientists, pharmacists and healthcare professionals is by connecting with and mentoring MCW students. Please join MCW ENGAGE at mcwengage.com.

As we look forward to the new year, we welcome award nominations for the 2025 Alumni Association Awards. Please consider nominating your very accomplished classmates and fellow alumni by December 31, 2024. ■



Call for Alumni Award Nominations

Please submit your nominations for the 2025 Alumni Association awards online at www.mcw.edu/alumniawards no later than **December 31, 2024**.

Note: More information on the 2024 Alumni Association award recipients can be found online at www.mcw.edu/alumniawards.

Newly Elected Alumni Association Board of Directors



VALERIE A. FLANARY,
MD, GME '94, FEL '95



JOSHUA M. LIEBERMAN,
MD '82



MATTHEW R. HODGES,
PhD '04

2024 Alumni Association Awards

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

MARIE L. NAKATA, MD '89, GME '93



Dr. Nakata served for two terms (2013–2019) on the MCW/Marquette Medical Alumni Association board of directors, including as president (2016–2017). An active participant and past president of the Alumni Association, Dr. Nakata was a member of the search committee for the association's executive director in 2019, and in 2020 began a three-year term on the MCW board of trustees. Dr. Nakata also has served on all her Class of 1989 Reunion Committees and volunteered at many association events, acting as a proactive resource to all alumni – fostering a lifetime connection between MCW and the alumni community in support of the institution's mission. ■

HUMANITARIAN AWARD

J. LUIS BAUTISTA, MD '84



Dr. Bautista is the medical director and president of Bautista Rural Medical Clinics in Sanger, Calif., Sespe Medical Group Inc. in Fillmore and Avance Home Health Inc. in Fresno. Since his early years as a physician, he has provided medical treatment to migrant workers (often uninsured and undocumented) and accepted as payment whatever his patients could offer. He was a key pillar for California's Central Valley Latino community, and has donated time to youth needing sports physical exams, participated in public service announcements and provided health-related seminars. For the past 25 years, the Bautista Medical Group has gifted more than 5,000 toys annually to inner-city youth and children of farm workers. ■

GRADUATE SCHOOL ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR

PETER A. BANDETTINI, PHD '94



Dr. Bandettini received his PhD in biophysics at MCW in 1994, where his co-advisors were Drs. James Hyde and Scott Hinks. In 1999, he began work at the National Institute of Mental Health as a principal investigator and chief of the section on functional imaging method and director of the functional MRI (fMRI) core facility. Dr. Bandettini has been engaged in serving and leading both the MRI and brain mapping communities, and his research has aimed to advance fMRI methodology and utility. In 2020, Dr. Bandettini won the *International Society for Magnetic Resonance in Medicine's Gold Medal* – its highest honor. ■

HUMANITARIAN AWARD

JOSEPH M. TOMBERS, MD '64



Dr. Tombers' first experience providing medical care in developing nations followed his internship, when he volunteered to serve the people of Honduras for one year at a clinic where he saw about 1,000 patients a month. He returned to Honduras in 1997 to provide care to the Mosquito Indians on the remote eastern coast. Dr. Tombers has made 26 trips lasting two weeks at a time in the last 27 years, providing medical care and education in preventative medicine. The team also engages in carpentry projects, helps in repairing airstrips and funds building projects. At age 85, he shows no sign of letting up in his volunteer efforts. ■

MEDICAL SCHOOL ALUMNA OF THE YEAR

ANNE M. HANNEKEN, MD '84



Dr. Hanneken is associate professor of molecular medicine at the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, Calif., a vitreoretinal surgeon at Scripps Memorial Hospital and vice president at Retina Consultants in San Diego. Her expertise is particularly notable in the areas of macular degeneration and transplantation. Dr. Hanneken's innovative contributions include leading a multidisciplinary team that succeeded in reviving human organ donor eyes post-circulatory death and reestablishing light-induced signaling in the macula. Dr. Hanneken is credited with devising the organizational structure of the "revEYEval" project and creating an efficient surgical protocol for rapid eye recovery. ■

HONORARY ALUMNA

ANGELA K. NELSON



Angela Nelson joined MCW in 2007 as a director of annual and special giving and was promoted to senior director of development and alumni relations in 2014. She served as executive director of the MCW/Marquette Medical Alumni Association from March 2020 until her retirement in June 2024. She distinguished herself as a tireless advocate for alumni across the entire country and facilitated innovative connections between alumni and students. She also worked diligently to ensure that MCW remains a trusted resource and vital campus partner for the entire alumni base and that alumni are included as key stakeholders as the strategic objectives of the institution are developed and achieved. ■

Alumni Weekend September 20-21, 2024

Banquet



Brunch





CLASS OF 1964 - 60th REUNION

◀ **FRONT ROW (l-r):** James Zellmer, MD; James McCabe, MD; Wendelin Schaefer, MD

BACK ROW (l-r): John Manning, MD; John Nachazel, MD; John Walsh, MD; Vincent Banker, MD; Anthony Stephen Woo, Jr., MD



CLASS OF 1969 - 55th REUNION

◀ **FRONT ROW (l-r):** Julia Moore, MD; Godfrey Pinder, MD; Marshall Cusic, MD; Robert Gomez, MD; Thomas Kilkenny, MD

BACK ROW (l-r): Donald Maclean Willson, Jr., MD; Perry Walters, MD; Tom Donovan, MD; Thomas Stoffel, MD; Bruce Carlson, MD



CLASS OF 1979 - 45th REUNION

◀ **FRONT ROW (l-r):** Michael Becker, MD; John Schulte, MD; Phillip Moss, MD; Joseph Burgarino, MD

BACK ROW (l-r): Brian Chapman, MD; Harry Brammer, MD; Monica Brammer, MD; John Almquist, MD; Kenneth Russo, MD; Daniel Larson, MD

ALUMNI

► **FRONT ROW (l-r):** Josie Schmidtner Timm, MD; Karen Eady, MD; Kathleen Schneider, MD; Mary Streetman, MD; Jacek Kowalski, MD; Anne Hanneken, MD; J. Luis Bautista, MD; Kathy Lauer, MD; Robert Lester III, MD

ROW TWO (l-r): Brian Bear, MD; Laurel Bear, MD; Lois Connolly, MD; Michael Haak, MD; Mark Tomski, MD; Joseph Bergs, MD; Sylvia O'Brien, MD; Evelyn Burdick, MD; Patrick Gries, MD

ROW THREE (l-r): Philip Kapsos, MD; Bruce Holmblad, MD; Margaret Grenisen, MD; Beth Erickson Wittmann, MD; Mary Otterson, MD; Craig Hoffman, MD; Mike O'Brien, MD

ROW FOUR (l-r): Timothy Walton, MD; Robert McDonald, MD; Cristina Grieben, MD; Douglas Wermuth, MD; Glenn Nemec, MD; James McNeely, MD

ROW FIVE (l-r): Thomas Wittmann, MD; Allen Chantelois, MD; Paul Sandford, MD; Grace Janik, MD; Edith Leggold, MD; Thomas Paulson, MD; Matthew Brouns, MD

ROW SIX (l-r): John Cochran, MD; Jeff Whittle, MD; Stanley Henjum, MD; Randall Kuhlmann, MD; Ray Cameron, MD

ROW SEVEN (l-r): James Grimm, MD; Larry Meyer, MD; Rick Fossen, MD; Robert Stevens, MD; Anna Kalman, MD; James Spencer, MD



CLASS OF 1984 - 40th REUNION



CLASS OF 1989 - 35th REUNION

◀ **FRONT ROW (l-r):** Andrew Kim, MD; Laurie Grunske, MD; Laura Radke, MD; Diane Gronski, MD; Jaylynn Kao, MD; Lina Calvo, MD

BACK ROW (l-r): Michael Miller, MD; Jane Pearson, MD; Mark Wilcox, MD; Bret Borowski, MD; Marie Nakata, MD

► **FRONT ROW (l-r):** Alison Shigaki, MD; Maryam Parviz, MD; Seema Khan, MD; Gale Etherton, MD; Kathleen Sullivan, MD; Rita Bair, MD; Lisa Wolf, MD; Patricia Witman, MD

BACK ROW (l-r): Pablo Joo, MD; Nadine Gettel, MD; Lisa Batchelor, MD; Michele McCallum, MD; Shadan Ghaemian, MD; Misa Lee, MD; John Chow, MD; David Halle, MD; Matthew Bair, MD; Shawn Patrick, MD; Kirk Simon, MD; James Rice, MD; Richard Gumina, MD



CLASS OF 1994 - 30th REUNION

► **FRONT ROW (l-r):** Shannon Muderlak, MD; Sukhjit Takhar, MD; Renee Koronkowski, MD

ROW TWO (l-r): Vinona Bhatia, MD; Stephanie Drobac, MD; Tiffany Mork, MD; Molly Martin, MD; Deborah Bernstein, MD; Nancy Havas, MD; Jennifer Weisgerber, MD; Michael Weisgerber, MD; Greg Orshansky, MD; Brian Koch, MD; Shannon Garton, MD; Sunny Malik, MD; Blaine Warkentine, MD

ROW THREE (l-r): Gregory Gramstad, MD; Matthew Taylor, MD; Kristian Novakovic, MD; Rhett Silver, MD; Stacey Halum, MD



CLASS OF 1999 -25th REUNION



◄ **FRONT ROW (l-r):** Lucia Cheng, MD; Kelly Hodges, MD; Ami Hannam, MD; Susan Goldsmith, MD; Jill Bader, MD; Jennifer Martin-McKay, MD

BACK ROW (l-r): Nick Webber, MD; Brooke King, MD; Stacy Lynch, MD; Allison Polender, MD; Margaret Collins, MD; Michael Berger, MD; Patrick Tandingan, MD; Elizabeth Thiel, MD; Brad Thiel, MD

CLASS OF 2004 -20th REUNION



▲ (l-r): Michael Akinyemi, MD; Michael Brody, MD

CLASS OF 2009 -15th REUNION



▲ (l-r): Sarah Stauder, MD; Jessica Lemke, MD; Kristine Sullivan, MD; Gregory Robbins, MD; Andrea Cavey, MD

CLASS OF 2014 -10th REUNION

ALUMNI NOTES

1970s

Michael F. Nolan, PhD '75, professor of basic science education at the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and a trailblazing figure in the field of clinical anatomy, has been awarded *Honored Membership* in the American Association of Clinical Anatomists.

Marguerite Compton, MD '72, GME '96, is a dermatologist with Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center in Walworth, Wis.

Irwin Rosenfeld, MD '76, retired from his psychiatry practice in Laguna Hills, Calif., in 2016. In his retirement years, he has taken up singing in a choir, acting in musicals, comedies and murder mysteries, playing competitive bridge and traveling in the US and central Europe.

M. Zuhdi Jasser, MD '79, was a candidate in the Republican primary for US Congress in Arizona's Fourth Congressional District. He is the founder and president of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy and is the author of *A Battle for the Soul of Islam: An American Muslim Patriot's Fight to Save His Faith*.

1980s

Marcella Roenneburg, MD '80, specializes in urogynecology with Tidal Health, with offices in Salisbury and Princess Anne, Md.

Hani Matloub, MD, GME '80, retired in June 2024, as professor of plastic surgery at MCW after 40 years of service. He was known for his studies on microsurgery and microanatomy of the upper extremities. In May 2024, Dr. Matloub and James Sanger, MD, GME '81, FEL '82, received the American Society for Hand Surgery's 2024 *Humanitarian Award*.

Cecilia Hillard*, PhD '83, is the recipient of BioForward Wisconsin's 2024 *Hector F. DeLuca Scientific Achievement Award* for her groundbreaking insights into how constituents of the cannabis plant affect

brain function and recovery after stress and injury. Dr. Hillard holds MCW's G. Frederick Kasten, Jr., Endowed Chair in Parkinson's Disease Research. She also is MCW's associate dean for research and professor of pharmacology & toxicology.

Gerald L. Knouf, MD '83, GME '86, is a geriatrician in Pocatello, Idaho, with Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center.

David Stowe, MD '83, GME '87, retired as a professor of anesthesiology at MCW in July 2024. He led one of the nation's premier laboratories focused on anesthesiology and cardiovascular research. His studies advanced understanding of congenital myopathies of the heart, energetic metabolism and stress-related pathways.

Mary F. Otterson, MD '84, GME '90, MS '88, retired as professor of surgery at MCW in June 2024. In 1990, she became the first woman clinician to join MCW's department of surgery. During her tenure at MCW, she served as vice chair of surgery and chief of surgery at the Zablocki VA Medical Center. She specialized in treating patients with colon cancer, inflammatory bowel disease and radiation enteritis.

Alice Rocke, MD '85, a general surgeon, has joined Plymouth General Surgery at Speare Memorial Hospital in Plymouth, N.H. Dr. Rocke has a special interest in benign and malignant breast disease, wound care and general surgery.

Mary Spellman, MD '88, GME '92, has been appointed to the scientific advisory board of Catawba Research, a contract research organization providing clinical trial management services to pharmaceutical, device, formulation development and biotechnology companies. Dr. Spellman is a dermatologist with more than 30 years of experience in biopharmaceutical development. She has held senior leadership roles at Castle Creek Biosciences, Menlo Therapeutics, Revance Therapeutics, Biogen Idec, Connetics Corporation, and Novartis.

Laura Roseman, MD '89, is celebrating her 30th year as a pediatrician with Children's National Pediatricians and Associates in Gaithersburg, Md. She writes, "Pediatrics has had so many changes to the field since the onset of my training, making it challenging and rewarding in the same breadth. I wouldn't change a thing, and I have the Medical College of Wisconsin to thank."

Scott W. Lindblom, MD '89, GME '92, is a pulmonologist in Charlotte, N.C., with Advocate Health – Atrium Health Carolinas Medical Center.

James Mu, MD '89, a long time family medicine practitioner in northern California, has been named public health officer for Shasta County.

1990s

Joseph Huh, MD '90, is a cardiovascular surgeon with Kaiser Permanente's Sacramento (Calif.) Medical Center.

Robert E. Molina, MD '91, GME '94, is chief medical information officer, vice president for information and informatics, and a family medicine doctor in Renton, Wash., with the UW (University of Washington) Medicine-Valley Medical Center.

Narendra Kini, MD, GME '92, is chief medical officer for CDR Health, an emergency management firm based in Miami, Fla. He previously served as chief medical officer for the state of Florida's COVID-19 infectious disease field hospital system. Prior to that, he was CEO of Miami's Nicklaus Children's Hospital.

Michael Saunders, MD '93, is a clinical professor of medicine (gastroenterology) and director of the Digestive Health Center at the UW (University of Washington) Medical Center-Montlake in Seattle.

Miya Shanahan, MD '93, is a hospitalist with Kaiser Permanente's Oakland (Calif.) Medical Center.

Cetin Hekimoglu, MD, GME '95, has relocated to Andalusia, Ala., where he is an internal medicine specialist with Pinnacle Health.

Tamara Lior, MD '95, GME '98, has joined Skin and Cancer Associates in Plantation, Fla., as a dermatologist specializing in medical dermatology, cosmetic dermatology and dermatologic surgery. She was previously with Cleveland Clinic Florida, where she was chair of the department of dermatology.

Carol Estill-Bogenshutz*, MD '96, pediatrician in Cedarburg, Wis., affiliated with Children's Wisconsin, received MCW's 2024 *Marvin Wagner Clinical Preceptor Award* for excellence in teaching by a volunteer faculty member.

Sheila Feyrer, MD '96, is a pediatrician with Dartmouth Health's Alice Peck Day Memorial Hospital in Lebanon, N.H., where she also is medical director of informatics.

Cynthia J. Konz, MD '96, is an internal medicine specialist with Grand River Medical Group in Dubuque, Iowa.

Eric Miller, MD, GME '96, is a family medicine doctor in Beaver Dam, Wis., and is affiliated with Columbus Community Hospital-Wisconsin.

Paul Pritchard, MD '96, GME '99, has been named senior vice president and chief medical officer for Prevea Health in Green Bay, Wis. During his 25-year career with Prevea Health, he worked in partnership with MCW to establish the first family medicine residency program in Green Bay.

Allison Meisner, MD '97, GME '01, specializes in addiction medicine with Kaiser Permanente's Sacramento (Calif.) Medical Center.

Karin L. Barnes, MD, GME '99, is a hospitalist in internal medicine and pediatrics with St. Francis Hospitalists in Cape Girardeau, Mo.

2000s

Enrico Pietrantonio, MD '00, is an obstetrician/gynecologist with Kaiser Permanente Riverside (Calif.) Medical Center.

Enas L. Pruitt, MD, GME '00, is a family medicine practitioner with Austin Regional Clinic in Round Rock, Texas.

Annu Navani, MD, GME '02, is chief medical officer of Boomerang Healthcare, a California-based provider of pain management services for workers' compensation, personal injury, Medicare and commercial insurance clients. She also is an adjunct clinical associate professor at Stanford University School of Medicine.

Kristen Pytynia, MD, GME '02, MPH, is a professor of head and neck surgery with MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, specializing in surgical therapy of malignant lesions of the head and neck.

David Smiley, MD '03, is an internal medicine specialist with Endeavor Health NorthShore Hospitals and Northwestern Medicine-Northwestern Memorial Hospital in the Metropolitan Chicago area.

Jennifer Knight*, MD '04, MS, MCW professor of psychiatry and behavioral medicine, and of microbiology & immunology, is chair of the MCW Cancer Center's population sciences team.

Beth Jelinek, MD '04, is an obstetrician/gynecologist with the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center-Western Maryland in Cresaptown, Md.

Andrew E. Lan, MD, GME '04, is an internal medicine specialist with Montefiore Medical Group-Co-Op City in the Bronx, N.Y.

Matthew Anderson, MD '06, PhD '04, was promoted to executive vice president and chief medical officer at Versiti, Inc., a national leader in innovative blood health solutions. He will lead the organization's

Medical Sciences Institute, providing strategic leadership and guiding innovative research and clinical programs.

Matthew Gerlach, MD, GME '06, is a spine surgeon with the Orthopaedic and Spine Center of the Rockies in Fort Collins, Colo.

Fatoumata Ceesay, MD, GME '07, has been named president of the Milwaukee Muslim Women's Coalition. Dr. Ceesay is a pediatrician and medical director for clinical coverage review for UnitedHealthCare.

David Kovacs, MD '07, is a rheumatologist in Mission Viejo, Calif., with Providence health system's Mission Heritage Medical Group.

Chris Liu, MD '08, is a hospitalist with Kaiser Foundation Rehabilitation Center in Vallejo, Calif.

Matthew R. Vernon, MD '08, is a radiation oncologist with the Dartmouth Cancer Center in Bennington, Vt.

Dominic Co, MD, GME '09, FEL '12, is an assistant professor of pediatrics and a pediatric rheumatologist with the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health.

Jeremy Joyal, MD '09, has been named medical director for KindlyMD, Inc., in Salt Lake City, Utah. He will oversee the company's clinical practices and develop program protocols for pain management.

Elizabeth A. Kelly, MD '09, GME '14, is an otolaryngologist with Methodist Health Partners in Omaha, Neb.

Naveen G. Reddy, MD, GME '09, is a gastroenterologist at Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Mich.

2010s

Ben George*, MD, FEL '10, authored a 2024 article in *Gastroenterology* that identified four distinct microenvironment subtypes in pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma. He holds

(continued on page 32)

ALUMNI NOTES

MCW's William F. Stapp Endowed Chair, is a professor of medicine (hematology/oncology) and is associate director of cancer genomics and precision medicine in the Linda T. and John A. Mellowes Center for Genomic Sciences and Precision Medicine.

Elizabeth Kessler, MD, GME '10, FEL '13, is a pediatric rheumatologist with Helen DeVos Children's Hospital in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Nima Maghami, MD '11, is an assistant professor of surgery in New York City's Weill Cornell Medicine's division of trauma, burns, acute and critical care surgery and an assistant attending surgeon at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center. Before joining Weill Cornell Medicine, he was an assistant professor of surgery at Texas A&M College of Medicine.

Ryan Sells, MD '11, is a dermatologist with Kaiser Permanente's Pleasanton (Calif.) medical offices.

Demetrios Douros*, MD, GME '12, is an assistant professor of orthopaedic surgery at MCW specializing in sports medicine. He was a member of the Greek national baseball team that competed in the 2004 Olympics.

Elica Inagaki, MD '12, is a vascular surgeon in Bellevue, Wash., and is affiliated with Overlake Medical Center & Clinics.

Rebecca K. Marcus, MD, GME '12, is a surgical oncologist with AHN (Allegheny Health Network) Surgical Institute in Erie, Pa. She treats primary and metastatic tumors of the digestive tract and abdomen.

Stephanie Delvo, MD, GME '13, is an obstetrician/gynecologist with Essentia Health Mid-Dakota Women's Center in Bismarck, N.D.

Abby R. Lochmann-Bailkey, MD '13, is a gastroenterologist with SSM Health St Mary's Hospital-Madison and Reedsburg (Wis.) Area Medical Center.

Brian Carroll, MD '14, is a pediatric pulmonologist with Gillette Children's Hospital's St. Paul (Minn.) campus.

Le'erin Voss, DDS, MPH '14, is a dentist for Children's Wisconsin and for Rock River Community Clinic in Fort Atkinson, Wis.

David Radler, MD '14, is an emergency medicine physician with Lompoc Valley Medical Center and Marian Regional Medical Center in Santa Maria, Calif.

Kai Yang, MD '14, GME '20, is an assistant professor of surgery at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. He also is a plastic surgeon specializing in hand surgery and aesthetic surgery with Village Pointe Aesthetic Surgery in Omaha.

Dominic Draper, MD, GME '15, a family medicine physician, has joined Mercyhealth Elkhorn (Wis.).

Naren Epperta, MD, MS '15, FEL '15, joined the University of Utah School of Medicine's division of hematology and hematological malignancies and the Huntsman Cancer Institute. He is associate chief for clinical research in the division of hematology.

Maria Pacella-LaBarbara, PhD, FEL '15, is a research assistant professor of emergency medicine with the University of Pittsburgh department of medicine's clinical research center.

Justin La, MD '16, is a urologist in San Rafael, Calif., with Kaiser Permanente.

Alicen Nelson, MD, GME '16, is a family medicine practitioner with Denver (Colo.) Health Medical Center.

Ahsan Sattar, MD, FEL '16, is a neurologist and interventional neuroradiologist with St. Joseph's Wayne Medical Center and University Medical Center in Livingston, N.J.

Kun Zhang, MD '16, specializes in internal medicine at Kaiser Permanente's San Leandro (Calif.) Medical Center.

David Houser, MD, FEL '17, is a nephrologist with RenalCare Associates with offices in Peoria and Pontiac, Ill. He also serves as medical director for RenalCare's peritoneal dialysis program.

Kathryn Konicke, MD '18, is a dermatologist with Kaiser Permanente's San Rafael (Calif.) Medical Center.

Michael Tanious, MD '18, is a radiologist at the University of Illinois Hospital in Chicago.

Ryan E. Little, MD, GME '19, has joined the faculty of the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth as an assistant professor of surgery in the division of otolaryngology – head and neck surgery.

2020s

Natalia Okon, MD '20, is a pediatric emergency medicine specialist with the University of Missouri Health Care in Columbia.

Alison Benda, MD '21, is a pediatrician with Eugene Pediatric Associates in Eugene, Ore.

Austin Dopp, MD '21, joined SageWest Health Care in Fremont County, Wyo., as a hospitalist.

Chandler Cortina*, MD, MS '21, an associate professor of surgery (surgical oncology) at MCW, identified the need to conduct a breast cancer risk assessment before transgendered individuals undergo gender-affirming chest masculinization surgery in a study published in the June 2024 issue of the *Annals of Surgical Oncology*.

Chase A. Tobin, MD, GME '21, is a plastic and reconstructive surgeon with Missouri Plastic & Hand Surgery and St. Francis Medical Center in Cape Girardeau.

Kiley Cameron, MD, FEL '24, has been named assistant professor of neurology at the University of Nebraska College of Medicine and is a neurology physician with Nebraska Medicine specializing in epilepsy.

Ian Ridge, MD, FEL '24, has joined University of Michigan Health as an orthopedic surgeon with UM Health-Sparrow Jolly Road Orthopedics in Lansing.

Michael Totoraitis, PhD '24, is commissioner of health for the city of Milwaukee. He was previously the health department's director of health data and evaluation.

Special Remembrances

Donald Heyrman, MD '56, a family medicine practitioner and one of the first physicians to practice in Menomonee Falls, Wis., died on June 26, 2024, at the age of 98. He served for several years as president of the Medical College of Wisconsin/Marquette Medical Alumni Association and received its *Distinguished Service Award* in 1994. Dr. Heyrman was a longstanding member of MCW's Walter Zeit Fellowship giving society and a founder of MCW's department of family and community medicine.

Anthony Meyer, MD '63, GME '66, FEL '68, medical director for the Aurora Psychiatric Hospital (formerly the Milwaukee Psychiatric Hospital) from 1990 to 2017, died on July 14, 2024, at the age of 87. Dr. Meyer formerly served as director of the Milwaukee County Child and Adolescent Treatment Center and as the director of MCW's child and adolescent psychiatry fellowship program, where a teaching award is named for him. Dr. Meyer either led or taught – in many cases both – most of the child psychiatrists practicing in Milwaukee.

1940s

Dorothy Rayburn McVann, MD '48, of San Marino, Calif., died on September 6, 2024, at the age of 101. She had worked for the Los Angeles County Health Department for many decades.

1950s

Elizabeth Wimberg, MD '58, died on August 6, 2024, in Evanston, Ill., at the age of 93. She was a psychiatrist in private practice in downtown Chicago. Dr. Wimberg was a volunteer faculty member at Northwestern University Medical School.

Eugene Walsh, MD '59, died on August 11, 2024, in Madison, Wis., at the age of 95. Dr. Walsh was a family medicine practitioner in private practice with offices in Madison and DeForest, Wis.

1960s

Robert Gene O'Briant, MD '63, of San Rafael, Calif., died on July 4, 2024, at the age of 91. He moved to the San Francisco Bay area in 1973, where he developed alcohol recovery programs in San Francisco, Santa Cruz and San Mateo counties. The final years of Dr. O'Briant's career were spent with the California Department of Correction as a staff physician.

Mitchell F. Kwaterski, MD '64, died on July 4, 2024, at the age of 86. He was an otolaryngologist in Appleton, Wis., where he was affiliated with the ThedaCare Regional Medical Center.

John Tamisiea, MD, GME '68, died July 1, 2024, in Wilmington, N.C., at the age of 86. A cardiologist, he was one of the founders of Wilmington Health Associates, where he established the cardiac rehabilitation department. He volunteered on medical missions, where he created tattoo removal clinics – enabling gang members to reintegrate into society in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador.

IN MEMORIAM

James Lesniak, MD '69, died on September 10, 2024, at the age of 80. A board-certified anesthesiologist in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Dr. Lesniak was affiliated with Broward Health Medical Center and served on many medical missions to Haiti and Honduras.

1970s

James Chermak, MD '73, GME '79, died June 18, 2024, at the age of 77. He was an otolaryngologist in private practice in West Bend, Wis. and was affiliated with Froedtert West Bend Hospital.

Charles Shooks, MD '73, died in Willimantic, Conn., on September 23, 2024, at the age of 76. He was an internal medicine specialist in private practice in Willimantic for 41 years and served as a preceptor for students at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine.

1990s

Michael Mostleth, MD, FEL '91, died suddenly while on a spiritual pilgrimage in Ireland at the age of 73. He was a pulmonologist in Alexandria, Minn., until his retirement in 2020.

Ramesh Peramsetty, MD '98, died in Tuscaloosa, Ala., on August 23, 2024, at the age of 63. Dr. Peramsetty was a family and bariatric medicine physician and founder and medical director of the Crimson Network group of physicians in Tuscaloosa. In early 2024, a street in Tuscaloosa was renamed in his honor, and a city holiday was declared in his honor in spring 2004 recognizing his 25-year career in medicine and his leadership role during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2000s

Matthew Biggerstaff, DO, GME '08, FEL '09, died on August 6, 2024, at the age of 56. He was an anesthesiologist specializing in pain management in Des Moines, Iowa.

Six Degrees of MCW

The Medical College of Wisconsin began to have its effect on Steven Bergin, MD '74, GME '78, long before he considered attending medical school.

"My primary care physician, Dr. Joseph Miller, was one of the first people to encourage me to become a doctor. He had graduated from MCW's predecessor institution, the Marquette University School of Medicine, in 1937," Dr. Bergin says. "I earned my medical degree at MCW, completed my residency here and then, when I moved to Stevens Point to practice, my partner had completed his residency at MCW a few years before me."

Dr. Bergin's relationship with MCW has been further strengthened by his experiences as an adjunct professor at MCW-Central Wisconsin, member of the MCW board of trustees and his leadership of the Walter Zeit Fellowship.

Additionally, Dr. Bergin and his wife, Sue, created the Dr. Richard F. Mattingly/Dr. and Mrs. Steven C. Bergin Endowed Professorship in

Obstetrics and Gynecology in 2018 to honor Dr. Mattingly, who was chair of MCW's department of obstetrics and gynecology when Dr. Bergin was a resident.

"I began to realize just how many of the people and events that profoundly affected my life involved the Medical College of Wisconsin," Dr. Bergin says.

But it wasn't always that way. When he entered medical school, MCW had just ended its relationship with Marquette University, leading to a time of intense transition – and a young Dr. Bergin didn't feel like he belonged. "I felt like I was an imposter," he recalls. "The intensity of the basic science courses was more than I had experienced as a pharmacy student [his degree before entering medical school]."

Fortunately, a discussion with Walter Zeit, PhD '39, helped change his mind. "He was one of the most supportive individuals. I told him that I didn't feel like I belonged here, but he told me, 'Yes, you do. You've achieved academic success, your interviews here showed that you belong. You can do this.' It was a real confidence boost," Dr. Bergin says.

That relationship made Dr. Bergin become involved with the Walter Zeit Fellowship, a donor society created in 1980 to support efforts at MCW and honor Dr. Zeit's contributions. Dr. Bergin has chaired the fellowship's executive committee since 2017.

That wasn't the only personal touch from MCW faculty that affected Dr. Bergin's future. "Another influential teacher was Dr. Eleanor Delfs. She always looked for the positive in people, prompting you to learn more," he says. Just before Dr. Delfs died at the end of Dr. Bergin's third year in medical school, she told him, "Steve, if you just remember what I taught you, you're going to be fine."

That's a lesson he continues to follow. "When I interact with today's medical students, I tell them that they don't have to be perfect," Dr. Bergin remarks. "It's not about getting 100 percent on every test. Medicine is a lifelong learning experience, and I want them to realize that they can learn from every experience."

As he looks back on the 50 years since his graduation, Dr. Bergin says his many connections at MCW have helped him. "I've had a good career," he shares. "When I've had trying times, my training and the advice and mentoring that was provided to me at MCW always helped me through." ■

– CHRIS COMBS



Dr. Bergin's medical school class photo, 1974

Dr. Bergin and his wife, Sue, at the 2023 Zeit Dinner

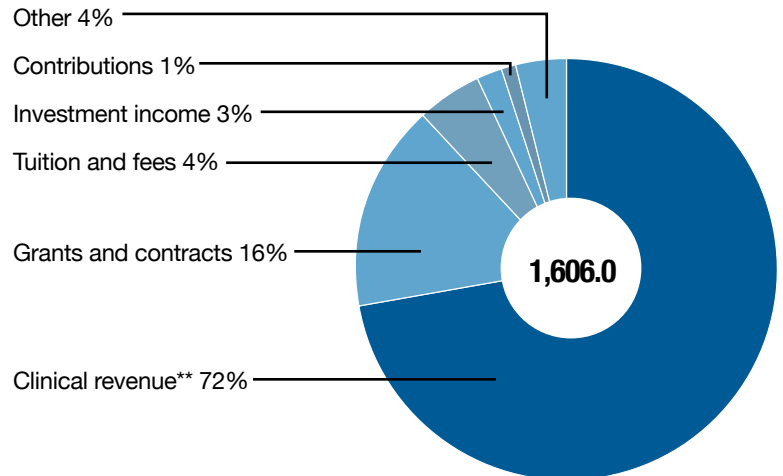


Fiscal Year 2024 Finance Report

Revenues*

| Fiscal year ended June 30, 2024 | Total All Funds (\$ in millions) |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Clinical revenue** | 1,152.0 |
| Grants and contracts | 257.4 |
| Tuition and fees | 70.9 |
| Investment income | 49.6 |
| Contributions | 7.4 |
| Other | 68.7 |
| Total revenues | \$1,606.0 |

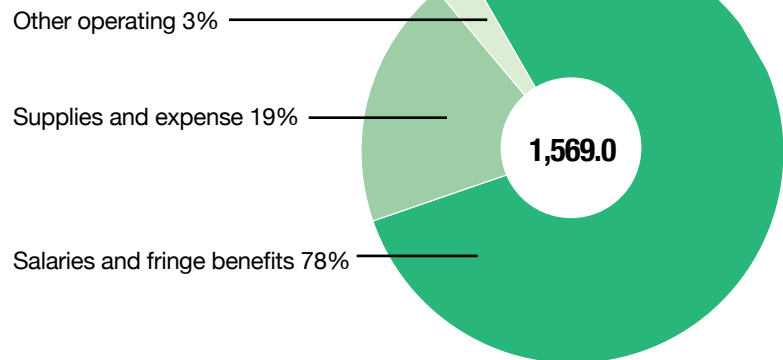
Revenues Fiscal Year 2024



Expenses*

| Fiscal year ended June 30, 2024 | Total All Funds (\$ in millions) |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Salaries and fringe benefits | 1,223.9 |
| Supplies and expense | 299.6 |
| Other operating | 45.5 |
| Total expenses | \$1,569.0 |
| Excess of revenues over expenses | \$37.0 |

Expenses Fiscal Year 2024

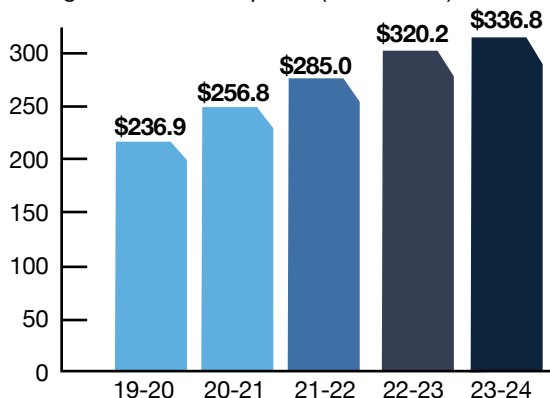


*Excludes nonoperating revenue and expense, including realized and unrealized gains and losses on investments.

**Includes adult and pediatric revenues.

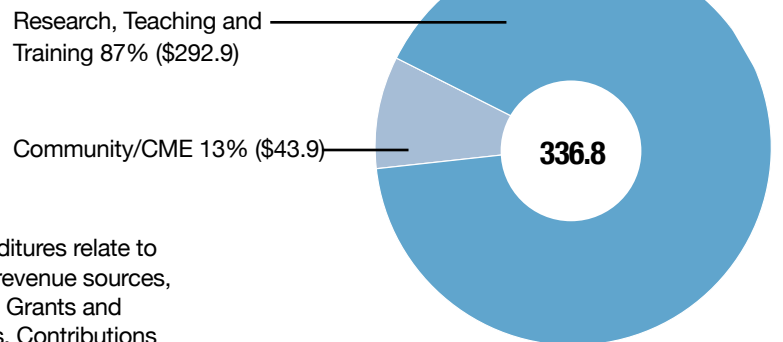
Externally Funded Expenditures***

July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2024
Total Externally Funded Expenditures for Research, Teaching, Training and Related Purposes (\$ in millions)



Externally Funded Expenditures by Purpose Fiscal Year 2024

(\$ in millions)



***Expenditures relate to multiple revenue sources, including Grants and contracts, Contributions and Other.



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