

Quarterly

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First Successful Bone Marrow Transplant Led to Today's Immunotherapies

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QUARTERLY

The Magazine for Alumni, Friends,
Faculty and Students of the University of Wisconsin
School of Medicine and Public Health

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CALENDAR

AUGUST 2018

Friday, August 24

White Coat Ceremony

Wednesday, August 29

Stethoscope Presentation
and Badger Cookout

OCTOBER 2018

Friday, October 19, and
Saturday, October 20

Fall WMAA Board Meeting
Homecoming Weekend
Class Reunions for Classes of
'73, '78, '83, '88, '93, '98, '03, '08 and '13
Homecoming Football Game, UW vs. Illinois

NOVEMBER 2018

Friday, November 9

Middleton Society Dinner at
Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery
Discovery Building

APRIL 2019

Friday, April 5

Spring WMAA Board Meeting
WMAA Scholarship Reception
WMAA Awards Banquet

MAY 2019

Friday, May 10

UW-Madison Commencement

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TRIUMPH

Leaders of the Training in Urban Medicine and Public Health program bolster its legacy as they guide students’ projects with community partners in Milwaukee.

Campus Scene (above)

A student enjoys a game of ultimate frisbee on the lawn of Signe Skott Cooper Hall, with the Health Sciences Learning Center (left) and the Wisconsin Institutes for Medical Research in the background.

On the Cover

Fritz Bach, MD, describes research that led to the first successful bone marrow transplants—which took place in 1968 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and University of Minnesota.

—Circa 1971 photo courtesy of UW-Madison Archives

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ROBERT N. GOLDEN, MD



As we celebrate the end of one academic year and the beginning of another at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH), we are honoring several milestones reached by our students, faculty and various programs.

We observed a wildly successful Match Day and equally magnificent graduation ceremony for the Class of 2018 medical students.

Between these two rites of passage, fourth-year medical students participated in the innovative Internship Preparation Course. This new training segment offers hands-on opportunities to learn the skills students need to “hit the ground running” when they begin their residencies. This practical, multidisciplinary training model takes our school’s ForWard Curriculum to a new level of relevance. The two-week “boot camp” aims to reduce stress as our graduating students prepare for their first days as PGY-1 residents. We hope that with this extra boost in practical training, rather than feeling *absolutely terrified* on their first night of call...they will merely feel *very scared!*

Also this spring, we celebrated the success of all students in the Training in Urban Medicine and Public Health (TRIUMPH)

program, as they presented their community projects at the graduation showcase event. The 2017-2018 academic year was the first since TRIUMPH’s founding director, Dr. Cynthia Haq, passed the baton to the new director, Dr. Kjersti Knox. Among the many impressive components of Dr. Haq’s legacy is the way she groomed an outstanding successor and other leaders. Three TRIUMPH graduates—Dr. Knox and co-associate directors, Drs. Michelle Buelow and Theresa Umhoefer-Wittry—are at the helm of this immersion program for students who are dedicated to practicing medicine and public health in underserved urban areas.

Honoring success among SMPH alumni continued as the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association presented major awards to two physicians in Wausau, Wisconsin. Dr. Kevin Thao earned the Forward Under 40 Award, and Dr. William Nietert was named Badger of the Year. We congratulate them on their outstanding accomplishments.

Another significant milestone, described in the cover article, is the 50-year anniversary of the first successful bone marrow transplants. In 1968, our school made international news when Professor Fritz Bach performed this ground-breaking

procedure, in parallel with colleagues in Minnesota. Dr. Bach was an influential mentor for Dr. Paul Sondel, who worked in Dr. Bach’s lab as an undergraduate student and has since devoted his career to childhood cancer research and patient care at the SMPH and American Family Children’s Hospital. Dr. Sondel and his colleagues have made huge strides in immunotherapy, advancing Dr. Bach’s vision.

Our school’s 10th annual Bioethics Symposium—with the theme “Follow the Money: Ethical Dilemmas in High-Cost Medicine”—featured the fourth annual medical student bioethics essay contest. The winning essay appears in the Connections section of this issue.

As described on page 37, Dr. Byron Crouse, the founding director of the Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine (WARM), has made the transition into retirement after serving as a distinguished faculty member for 17 years. We highlight many of Dr. Crouse’s remarkable contributions to this institution—and for the entire state of Wisconsin. He leaves a wonderful legacy of bringing people together, building innovative programs and providing outreach to rural communities. We welcome Dr. Joseph Holt, a UW-Madison alumnus, as WARM’s new director.

As I write this message, I am struck (if not distracted) by the natural beauty that lies outside the windows of my office. Summer is always a time of rejuvenation in our school as we welcome new students, new house staff and new faculty members. Perhaps symbolically—as I reflect on the transitions over the past year—the sky is sunny and bright, the birds have returned from the winter’s migration, and all is well at *your* school of medicine and public health. Please give a call and stop by for a visit the next time your travels bring you to Madison.

Robert N. Golden, MD

*Dean, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health
Vice Chancellor for Medical Affairs,
UW-Madison*

SUSAN ISENSEE, MD '83 (PG '86)

Greetings to my wonderful fellow alumni of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) as I write my final president's message to you. It has been a privilege to serve these past two years and meet so many extraordinary alumni, students and staff.

Our Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) Board of Directors has added several new, enthusiastic members from throughout the state and nation. They span several years of graduation and will contribute to the healthy future of our association. Our board has accomplished many additional goals in my term as president, including reviewing and revising the strategic plan. We continue to encourage philanthropy to help SMPH students who face overwhelming tuition and costs. Many classes have created Great People Scholarship Funds, and classes continue to add to their class funds, especially during their reunions.

We also are proud of the WMAA Stethoscope Program, which provides new stethoscopes to first-year students at the beginning of their time on campus. These students are amazingly talented, and they have a variety of impressive backgrounds.

Students greatly appreciate the many programs the WMAA supports, including wellness activities, opportunities to explore career options and—of course—the sweet treats in the famous candy bowl in the WMAA office.

As president, I have had the opportunity to meet remarkable alumni, from whom I have learned a lot. I share a special shout out to Dr. William Nietert, a past president of the WMAA. He was recently honored as the Badger of the Year at the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association event in Wausau. To quote Dr. Nietert, "Every day you should see something amazing or amusing." I take that to heart!

It was a special honor to present the WMAA medallions to the Half-Century Society members, who are alumni who graduated 50 years ago. The Class of 1968 had a wonderful celebration during the recent Alumni Weekend—which you'll be able to read about in the next issue of *Quarterly*. These alumni tell interesting and sometimes humorous stories of what medical school was like for them.

Working with Dean Robert Golden has been a great honor. He has done an incredible job recruiting new faculty members and chairs, as well as balancing the SMPH budget at this time of challenging state and federal budgets. The school's faculty members are achieving great things, and their research continues to impress the nation and the world.

I would like to thank all of you for allowing me to serve as your president. I am grateful to the WMAA staff who made this job enjoyable. Karen Peterson, executive director, is one of the best in the nation, as is our *Quarterly* magazine. Special thanks to Andrea Larson and Maureen Brady of the WMAA office, and Jill Watson and Sarah Dillivan-Graves from the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association. And last but not least, photographer Todd Brown does a beautiful job capturing the essence of alumni events with enthusiasm.

The WMAA is in good hands with our incoming president, Dr. Daniel Jackson, from the Class of 2003. I look forward to continuing to serve on the WMAA Board of Directors, as a past president and as treasurer, under the leadership of Dr. Jackson and other future presidents.

Again, thank you.

Susan Isensee, MD '83 (PG '86)
*President, Wisconsin Medical
Alumni Association*





Paul Sondel, MD, PhD '75 (PG '80), has devoted his career to finding treatments and cures to help children with cancer.

Golden Anniversary

FIRST SUCCESSFUL BONE MARROW TRANSPLANT
LED TO TODAY'S IMMUNOTHERAPIES

Fifty years ago, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) Professor Fritz Bach, MD, and University of Minnesota Professor Robert Good, MD, PhD, performed the first successful bone marrow transplants, made possible by Bach's earlier research findings. One year later, a young, inquisitive undergraduate student—Paul Sondel, MD, PhD '75 (PG '80)—joined Bach's lab and, with colleagues, has carried the torch to further the field of immunotherapy ever since.

"The national media, university and lab were still buzzing about the landmark transplants when I started working in Dr. Bach's lab in 1969," exclaims Sondel, now the research director of the Division of Pediatric Hematology, Oncology and Bone Marrow Transplant in the SMPH Department of Pediatrics. "I was struck by seeing news stories about it."



Paul Sondel, MD, PhD '75 (PG '80); circa 1969.

His working relationship with Bach played a huge role in Sondel's decision to earn a doctorate degree in genetics at UW-Madison before he attended medical school at Harvard University, where Bach had earned his medical degree. They became lifelong friends before Bach died in August 2011 at age 77.

"I knew Dr. Bach for 42 years," says Sondel, who did pediatric residency training at the University of Minnesota and UW Children's Hospital in Madison [now called American Family Children's Hospital (AFCH)] before he joined the faculty of the SMPH Departments of Pediatrics, Human Oncology and Genetics in 1980. "He was a treasured mentor, colleague and friend."

Bach's first successful bone marrow transplant, performed in 1968, was on a 22-month-old boy with Wiskott-Aldrich Syndrome, an immunodeficiency disease. The patient and his family were from upstate New York, and Bach conducted the transplant at UW Children's Hospital. The boy's sister had donated the bone marrow, which allowed her brother to live into adulthood.



Fritz Bach, MD, in his laboratory; circa 1975.

The test that opened the door to the first successful bone marrow transplants was the Mixed Leukocyte Culture (MLC) that combined white blood cells of the patient with white blood cells of related donors to find a match by serving as a surrogate marker of Human Leukocyte Antigen (HLA) gene compatibility. French researcher Jean Dausset, MD, had identified the HLA genes on chromosome 6, and Bach proved that

a donor-recipient match of the HLA genes can help predict the success of a bone marrow transplant.

“Dr. Bach figured out how to do the equivalent of a bone marrow transplant in a test tube by mixing the white blood cells of the patient and the related donor. It was a way to gauge the chances of graft-versus-host disease (GVHD), a lethal reaction in which immune cells attack the patient’s body,” describes Sondel, adding that any two siblings who did not react to each other in the MLC would signify a match; and any two siblings have a 25 percent chance of being a match.

Bach shared the MLC testing method with Good, which enabled him to perform a successful bone marrow transplant on a different patient in Minnesota that coincided with the transplant in Wisconsin. Research papers on the two transplants were reported side-by-side in the prestigious journal *The Lancet*.

Richard Albertini, MD '63, PhD '72 (PG '87)—a former post-doctoral research fellow with Bach and a member of the transplant team—was at the bedside of the patient when he received the first successful bone marrow transplant by Bach.



Among the buildings behind Wisconsin General Hospital (now called the Medical Sciences Center) is UW Children’s Hospital (now called the Bradley Building), where Fritz Bach, MD, performed the first successful bone marrow transplant in 1968.

“That was the second time we had done a bone marrow transplant on the [Wisconsin] patient,” notes Albertini. “The first time, we didn’t immunosuppress his system, but for the second, we completely wiped out his system to suppress it before the transplant, thereby enabling the transplant to grow successfully.”

Albertini saw evidence of the long-term success of the boy’s second transplant when the recipient—then an active

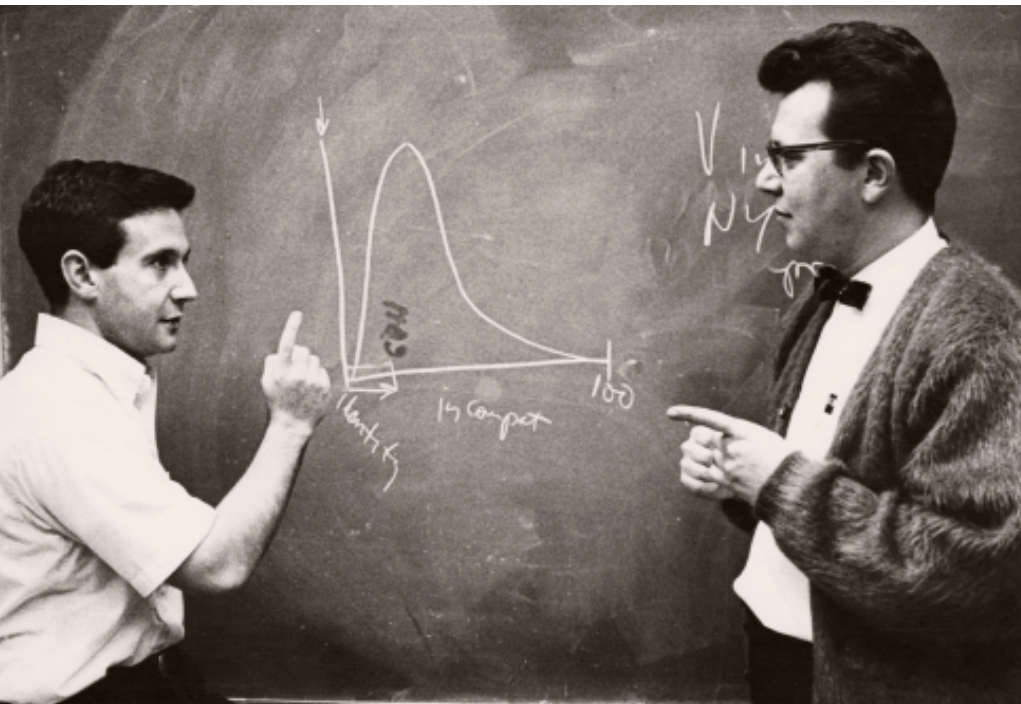
teenager—visited him several years later at the University of Vermont.

About seven years after the first successful transplants, Bach found a way to speed up the MLC test so it required only several hours rather than six days. In addition to benefitting bone marrow transplant patients, the speeded-up test also positively impacted cadaver kidney transplant recipients, because that procedure must be done within 48 hours of the donor’s death.

“Fundamentally, we still conduct this testing, but we have a refined way of doing so,” explains Mark Juckett, MD, director of the Adult Bone Marrow Transplant Program at UW Health and an SMPH professor (CHS) in the Department of Medicine’s Division of Hematology and Medical Oncology.

Today, bone marrow transplants can be done with unrelated donors. The National Marrow Donor Program, otherwise known as the “Be the Match” program, was founded in 1986 and includes approximately 10 million potential bone marrow donors. The registry allows physicians to conduct transplants on the 75 percent of patients who need a bone marrow transplant but who don’t have a family member who is a match.

“Hopefully, through research, bone marrow transplants will continue to get easier and safer for patients, or we will find other treatments that are less risky,” says Juckett, noting that Bach’s early work and successful



Fritz Bach, MD (left), discusses factors related to immune response with Richard Albertini, MD '63, PhD '72 (PG '87); circa late 1960s.



A lab technician uses a coulter counter to analyze blood samples; circa 1970s.

transplants paved the way for five decades of advances, with more on the horizon.

When transplants were first performed for children and adults with leukemia, patients were treated with high doses of chemotherapy and total body radiation in an attempt to cure the disease. The transplant was given immediately after the chemotherapy and radiation in order to rescue the patient from a major side effect of this treatment—severe damage to the patient’s normal bone marrow. It was later discovered that immune cells from the donor, transferred to the patient with the transplant, played an important role in destroying any cancer cells that were not killed by the chemotherapy and radiation, a phenomenon now known as the “graft-versus-leukemia” effect. This realization facilitated the development of many other immune-based therapies to fight cancer.

“We’re at the beginning of new types of therapies in which patients are given cells using novel techniques,” Juckett says,

referring to immunotherapies that use the body’s own white blood cells to kill leukemia and other cancers without destroying normal tissue.

Sondel has pored over the concepts behind immunotherapy for five decades.

“I remember, back in 1969, talking with Fritz Bach about the strength of the immune system,” Sondel says. “Specifically, if it is so strong that it can reject a liver transplant or bone marrow transplant, why can’t we use the immune system to kill cancer?”

One of the most successful immunotherapies is Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy, led at the SMPH by Christian Capitini, MD, assistant professor, Department of Pediatrics. Only a few U.S. academic medical centers are using this therapy for children with refractory acute lymphoblastic leukemia. The technique extracts T-cells from a patient, then bioengineers them to create cancer-fighting T-cells before infusing the cells back into the patient.

Another innovative therapy is alpha beta T-cell depletion. In a protocol developed by Mario Otto, MD, PhD, and Kenneth DeSantes, MD, the patient’s immune system is destroyed through high-dose chemotherapy. Immune cells and stem cells obtained from a half-matched donor, usually a parent, are manipulated utilizing a method co-developed by Otto, an associate professor in the Department of Pediatrics. The process uses magnetic beads, which attach to a protein and “snatch” the alpha beta T-cells that cause GVHD. The remaining white blood cells and stem cells are infused into the patient, and can attack and kill cancer cells, decrease the risk of infection and restore the production of normal blood cells.

“We use this approach on patients with leukemia,” says Sondel, the Reed and Carolee Walker Professor in Pediatric Oncology. “Additionally, we’re the only center in the nation to use this approach to treat solid cancers, such as neuroblastoma, that haven’t responded to conventional treatments.

DeSantes—a professor in the Department of Pediatrics and director of the Pediatric Hematology, Oncology and Bone Marrow Transplant Program at AFCH—recently opened another U.S. Food and Drug Administration-approved clinical protocol in which he takes healthy cells from a donor, grows them in the lab to “activate” them, and infuses the cells—along with an anti-cancer antibody—into a cancer patient.

Reflecting on all that has transpired since the first successful bone marrow transplants, Albertini—who earned his medical degree and doctorate at the SMPH, did post-doctorate research with Bach, and completed a residency at UW Health before moving to Vermont—says, “I’m proud to have Wisconsin in my background and to have worked on remarkable research with remarkable people.”

Today, immunotherapy can be considered the standard of care for certain types of cancer, leading some to ask whether bone marrow transplants will be needed at all.

“I think that procedure will become *passé* for cancer patients, but not for children who are born with genetic defects that cause potentially fatal diseases, in which the bone marrow malfunctions,” Sondel says, predicting that bone marrow transplants will remain relevant for several more decades.

He adds, “In theory, if the bone marrow is not working correctly because a gene is missing, you can take some of the bone marrow and insert the correct gene, then give the marrow back to the patient. It’s already happening for some diseases, such as select subtypes of severe combined immune deficiency syndrome, but we don’t know whether or when this will be possible for many other genetic diseases.”

Figuring out next steps like this is in line with the mission of the North American Pediatric Dream Team of researchers—including Sondel, Capitini, DeSantes and Otto—who have dedicated their careers to understanding the immune system and developing treatments that use its power to battle deadly diseases. Their quest continues.



Kenneth DeSantes, MD, poses with a young patient.

PHOTOS BY TODD BROWN

From Match Day to Graduation

CELEBRATING MEDICAL STUDENTS' ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Reminiscent of the Game of Thrones, the MD Class of 2018 at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) created its own drama: the Game of Matches.

On March 16, 2018, fourth-year medical students—accompanied by their families and friends—gathered at the Health Sciences Learning Center in Madison, as they imagined they were on the continents of Westeros and Essos. Their matches

played out joyfully, as they revealed the secret upcoming destinations in their adventurous training journeys.

On May 11, class members donned ceremonial caps and gowns to receive diplomas, thank their supporters and celebrate all they have accomplished.

The SMPH's 165 MD graduates include 28 students from the Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine, 12 from the Training in Urban Medicine and Public Health program,

seven who earned MD-MPH degrees and 12 who earned MD-PhDs.

Top row (left to right): Match Day shirts shared a Game of Thrones theme; Katharine Kelly; Billy Burrough, Rezvanah Ghasemzadeh. Bottom row: Steve Amaefuna and friend; Annie Reda, Jeremy Riekana.





Top row: Sean Buck, Katharine Kelly, Shara Feld, Ian Holmen; Rebecca Warwick, Kathleen O'Brien. Second row: Alan Wang; Sara Saleh; Danielle Westenberg. Third row: Awards recipients Alexa Lowry, Stephanie Fricke, Sara Saleh, Rebecca Warwick, Jeff Mahlum, James Dahm; Native American Center for Health Professions Bret Benally Thompson, MD, Alex Kivimaki, Christine Athmann, MD, Jacquelynn Arbuckle, MD '95; Medical Students for Minority Concerns, seated: Annemarie Giuca, Brittane Khong, Jenny Giang, Chee Lor; standing: Laura Lins, Minh Nguyen, Alex Kivimaki, Erika Starks, Steve Amaefuna, Rashid Siddiqui, Kestrel Reopelle, Iris Vuong.





The three leaders of the Training in Urban Medicine and Public Health (TRIUMPH) program are TRIUMPH alumni who also practice medicine and community health in Milwaukee. They are, above left to right, Michelle Buelow, MD '11, MPH, co-associate director; Kjersti Knox, MD '11, director; and Theresa Umhoefer-Wittry, MD '12, co-associate director.

TRIUMPH

URBAN PROGRAM'S NEW LEADERS AND CURRICULUM BOLSTER ITS LEGACY

Cheers erupted during a brief pause at the start of the Training in Urban Medicine and Public Health (TRIUMPH) graduation in May 2018, when some students noticed a familiar face flash across the screen in Aurora Sinai Medical Center's Rapkin Auditorium in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The fleeting video clip revealed the image of Cynthia Haq, MD (PG '87), TRIUMPH's founding director who led the program through 2017. And much to everyone's surprise—via an online video system—Haq later congratulated the graduates, who had started their training under her leadership. Her joy in seeing these students graduate was evident in her voice and on her face, even from a great distance.

Members of the TRIUMPH Class of 2018—like all students in the program—chose to train in a medically underserved, urban environment with the goal of helping to ease the doctor shortage in large cities like Milwaukee. The program prepares motivated medical students to become community-

engaged physician leaders; promotes health equity; and engages students in addressing complex public health concerns, such as obesity and infant mortality.

Perhaps the students' accidental preview of the video symbolized TRIUMPH's recent year of transitions, including its top leadership, curriculum and program size.

When Haq—formerly a professor in the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health's (SMPH) Department of Family Medicine and Community Health and Department of Population Health Sciences—left to become the chair of the Department of Family Medicine at the University of California, Irvine, SMPH administrators looked to the program itself to find new TRIUMPH leaders. They chose Kjersti Knox, MD '11, as its director and Theresa Umhoefer-Wittry, MD '12, as a new co-associate director, to join forces with Michelle Buelow, MD '11, MPH, co-associate director. The three physicians are TRIUMPH alumni who practice medicine and community health in Milwaukee.



Cynthia Haq, MD (PG '87), addressed the 2018 TRIUMPH graduates via video.

“Dr. Knox is one of our first TRIUMPH graduates, and we’re thrilled to come full circle with this great accomplishment of having three of our alumni leading this program,” notes Christine Seibert, MD, associate dean for medical student education and services and a professor of medicine. “They are following in the footsteps of their beloved mentor, Dr. Haq.”

At TRIUMPH's graduation celebration, Robert N. Golden, MD, dean of the SMPH,

told the Class of 2018, “A true measure of the strength and success of a program is when the torch is passed in leadership, and it doesn’t miss a beat.”

Indeed, Knox, Umhoefer-Wittry and Buelow haven’t missed a beat, even though they are carrying the torch during a time of several transitions.

For instance, the 2018 graduating class trained under the school’s old curriculum; members of the next class are training in the legacy curriculum; and all other classes started their training with the new ForWard Curriculum, a three-phase model that the SMPH has been gradually rolling out to fully integrate basic science, public health and clinical science throughout all medical students’ education.

Further, TRIUMPH has grown substantially since its first six students entered a six-month pilot program in 2009. Responding

Now, 16 students are competitively selected each year from the cohort of 176 first-year SMPH medical students. All begin their training in Madison. Because the Forward Curriculum’s Phase 2 has second-year medical students enter their clinical years sooner than they did in the legacy curriculum, TRIUMPH students now relocate to spend the last half of their second year and their entire third and fourth years in Milwaukee.

Reflecting the school’s focus on combining medicine and public health, each TRIUMPH student is matched with a Milwaukee-area partner to pursue a population-based health improvement project, in addition to clinical training. Through these projects, students gain a robust understanding of the types of patients and communities they will serve in their future practices; build skills in community

an abundance of community and public health organizations—have expanded to accommodate more students, who come from Wisconsin and across the nation.

“With the arrival of the 16 members of the M2 TRIUMPH class in January (2018), we are excited to expand our TRIUMPH cohort to more than 50 students who are in Milwaukee at any given time,” says Knox. “They work in collaboration with their clinician teachers and more than 40 community partners that are leading our students and our community toward better health. It’s exciting!”

James Dahm is a 2018 TRIUMPH graduate whose successful TRIUMPH journey spanned several of these changes. He did his community project at the Sixteenth Street Community Health Center, a federally qualified community health center, where he worked to improve screening rates for colorectal cancer among Latino patients. Through data analysis, collaborative engagement and creative community-based interventions, Dahm played a key role in increasing the screening rates among some of Milwaukee’s most underserved patients.

“I believe TRIUMPH will be successful for years to come,” he shares, adding that the program’s family atmosphere and its new leaders’ vast experience levels add to its strength.

While Dahm’s class had a dozen graduates, that number varies each spring because some trainees take time out to pursue global health opportunities or a dual degree with a master of public health (MPH). After these activities, all TRIUMPH students return to finish their training in Milwaukee.

With the addition of the newest accepted first-year students, TRIUMPH has enrolled 166 students throughout its 10-year history. To date, of the 110 students who have graduated from TRIUMPH, all have gone on to residencies that emphasize service to people in urban, low-income communities. Forty-four graduates have completed residency training, and 100 percent of these physicians now practice in urban areas. Twenty-one of them (about 47 percent) have returned to practice in Wisconsin.

A Milwaukee-area native, Buelow—who splits her time between working for the



Natalie Dosch, a third-year TRIUMPH student (center), describes her community project to Azure'De Williams (right), at the student showcase event in May 2018.

to student demand and community interest, the program has expanded in cohort size and program duration several times since then, growing to include 16 students per cohort in 2014. Most recently TRIUMPH expanded to include M2 students in Milwaukee during Phase 2 of the ForWard Curriculum, resulting in the program’s expansion to approximately 50 students in M2, M3 and M4 classes.

health assessment, project design and interprofessional collaboration; and learn to work upstream to address the social determinants of health and health equity.

Another growth boom helped the program leaders and students keep pace: TRIUMPH’s partnerships—including those with Aurora Health Care, the City of Milwaukee Health Department, schools and



Fourth-year TRIUMPH student Kerriane Fullin (center) describes the “Blood Pressure Land” game she designed during her community project to (left to right) third-year TRIUMPH student Nicholas Thompson, SMPH Dean Robert N. Golden, MD, and community partner Kay Maas.

program and serving as a family physician at the Sixteenth Street Community Health Center—notes that she and other TRIUMPH faculty and staff have worked hard to keep up with the program’s growth. For instance, they coordinate community projects, rotation assignments and many other education-related tasks for twice the number of students they used to accommodate.

She notes, “It’s been challenging for the past few years to have students at different curriculum stages, but they have been really resilient as we’ve gone through several transitions in curricula as well as leadership.”

Perhaps the most difficult part of the curriculum change has been keeping the students connected with each other and with program leaders, says Knox, who practices at Aurora Health Care.

In the previous curriculum, students worked on their community projects for 16 months, and they met with TRIUMPH leaders every one to two weeks, depending on the stage of their education. In the new curriculum, students’ community-based time

is closer to 28 months, and they meet with leaders every other week.

“We are thrilled that the students have more time to gain experience with their community project sites,” Knox says. “And to make this happen, we have been re-designing the way students connect with us.”

She adds that the future holds more changes related to the new curriculum, including an increased focus on incorporating health advocacy.

Umhoefer-Wittry predicts that each new class of TRIUMPH students will embrace the changes and will continue to embody the program’s goals of serving the underserved and making a difference in the city.

These goals shine brightly at an annual project showcase, at which all TRIUMPH students present their knowledge and demonstrate their results to an audience of parents, SMPH leaders and community partners.

For this annual spring tradition—held with the TRIUMPH graduation celebration—each fourth-year student shared a brief

presentation that described his or her community project, while second- and third-year students displayed abstracts and posters that detailed their projects. TRIUMPH leaders also presented community partners with awards to thank them for their service to the program.

“As a graduate myself and with the ability to see this program from a new perspective, I recognize what a wonderful program TRIUMPH is, and why these community projects are so important,” observes Knox, adding that Haq left a lasting impression on those who trained under her.

“It is a testament to her legacy and the power of TRIUMPH that three alumni provide its physician leadership. We are thrilled that Drs. Theresa Umhoefer-Wittry and Michelle Buelow are on board with me to provide outstanding leadership and support for our students,” Knox concludes. “And we are incredibly grateful to all of our community partners for their help in making this important work possible for the benefit of our students and the community members they serve.”

Celebrating Milwaukee

PARTNERSHIPS FOCUS ON BUILDING TOGETHER



Clockwise from top left (left to right): Tito Izard, MD '96, Alex Tucker, MD '75, Juliane Lee, MD '94, Thomas Puetz, MD '90, and Steve Merkow, MD '80, reacted to the crowd; members of the Amazing Grace Chorus performed; Tonya Mathison and Eileen Smith shared information about the Wisconsin Partnership Program with a guest.

by Andrew Hellpap

Recognizing that partnerships are a building block of community strength, the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) honored its Milwaukee-based partners during an evening at that city's Italian Community Center.

The school has many collaborations in Milwaukee, some aimed at addressing urgent public health needs such as African American infant mortality, while others are academic, like organizations that partner with the Training in Urban Medicine and

Public Health (TRIUMPH) program for second- to fourth-year medical students.

Honorary co-hosts of the event—sponsored by the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) in March 2018—were association board members Tito Izard, MD '96; John Kryger, MD '92; Juliane Lee, MD '94; Steve Merkow, MD '80; Thomas Puetz, MD '90; and Alex Tucker, MD '75.

SMPH Dean Robert N. Golden, MD, recognized representatives from Milwaukee partners, including Aurora Health Care, Medical College of Wisconsin and Cream City Medical Society, as well as SMPH faculty and affiliate faculty who

are based in Milwaukee. He described the value of the school's collaborators.

"To many, the way we work together seems obvious: Our students perform rotations at Aurora Health Care's hospitals and clinics," noted Golden. "But by digging deeper, we reveal how far our roots extend."

Examples of Milwaukee-based partnerships include:

- preceptorships that provide valuable experience for medical students;
- joint research projects with health care and public health organizations;
- Wisconsin Partnership Program grants, which aim to improve the health and well-being of Milwaukee residents;



Guests review program materials; Brian Gittens, MEd, Manuel Santiago, Gina Green-Harris, MBA, and Beverly Hutcherson conversed; musicians accompanied the Amazing Grace Chorus; Mark Sager, MD, Gina Green-Harris, MBA, and Barbara Lawrence enjoyed the event.

- the Rural and Urban Scholars Community Health program, built through a partnership between the SMPH and UW-Milwaukee; and
- the Center for Urban Population Health, sponsored jointly by the SMPH, UW-Milwaukee and Aurora Health Care.

The Amazing Grace Chorus performed during dinner. Organized by the school's Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute in Milwaukee, the choir includes people who have Alzheimer's Disease or dementia, as well as caretakers, relatives and friends.

In the festive banquet hall, speakers took the stage, starting with Elizabeth Petty, MD '86 (PG '89), senior associate

dean for academic affairs. She described the Robert D. and Patricia E. Kern Institute for the Transformation of Medical Education, a partnership among the SMPH, Medical College of Wisconsin and other medical schools around the nation.

The night also showcased the SMPH's TRIUMPH program. Director Kjersti Knox, MD '11, showed a video about one example of a Milwaukee-based community partnership: Penfield Children's Center and its special care nursery.

Gina Green-Harris, MBA, described the benefits the partnerships bring to communities. She is the director of the Regional Milwaukee Office,

Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute; Regional Program Office, Lifecourse Initiative for Healthy Families; and Regional Milwaukee Office, Center for Community Engagement and Health Partnerships.

"Milwaukee is an amazing place to live, work and learn, with diversity and culture matched by few cities in the United States," Golden told the 140 event participants. "The complex tapestry that makes up the city presents challenges, including health disparities facing minority populations and the unequal distribution of providers in underserved communities. ... But through our partnerships, we are meeting these challenges head on."

Know Your Class Representatives

Each University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) graduating class has one or more class representatives who play an integral role in working with the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) to plan class reunions. Those featured here hope classmates will join them at their reunions in fall 2018.

Patrick J. Fahey, MD '73

What type of practice are you in now, and where?

In 2015, I retired from the faculty of Stritch School of Medicine at Loyola University in Chicago. For 35 years, I practiced in the Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine Division. I was the chair of the Department of Medicine for 11 of those years, as well as chief of the medical service at the affiliated Hines Veterans Administration Hospital for five years. I now work part time as the chief medical officer at another affiliated facility, RML Specialty Hospital, which provides long-term acute care.

What are your hobbies/interests?

My wife and I recently purchased the Main Street Inn, a bed and breakfast inn in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, 50 miles south of St. Louis on the Mississippi River. The eight-room inn was built in 1880 and has been completely restored in the French second-period style.

What are your plans for your reunion?

I am looking forward to seeing many classmates at our 45-year reunion this October. I hope many of you can make it!

Other news

I have kept my Wisconsin roots nourished with a home on Washington Island in Door County for the past 25 years. It's a beautiful setting. Also, my 98-year-old mother still lives in Madison, so I visit regularly.

Susan Isensee, MD '83 (PG '86)

What type of practice are you in now, and where?

After I completed my family medicine residency in the UW Department of Family Medicine and Community Health, I worked at Dean Medical Center in Madison for nearly 31 years. I practiced family medicine there for 25 years, and I split my time between family practice and weight management for 12 of those years. For the last five years before I retired in May 2017, I practiced exclusively weight management.

What's your fondest memory of medical school?

I have three favorite memories: neuroanatomy class with Dr. John Harting; anatomy lab with Dr. James Pettersen; and my class' third-year skits.

What are your hobbies/interests?

I enjoy spending time with my family, including my husband, Glenn Isensee, and our son and daughter: Chris, age 30, and Molly, age 27, as well as our extended family. I also like to spend time reading, sewing, fishing, exercising, watching the Badgers and Packers, walking my dogs, getting together with friends, gardening and cooking.

What SMPH faculty do you remember the most, and why?

See the list in my fondest memories.

What are your plans for your reunion?

In addition to attending the WMAA's events planned that weekend—the reunion event at DeJope Hall, the tailgate party at Union South and the football game—we are making plans for our class to spend another evening together at The Edgewater.

Also, it will be fun for everyone to see the exciting changes on the UW-Madison campus. The awesome WMAA staff works hard to organize reunions. Let's show them that we are still one of the best classes ever!

Message to your classmates?

We are a great class—and it's been an amazing 35 years since we graduated. We are getting older, and it will be wonderful to reconnect in the great city of Madison and give back to our incredible school. Our goal is to increase our contributions toward the Class of 1983 endowed scholarship.

I have been honored to serve as WMAA president for the past two years, and to meet many students who are very appreciative of what alumni do for them, from giving them stethoscopes, contributing to scholarships, and so much more. Thank you.



Patrick J. Fahey, MD '73



Susan Isensee, MD '83 (PG '86)



Ann Liebeskind, MD '98



Gregory Horwitz, MD '03

Ann Liebeskind, MD '98, FAAP, FNLA

What type of practice are you in now, and where?

I completed a residency in internal medicine and pediatrics, as well as a certification in lipidology. After a few years working in a health care system's cardiology department, I now run a private practice lipids clinic for adults and children in Neenah, Wisconsin. I also have a growing corporate wellness business, which has been a lot of fun.

What's your fondest memory of medical school?

I relish the friendships that still endure today.

What are your hobbies/interests?

Anything I can do with my kids and husband makes me happy. We especially love to travel, so we are always planning our next vacation.

What SMPH faculty do you remember the most, and why?

Dean Philip Farrell was such a great advocate for students, and he was fun to hang out with.

What are your plans for your reunion?

I am hoping to attend our reunion and would love to see as many classmates as possible. I'm looking forward to some great Badgers football.

Message to your classmates?

If you haven't been back to Madison in a while, you'll be shocked at how it has grown and changed. It is still a great town—just bigger and busier. Some things don't change though. We'll always have State Street, Bascom Hill and the Memorial Union Terrace!

Gregory Horwitz, MD '03

What type of practice are you in now, and where?

I am a urologist in a private practice in Kansas City, Missouri.

What's your fondest memory of medical school?

I miss the glory days of playing drums with the SMPH rock band, "The Arrhythmias," and hanging out with good friends. I've had to start a new band with my three children (ages 10, 7 and 6), who play guitar, drums and piano. My new family band is not quite ready to play the Madison bar scene, but we have a lot of fun practicing together.

What are your plans for your reunion?

I can't wait to see all of my classmates, hang out on State Street and jealously explore all the new locations Madison has to offer.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVES WHO ARE PLANNING REUNIONS

These classes will hold reunions on Friday and Saturday, October 19 and 20, 2018.

1973: Patrick Fahey

1978: Representative needed

1983: Susan Isensee

1988: Catherine Best, Kay Gruling, Maria Weber

1993: Bruce Douglas

1998: Ann Liebeskind, Timothy Richer

2003: Greg Horwitz, Daniel Jackson

2008: Sarah Endrizzi, Jaime Hook

2013: Nick Coorough, Katie McManus



There's More Online!
Visit med.wisc.edu/class-reps



ALLISON DUFFY, MD '05

After completing my anesthesiology residency at the University of California, San Francisco, in 2009, I joined a private practice of 150 anesthesiology physicians that covers a large territory in northern California. My practice is in the East Bay area.

I enjoy being one-on-one with my patients during their surgery or procedure. My time is divided among one hospital—San Ramon Regional Medical Center—and several outpatient surgery centers, in vitro fertilization centers, surgeon's offices

and endoscopy centers. At the hospital, I do a mix of obstetrical anesthesia and anesthesia for cases such as total joint arthroplasties, spine procedures, general surgery and urology procedures. At the outpatient centers, I provide anesthesia for patients undergoing fast-paced smaller procedures in orthopedics, plastic surgery, gynecology and other fields.

Also, I find it enjoyable to have multiple practice locations and work with many surgical specialists. It is challenging and rewarding to take care of such a wide variety of patients, from

healthy to ill and young to old, all requiring different types of anesthesia. For instance, we do general anesthesia, deep sedation, epidurals, nerve blocks and other procedures in different settings.

A patient I found memorable was undergoing a C-section to deliver her twins, and the physician soon discovered she had placenta accreta, with a sudden, unexpected and significant blood loss and hemodynamic instability. I was able to stabilize her hemodynamics and started the emergency transfusion protocol while the OB/GYN physician



worked quickly. Fortunately, the twins and mom all had a great outcome.

For medical students who are considering anesthesiology, I would tell them this is a dynamic and fulfilling career that offers a wide variety of practice locations.

DAVID J. ROSENFELD, MD '94

I am a partner in a large Atlanta-based chronic pain management practice, Alliance Spine and Pain Centers.

Following my residency, I initially practiced anesthesiology, but I now practice chronic pain management, including minimally invasive spine surgical cases, such as percutaneous discectomy, percutaneous decompression and implantation of neuromodulation devices.

While I was on call at Tulane University in New Orleans, I had to resuscitate one of

my partners who suffered a sudden myocardial infarction in front of me. It was almost surreal. I was able to provide advanced cardiac life support and intubate him without being overcome by emotions. Later, in the cardiac catheterization lab, he arrested again. Although I feared that he would die, I was able to keep my thoughts focused and provide the critical care he needed. When it was over—and he survived—I was mentally and physically drained, but I felt that all my studies and practice had paid off. I had saved a life!

Even before I entered medical school, I liked the operating room environment, which I had experienced while working for Dr. Bruce Harms in the SMPH Department of Surgery. I initially matched into otolaryngology but quickly realized that was not a good fit. My neighbor, a nurse anesthetist, suggested that I consider specializing in anesthesiology. Within two weeks of starting my anesthesiology residency at Alton Ochsner Medical Foundation in New Orleans, I knew I had made the right choice. I decided to do a pain



fellowship there after I had a personal experience with chronic pain after surgery.

I am an active member of the Georgia Society of Interventional Pain Physicians and the North American Neuromodulation Society, and I am the president of the Greater Atlanta Pain Society.

PATRICK PIKE, MD '10

Following medical school, I was fortunate to be able to stay at UW Health to complete my anesthesiology residency. My first job after my residency took me to Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, where I joined a group that enabled me to practice the full spectrum of anesthesiology. My practice there included caring for healthy pediatric patients, obstetrics patients and cardiac patients, and it included regional anesthesia.

My most memorable case during my time in Fond du Lac was caring for an otherwise healthy 55-year-old patient who woke up in the middle of

the night with pain between the shoulder blades. The patient was diagnosed with an ascending aortic dissection, which required repair under deep hypothermic circulatory arrest. I found this to be a very rewarding experience to be part of the team that saved this person's life. The patient went on to make a full recovery and went home from the hospital in one week.

My experiences in Fond du Lac inspired me to return to UW Health to complete additional training in cardiac anesthesia as part of the inaugural class for its new cardiothoracic anesthesiology fellowship. With my fellowship

coming to an end, I have been fortunate to obtain a position with Central Wisconsin Anesthesiology based in my hometown of Wausau, Wisconsin.

I was set on my specialty choice by the time I started my third year of medical school. Looking back over my career so far, I could not imagine doing any other specialty. I think medical students who are drawn to critical care, physiology and pharmacology, as well as those who enjoy working as part of a team, should consider anesthesiology as a career.



Class Notes *compiled by Andrea Larson*

We want to hear from you!
med.wisc.edu/shareyournews

Class of 1968

David de Harter has been recognized for his contributions to radiation oncology by *Marquis Who's Who* biographical volumes. Individuals profiled are chosen from among the most prominent professionals in their fields. Factors such as position and noteworthy accomplishments are considered during the selection process.

Class of 1976

Richard Heuser was inducted into the 2018 Class of Master Interventionalists of the Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions (SCAI). He joins a select group of 50 outstanding innovators in cardiology who have demonstrated excellence in invasive/interventional cardiology in their careers, manifested by a commitment to the highest levels of clinical care, innovation, publication and teaching. Heuser co-directed the first New Innovations and Cardiovascular

Interventions and Technology Summit at the annual SCAI meeting. He has published more than 400 medical articles and edited six cardiology textbooks, three of which have received strong reviews by the American College of Cardiology. He holds 22 patents, co-owns six and has 10 pending.

Class of 2007

Mike Puskarich has become an associate professor and director of research in the Hennepin County Medical Center's Department of Emergency Medicine. Based in Minneapolis, with a dual-appointment at the University of Minnesota, this role brings him closer to his hometown than his previous practice. In his new position, he will continue his research related to the early treatment of patients with sepsis.

Class of 2015

Caroline Yang was awarded a 2017-2018 Yale/Stanford Johnson and Johnson Global Health Scholarship. In May 2018, she traveled to South Africa to work in a hospital

for six weeks. The opportunity has been beneficial in terms of her work in emergency procedures and infectious diseases.

SEEKING SUBMISSIONS FOR HEALER'S JOURNEY

Healer's Journey, a section of *Quarterly* magazine, showcases creative work by members of the UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) family. We seek prose, poetry and photographs that are moving, humorous or unusual and that reflect personal experiences in our world of healing.

Guidelines are as follows: Manuscripts, subject to editing, can be no longer than 1,000 words. Photos must be high resolution. Subject matter should relate to any aspect of working or studying at the SMPH or in the medical field generally. Send submissions to quarterly@med.wisc.edu or via mail to:

Managing editor, *Quarterly* magazine
 Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association
 750 Highland Ave.
 Madison, WI 53705

IN MEMORIAM

Erwin S. Huston, MD '50
 Fox Point, Wisconsin
 April 10, 2018

Jack D. Heiden, MD '58
 Madison, Wisconsin
 February 28, 2018

Norman C. Schroeder, MD '62
 Manitowoc, Wisconsin
 January 8, 2018

Richard J. Hodach, MD '76,
 PhD '76, MPH
 Dallas, Texas
 May 4, 2018

Robert C. Wheaton, MD '55
 Burlington, Wisconsin
 March 18, 2018

Robert A. Keller, MD '58
 Sheboygan, Wisconsin
 January 31, 2018

Ronald L. Strebel, MD '63
 Neenah, Wisconsin
 January 9, 2018

Bruce C. Wilson, MD '80
 Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin
 January 28, 2018

Kenneth A. Hurst, Jr., MD '56
 Waupaca, Wisconsin
 January 15, 2018

John D. Riesch, MD '58
 Germantown, Wisconsin
 March 26, 2018

Marlen F. Junck, MD '69
 Oregon, Wisconsin
 February 1, 2018

Mark Luedke, MD '81
 Newburyport, Massachusetts
 January 14, 2018

Anne G. Schierl, MD '57
 Stevens Point, Wisconsin
 April 12, 2018

Milfred A. Cunningham, MD '61
 Madison, Wisconsin
 February 8, 2018

Goodbye Dear Friends

ANNE G. SCHIERL, MD '57

A devoted member of the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) Board of Directors for many years, Anne G. Schierl, MD '57, died on April 12, 2018, at age 86.

Born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Ralph and Ruth Gilfry, she lived by the example of her mother, who rode into Portage County in a Model T Ford as its first public health nurse in the 1930s.

Schierl studied the sciences at University of Wisconsin-Madison as an undergraduate and earned her medical degree from the

UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH), where she was one of two women in her class. In 1960, she married Butch Schierl, and they had three sons.

Schierl practiced anesthesiology at St. Michael's Hospital in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, where she was the chair of the Department of Anesthesiology for 25 years. She retired in 1989.

She was passionate about causes for the betterment of youth, arts and culture, and drug and alcohol prevention. She was a founding board member of the Boys and Girls

Club of Portage County and was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Her work earned Schierl the prestigious Marty Stein Outstanding Board Volunteer Award and the Ralph Hawley Distinguished Service Award from the WMAA, among other honors. She also has endowed scholarships for freshmen at UW-Stevens Point.

Schierl was an active member of her SMPH Class of 1957.

UW-Madison held a special place in her heart. In an article in the "Stories from Around the State" series, published by



TODD BROW/MEDIA SOLUTIONS

UW-Madison in 2016, she said, "It certainly had a dramatic effect on who I am today. It fit for me ... the attitude, the climate, and, of course, the challenges. I'm proud to always be an ambassador for UW-Madison."

HERBERT F. SANDMIRE, MD '53

Herbert F. Sandmire, MD '53, passed away on February 24, 2018, in Green Bay, Wisconsin, at age 89. He was the president of the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association in 1989.

Born in Richland Center, Wisconsin, to Lois Bernadine Patch Sandmire and Carl Glen Sandmire, he grew up on farms with his parents and eight siblings until they moved to Cottage Grove, Wisconsin, to be nearer the University of Wisconsin-Madison, so he and his siblings could go to college if they chose.

Sandmire earned his medical degree from the UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) in 1953, and served in the U.S. Air Force from 1953 to 1956. At age 25, he became the chief of obstetrics and gynecology at Ladd Air Force Base Hospital in Fairbanks, Alaska. He completed an obstetrics and gynecology residency at the University of Iowa Hospital, and in 1959, he began practicing obstetrics and gynecology in Green Bay. Sandmire delivered more than 11,000 babies and was a courageous and loyal advocate for women's rights.

He also was a clinical professor at the SMPH. More than 700 practicing physicians have had part of their training experience under his direction in Green Bay.

Sandmire lectured extensively in the United States and abroad, was an editorial consultant for eight medical journals and authored 47 peer-reviewed research publications. He received 19 state, national and international prestigious awards in his field, including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists National Distinguished Service Award.



MEDIA SOLUTIONS

He and his wife of 67 years, Crystal Sandmire, raised five children. Following his retirement, he authored his memoir, *Making a Difference, One Man's Journey*.

Thao, Nietert Honored at Founders' Day Celebration

WAUSAU-BASED PHYSICIANS RECEIVE ALUMNI AWARDS



Before the UW Founders' Day awards ceremony, the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association held a reception, with assistance from honorary co-hosts and association board members Mathew Ashbrenner, MD '06, and Kay Gruling, MD '88. Several reception participants gathered for the photo above: front row: Jill Watson, Gloria Hawkins; back row: Patrick McBride, MD '80, MPH, Karen Peterson, Kevin Thao, MD '10, MPH '11 (PG '15), Jeff Wendorf, and William Nietert, MD '78.

University of Wisconsin-Madison alumni and friends gathered on April 19, 2018, at the Great Dane Pub and Brewing Company in Wausau, Wisconsin, to celebrate Founders' Day, which commemorates the first day of classes held at UW-Madison on February 5, 1849.

At the event, representatives of the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association (WFAA) and WFAA: Wausau Chapter presented awards to two Wausau-based physicians—alumni of the UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH)—who embody the Wisconsin Idea: the principle that graduates should use their UW-Madison

education to better their community and the world.

The award winners are Kevin Thao, MD '10, MPH '11 (PG '15), who received the Forward Under 40 Award, and William Nietert, MD '78, who received the Badger of the Year Award.

Thao is a primary care physician at Aspirus Wausau Family Medicine in Wausau and a faculty associate in the SMPH Department of Family Medicine and Community Health (DFMCH). He focuses on preventing long-term disease and promoting a healthy lifestyle for the Wausau area's large Hmong population. (See article at right.)

Niertert earned his bachelor's degree at UW-Madison and his medical degree from the SMPH. Further, he completed a family medicine residency in the DFMCH.

In spring 2015, Nietert earned the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) Service Award, which honors an alum who has exhibited exceptional commitment to the WMAA over the years. He has served several terms on the WMAA Board of Directors, including a two-year term as that organization's president. He also has served as a class representative for his SMPH Class of 1978.

Niertert has practiced family medicine for 39 years. Before moving to Wausau, he was a family practice physician in Mosinee, Wisconsin, where he participated in the education of medical students and residents. For his service as a preceptor for fourth-year medical students, he was honored with the SMPH and WMAA's Max Fox Preceptor Award in 2009. He currently practices family medicine at Aspirus Kronenwetter Clinic and is affiliated with Aspirus Wausau Hospital.

In 2013, Nietert received the Wisconsin Medical Society's Physician Citizen of the Year award for his contributions to the Never Forgotten Honor Flight, a Wausau-based non-profit organization that flies veterans to Washington, DC, to visit memorials erected in their honor. He has helped make it possible for more than 1,000 military veterans from northern Wisconsin to make the trip by learning about and monitoring their health prior to and during these trips.

The 2018 Founders' Day event—sponsored by the WFAA: Wausau Chapter—also featured a presentation, "Much More Than Just Traditions: Principles that Define the University of Wisconsin," by Jeff Wendorf, vice president of advancement, WFAA.

Kevin Thao, MD '10, MPH '11 (PG '15)

FORWARD UNDER 40 AWARD



by Andrea Schmick

Wisconsin has been home to one of the nation's largest Hmong communities for more than 40 years. And still, Kevin Thao, MD '10, MPH '11 (PG '15), is struck by how startlingly little is known about the health of this population. As a result, he's dedicated to building a better body of research, aiming to prevent long-term disease and promote healthy lifestyles for Hmong across Wisconsin and the nation.

Thao knows firsthand that there are many reasons why the Hmong might not receive adequate health care. His family arrived in Wausau, Wisconsin, as refugees from Thailand when he was 3 years old, and he is one of the first members of his family to pursue advanced education.

Factors such as language and literacy differences, cultural and medical practices, and religious beliefs influence whether populations such as the Hmong are able to access the care they need.

"The [Hmong] community has gone through a historical transition in diet, environment and lifestyle as [individuals] acclimate to life in America. These changes

are having positive and negative effects on the health of the community," he says.

After Thao earned his bachelor's degree in medical microbiology and immunology at University of Wisconsin-Madison, he enrolled in the UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH). There, he led outreach projects to improve Hmong health literacy. He translated health information into formats that Hmong patients could use and held educational workshops for local Hmong communities. In recognition of this work, the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health (DFMCH) gave Thao its McGovern-Tracy Scholarship in 2008.

The next year, he partnered with Dane County Public Health and several colleagues to launch the Hmong Health Council of South Central Wisconsin. They created several interventions aimed at preventing chronic disease and promoting healthy lifestyles in Madison's Hmong communities, including a video on the role of diet and exercise in diabetes prevention.

After he earned his medical degree from the SMPH, Thao stayed in Madison to complete his family medicine residency and research fellowship in the DFMCH. The latter included gathering data as he engaged with local Hmong communities.

Thao's research analyzed health and demographic information on more than 5,000 patients at UW Health primary care clinics from 2007 to 2012. Of those patients, greater than 80 percent were identified as non-Hispanic whites and 0.19 percent as Hmong.

He emerged with some important findings: many of the Hmong he studied were at high risk for cardiovascular disease. And the study showed that, after adjusting for age, sex, body mass index (BMI) and insurance status, the relative risk

of diabetes is 3.3 times higher for Hmong adults than for non-Hispanic whites.

Although the study was not designed to determine the causes for the increased risk, Thao explains that changes in environment affect populations migrating from developing countries to affluent ones. Focus groups of Hmong have indicated that the change in environment leads to lack of physical activity and poor diet, factors that can lead to the development of diabetes.

Published in the October 2015 *Wisconsin Medical Journal*, the study also supports recommendations that physicians should screen for glucose intolerance in Hmong patients at lower ages and at lower BMIs than usual.

Having moved back to Wausau following his training, Thao is a primary care physician at Aspirus Wausau Family Medicine and a faculty associate in the DFMCH. He teaches in that department's Family Medicine Residency Program, also in Wausau.

Thao helped form the Hmong Health Coalition of Central Wisconsin. He collaborates with the DFMCH, UW School of Social Work and local Hmong American Community Center to continue research through an ongoing survey of Hmong households in the Wausau area.

He is especially thoughtful about what it means to provide culturally inclusive health care, and he promotes cross-cultural communication between the medical and Hmong communities. Importantly, he says, physicians already have a powerful way to help Hmong people live healthier lives: listening.

He advises his fellow doctors to use the standard tools that they're taught for motivational interviewing, and to accept what patients tell them in order to help them find solutions to their health needs.

2018 WMAA Awards Banquet

BIRNBAUM, ALLEN AND BEST EARN TOP AWARDS

TODD BROWN/MEDIA SOLUTIONS (3)

At the 2018 Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) Awards Banquet in late April 2018, several notable alumni, faculty and staff of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) received awards. See the full list on the next page, and read about the top three award winners below.



MARVIN BIRNBAUM, MD '60, PHD '71 (PG '65)

Birnbaum received his undergraduate degree from UW-Madison and earned his medical and doctorate degrees from the SMPH. He also completed his internal medicine residency and postdoctoral fellowship in chest disease and cardiopulmonary physiology at UW Hospital and Clinics (now UW Health). He then joined the SMPH faculty and launched a remarkable career of service and leadership that personifies the best traditions of the "Wisconsin Idea."

Before there were departments of emergency medicine, Birnbaum advanced the field that was initially called "emergency services." And before the SMPH, like its peers, embraced the concept of global health, he made international contributions to the health of nations across the globe.

From the start of his career, Birnbaum directed many educational programs at the school, including the Center for Trauma and Life Support, Mobile Critical Care Unit and Emergency Medical Services Program. He has played leadership roles in the American Heart Association's Wisconsin chapter and the Madison Fire Department. Further,

Birnbaum has served on international working groups that designed medical disaster relief programs, and for more than two decades, he was the editor-in-chief (now the emeritus editor-in-chief) of *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine*, the journal of the World Association for Disaster and Emergency Medicine.

Birnbaum's multitude of honors and awards include the first Peter Safar Award for Services in Disaster Reanimatology, presented in Australia, and a visiting professorship in Japan. In 2000, he was selected as one of the 20 most influential people in emergency medical services by the *Journal of Emergency Medical Services*. Currently, he is an emeritus professor of medicine and physiology at the SMPH.



DAVID ALLEN, MD (PG '88)

Allen completed his undergraduate degree at Stanford University, where he was elected into the Phi Beta Kappa honor society. He earned his medical degree from Duke University, before completing his pediatric residency, chief residency and fellowship training in the SMPH Department of Pediatrics. He joined the SMPH faculty in 1988 and quickly rose through the ranks. He is a professor of pediatrics and chief of the Division of Pediatric Endocrinology and Diabetes, as well as director and principal investigator for the National Institutes of Health-funded Pediatric Endocrinology and Diabetes Fellowship Program.

Allen's research interests include early-life adipose organ development and

dysfunction, the prevention of diabetes in children and the improvement of newborn screening for endocrine disorders. He has served as a mentor and role model for countless medical students, residents and fellows, and he has published nearly 200 papers and chapters. His many honors and awards include election into Alpha Omega Alpha; visiting professorships at leading academic medical centers in the United States, Canada and South Korea; service on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism* and the *International Journal of Pediatric Endocrinology*; and election as president of the Pediatric Endocrine Society. In his spare time, he qualified to participate in the U.S. Olympic Marathon Trials in 1988 and 1991.



SARA BEST, MD '03 (PG '09)

Best completed her undergraduate studies at UW-Madison and earned her medical degree from the SMPH, where she was elected into Alpha Omega Alpha. She developed an interest in minimally invasive urology, and she spent a year after medical school pursuing endo-urology research at the University of Minnesota. As a result of her work during and after medical school, she contributed to 12 peer-reviewed papers in top-tier journals. In 2004, she returned to UW Health for a urology residency, and she received the Ira Sisk Memorial Award for Dedication to Scholarly Activity by a Resident in 2008. After a two-year fellowship in endo-urology and minimally invasive urology at the University of Texas-Southwestern Medical

Center, in 2011 she joined the SMPH's Department of Urology as an assistant professor. She brought with her the latest robotic and laparoscopic techniques, and she now provides state-of-the-art training to residents. She has published more than 60 papers and chapters and has edited a book on minimally invasive urology. Her awards include recognition for best paper and poster presentations at several national meetings.

2018 Awards

Medical Alumni Citation— Distinguished Alumni Award

Marvin L. Birnbaum, MD '60, PhD '71
(PG '65)

Resident Citation— Distinguished Resident Award

David B. Allen, MD (PG '88)

Early Career Achievement Award

Sara L. Best, MD '03 (PG '09)

Basic Sciences Emeritus Faculty Award

Millard Susman, PhD

Clinical Sciences Emeritus Faculty Award

Gloria E. Sarto, MD '58, PhD '71

Sigurd Sivertson Medical Education Award

Barbara A. Horner-Ibler, MD '98

Ralph Hawley Distinguished Service Award

James M. Vergeront, MD '78

WMAA Service Award

Charles V. Ihle, MD '65

Honorary Life Membership in the WMAA

Kristi K. Whitman

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NOMINATE ALUMNI!

The Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association invites alumni to nominate fellow alumni to be considered for WMAA awards. For details about award categories and deadlines, see med.wisc.edu/96. For more information, please contact Andrea Larson at allarson7@wisc.edu.

WMAA Teaching Awards

Given on behalf of the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH), these awards recognize faculty and house staff for their outstanding teaching efforts, including those at the school's major teaching locations in La Crosse, Madison, Marshfield, Milwaukee and Green Bay, Wisconsin.

DISTINGUISHED CLINICAL SCIENCE TEACHING AWARDS

Evan Kemp, MD (PG '14) (La Crosse) is a pediatric hospitalist at Gunderson Health System in La Crosse. He also serves as a clinical adjunct professor with the SMPH. He was raised in rural North Dakota and earned his medical degree from the University of North Dakota School of Medicine. He completed a pediatric residency at the American Family Children's Hospital in Madison.

Laurel Romer, MD (Madison) is a clinical associate professor of medicine at the SMPH, an internist at the UW Health Women's Health Internal Medicine Clinic and an attending physician on the teaching service at University Hospital. She recently became a longitudinal teacher coach for the SMPH ForWard Curriculum. Romer earned her medical degree at the University of Maryland and completed her residency at the University of Chicago.

Lori Remeika, MD (Marshfield) practices internal medicine at Marshfield Clinic. She is an SMPH clinical adjunct professor, the Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine site director and the medical student programs director for Marshfield Clinic Health System. She earned her medical degree at Wright State University School of Medicine and completed a residency at Indiana University Medical Center.

Alfred J. "AJ" Capelli, MD (Milwaukee) (award given posthumously) was the medical director of quality/care management for Aurora Health Care-South Region in Milwaukee and Aurora/CompCare Health Network in Kenosha. He taught SMPH and Marquette University students. He earned his medical degree from Universidad Autonoma de Guadalajara and the Medical College of Wisconsin.

Paul Luikart, MD (Green Bay) is an anesthesiologist at Aurora BayCare Medical Center in Green Bay. He earned his medical degree from the University of Minnesota and completed an anesthesiology residency at the Mayo Clinic. His areas of interest include cardiac and regional anesthesia.

RESIDENT TEACHING AWARD

Sierra Jansen, MD, is a second-year obstetrics and gynecology resident at UW Health. She earned her medical degree from Oregon Health and Science University. She says one of the most rewarding parts of residency is teaching medical students and allowing them to build their procedural skills.

DISTINGUISHED BASIC SCIENCE TEACHING AWARD

Robert Corliss, MD '00 (PG '05), an SMPH associate professor and director of the Pathology Residency Program, directs the Autopsy Service in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine. He earned his medical degree from the SMPH and completed a residency at UW Health and fellowship in the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office in Minneapolis.

2018 Dean's Teaching and Research Mentorship Awards

TODD BROWN/MEDIA SOLUTIONS



*Left to right:
Robert N. Golden, MD;
Kenneth W. Merkitch, Jr., MD;
Nasia Safdar, MD, PhD (PG '02);
Jamie Hess, MD;
Barbara Duerst, RN, MS;
Jason Stephenson, MD.*

Dean's Teaching Awards and the Dean's Award for Excellence in Medical Student Research Mentorship honor outstanding contributions by faculty members at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH). Dean Robert N. Golden, MD, presented the annual awards during the school's Medical Education Day in May 2018.

He honored the following individuals with Dean's Teaching Awards:

- **Barbara Duerst, RN, MS**, deputy director, Master of Public Health (MPH) Program; director, Public Health Education and Training, Department of Population Health Sciences
- **Jamie Hess, MD**, associate professor, Department of Emergency Medicine
- **Kenneth W. Merkitch, Jr., MD**, staff physician, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Gundersen Health System, La Crosse, Wisconsin
- **Jason Stephenson, MD**, assistant professor, Department of Radiology

Golden also presented the Dean's Award for Excellence in Medical Student Research Mentorship to:

- **Nasia Safdar, MD, PhD (PG '02)**, associate professor, Section of Infectious

Diseases, and vice chair for research, Department of Medicine; associate chief of staff for research, William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans (VA) Hospital; medical director for infection control, UW Health

Duerst received a bachelor's degree in nursing from Edgewood College in Madison and a master's degree in community health nursing and administration from UW-Madison. She was a public health nurse and the health officer in the Green County (Wisconsin) Health Department.

Duerst devoted her first 11 years at the SMPH working at the Wisconsin Office of Rural Health on programs that promote health care access, quality and affordability for rural residents. She worked with health professions programs to prepare students to work in interdisciplinary teams in rural areas.

In 2006, Duerst became the associate director of the MPH Program, for which she developed and enhanced courses that she directs, including Principles and Practice of Public Health and Interprofessional Public Health Leadership. She also leads the MPH Seminar.

Duerst was named the Public Health Program Faculty of the Year in 2011 and 2017 by the MPH Student Organization. She

has mentored more than 30 MPH students, and trainees laud her for incorporating service learning into courses. Since fall 2016, students in her Principles and Practice of Public Health course have worked with more than 25 community organizations on projects that address public health issues.

Duerst collaborates with faculty members to develop new courses and led the creation of the Field Work and Capstone Experience Courses that define the MPH Program; these connect students with communities to apply their knowledge and skills in real-world settings. The MPH curriculum consistently receives outstanding reviews, and its applicant pool has increased consistently.

Nominator Patrick Remington, MD '81, MPH, associate dean for population health, noted, "Barb personifies servant leadership, putting the needs of the program and of others first—without worrying about who gets credit. Speaking from personal experience, I have never worked with someone more capable, competent and caring than Barb Duerst."

Hess has excelled in multiple educational leadership roles at the SMPH.

She earned her medical degree from the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and

completed an emergency medicine residency at Baystate Medical Center/Tufts University, Springfield, Massachusetts; an emergency ultrasound fellowship at Hennepin County Medical Center, Minneapolis; and a medical education research certificate from the Association of American Medical Colleges.

In 2012, Hess joined the faculty of the SMPH's (then) Division of Emergency Medicine, which became a department in 2014. She served as the director of resident education and later became the director of her department's medical student education program. She also served as the clerkship director for the M3 Basic Emergency Medicine Clerkship and M4 Advanced Subinternship. Hess has transformed the clerkship with an innovative curriculum that has been featured at national conferences. Emergency medicine is the third most popular specialty choice for SMPH students.

Hess collaborated with the Phase 2 Acute Care Design Team of the SMPH's ForWard Curriculum to make emergency medicine a required part of all medical students' education. In 2016, she was recruited as a founding co-director for the Phase 3 Internship Preparation Course, and she has become the thread director for quality, patient safety and interprofessional health.

Hess' passion for teaching and curriculum development culminated in creation of the Emergency Medicine Education Fellowship.

According to nominator Azita Hamedani, MD, MPH, MBA, Distinguished Wisconsin Endowed Chair of Emergency Medicine, "Dr. Hess has made an enormous impact within our department and institution, and she has grown into a key leader with a focus on ensuring success for all students."

Merkitch has been a physician at Gundersen Health System since 1988 and was chair of its Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology for nine years. He earned his medical degree from Northwestern University Medical School and completed an obstetrics and gynecology residency at Prentice Women's Hospital in Chicago.

He has worked tirelessly with SMPH students at Gundersen for years, providing core lectures during medical student

rotations and teaching in Phases 2 and 3 of the SMPH's ForWard Curriculum.

With creativity as his hallmark, Merkitch develops hands-on, low-cost models—often using common household items to teach skills in suturing, uterine artery ligation and cervical dilation assessment.

Merkitch is the Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine La Crosse site director and the director of the Care Across the Lifecycle and Chronic and Preventive Care blocks of the new curriculum.

He was honored as the 2002 Clinical Educator of the Year by the Physician Assistant Program at UW-La Crosse, Mayo Clinic and Gundersen Health System.

According to nominator Kimberly Lansing, MD, PhD, associate director of WARM in La Crosse, "Not only is Dr. Merkitch renowned for his hands-on teaching experiences, but he also . . . models how to stay abreast of the latest literature for the students with ease. I am in awe of his command of the medical literature."

Stephenson has more than 20 years of experience as an inspirational educator. His academic interests include medical education across health-related disciplines, curriculum design and instructional technology.

Having earned his medical degree from Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, he completed a transitional internship at St. John's Mercy Medical Center, and a diagnostic radiology residency and musculoskeletal imaging fellowship at Mallinckrodt Institute of Radiology at Barnes-Jewish Hospital, St. Louis.

He directs medical student education for the Department of Radiology and is the integrated block leader for the Mind and Motion Block of the ForWard Curriculum.

When Stephenson joined his department in 2012, he facilitated a fresh look at the radiology curriculum to assure collaboration and consistency throughout the state. Among other innovations, he created a simulation call-readiness assessment tool.

Stephenson has won numerous awards for educational presentations at national meetings and, in 2014, he joined the SMPH's Centennial Scholars Program.

David Kim, MD, nominator and professor of radiology, noted, "Dr. Stephenson brings a wealth of experiences, including his years as a high school science teacher, where he first adopted the practice of focusing his teaching on meeting the demonstrated needs of his learners. In combination with his passion and intelligence, he has refined a way of inspiring learners to master difficult concepts."

Safdar is genuinely interested in her mentees' career paths, encourages them to achieve stretch goals, and fosters an inclusive, welcoming work environment.

She earned her medical degree at Aga Khan University Medical College, Karachi, Pakistan, and completed an internship at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, Lahore, Pakistan; an internal medicine residency at UW Health; fellowships in infectious diseases and women's health at UW Health; and a PhD in clinical research from UW-Madison.

Safdar's research focuses on preventing health care associated infections. She has served as principal investigator on 10 grants.

Since 2006, she has mentored 26 medical students, emphasizing evidence-based methods and autonomy. These mentees have authored about 35 peer-reviewed manuscripts and presented at local, regional and national meetings. Many have been part of the Shapiro Summer Research Program. She also has facilitated training in mentoring for faculty members.

Among her awards are the 2017 President's Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers and the 2017 Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America Mid-Career Investigator Award.

Dawn Belt Davis, MD, PhD, associate professor of medicine, notes, "Most impressive to me is her ability to successfully mentor several students each year, while giving each of them individual attention and a highly productive research training experience. She manages to be a highly dedicated and effective mentor, while still achieving excellence and juggling all of her other responsibilities as a clinician, administrator and researcher."

Alpha Omega Alpha

EVENT HONORS SOCIETY INDUCTEES



Above: AOA student inductees:
 Front row (left to right): Kaitlyn McQuiston, Sarah Mortimer, Maureen Riegert, Annika Selvick, Courtney Pokrzywa, Ashley Soppe, Layla Barkal. Middle row: Dean Robert N. Golden, MD, Lauren Hintz, Sara Saleh, Katharine Kelly, Jesse Boyett Anderson, Heather Burton, Marki Klapperich, Stephanie Fricke, Brittany Van Remortel, Brittany Young, Andrew Scrima. Back row: Mohammad Siddiqui, Jacob Lescher, Bridget O'Connell-Long, Sean Golden, Anatoliy Nechyporenko, Bryant Megna, Katie Gelinas, Karla Wetley, James Dahm. Not pictured: Daniel Jurczyk, Kathleen O'Brien.

Top right: Dean Robert N. Golden, MD (left), presents a certificate of appreciation to the AOA guest speaker, Ellen Wald, MD.



Above: AOA faculty and house staff inductees: Front row (left to right): Laura Zakowski, MD '90 (PG '96), AOA councilor; Aimee Becker, MD '01; Heather Johnson, MD '02 (PG '10); Allison Heizelman, MD (resident). Back row: Yoram Shenker, MD; Byron Crouse, MD; SMPH Dean Robert N. Golden, MD; Zsofia Szabo, MD (resident); Tracy Downs, MD. Not pictured: Michael Bentz, MD; Wendell Lake, MD (PG '14); Fred Lee, MD; Alexandra McDow, MD (fellow).

TODD BROWN/MEDIA SOLUTIONS (3)

At the April 6, 2018, induction ceremony for the Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) Honor Medical Society at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH), Dean Robert N. Golden, MD, explained, "This organization's mission—developed over the past 100 years—has been to recognize and enhance professionalism, academic excellence, service and leadership within our profession."

Laura Zakowski, MD '90 (PG '96), the SMPH's AOA councilor, noted that election is a life-long honor signifying characteristics of honesty, honorable conduct, morality, virtue, unselfishness, ethical ideals, dedication to serving others and leadership.

The ceremony—hosted by the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association—honored fourth-year medical students, SMPH faculty leaders and UW Health house staff who were inducted (see names in captions).

Golden introduced the guest speaker, Ellen Wald, MD. An AOA member, Wald is the Alfred Dorrance Daniels Professor and chair of the Department of Pediatrics. She earned her medical degree from the State University of New York Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn and completed her pediatric residency at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn and an infectious disease fellowship at the University of Maryland Hospital in Baltimore. She shared words of wisdom and inspiration with the newest AOA members.

Generosity Through Scholarships

RECEPTION INTRODUCES DONORS, GRATEFUL RECIPIENTS



TODD BROWN/MEDIA SOLUTIONS (8)

In an April 2018 reception, the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) and the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) brought together generous donors who have funded scholarships and the grateful medical students who received them.

"I want to express my profound thanks to the many people who have made a difference in our students' lives," noted SMPH Dean Robert N. Golden, MD. "The encouragement and support of family and friends is vitally essential for our students' success. Our dedicated faculty and staff help shape the next generation of compassionate and skilled physicians. Alumni serve as role models and inspiration for our students. And the generous support of our donors creates the margin of excellence in our educational programs and in all of our missions."

He continued, "Thank you for supporting our students and our UW School of Medicine and Public Health. Together, we are advancing the future of medicine and the health of the people of Wisconsin and beyond."

Fourth-year medical student Brittany Van Remortel, who received the Reimann Scholarship for the Advancement of Primary Care Education, addressed the alumni, donors, faculty members and students.

"I have been continuously amazed and inspired by the generosity of our alumni and donors. The scholarship support that I have received during my time at the SMPH has provided relief from the ever-present financial stresses of medical school. In addition, this support has given me access to opportunities that would not otherwise have been possible, such as the ability to complete a master

of public health degree. As an M4 looking ahead to loan repayment during residency, the significance of scholarships this year is even more apparent," Van Remortel noted. "On behalf of all students, I thank you so much for your generous support and for helping us reach our dreams."

Top row (left to right): M3 Weeden Bauman, Dori Brown; M3 Kathryn Eszes, Dennis Maki, MD '67; Peter Qualey, MD '91, M2 Laura Valaas, Ann Ruscher, MD '91; M1 Rodolfo Macias, Steven Wiesner, MD '85. Bottom row: Ramona Steele, M2 Tenzin Atruksang; Richard Welnick, MD '73 (PG '76), Kathy Welnick, M3 Haley Schoenberger; Delicia Randle-Izard, MD, Tito Izard, MD '96, M3 Randi Timerman; M2 India Anderson-Carter, Sandra Bertics.

Brasier Named Director of the Institute for Clinical and Translational Research

Allan Brasier, MD, is the new executive director of the Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (ICTR) at the University of Wisconsin



School of Medicine and Public Health. He also is the school's senior associate dean for clinical and translational research.

The ICTR engages scientists from medicine, public health, nursing, pharmacy, veterinary medicine and engineering, together with the Marshfield Clinic Research Institute, to promote the translation of scientific discoveries into new approaches for promoting health and treating diseases.

Brasier earned his medical degree at the University of California, San Francisco. He completed residency and fellowship training at Brigham and Women's Hospital and the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, and a research fellowship at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute in Maryland.

In 1991, he joined the faculty of the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, where he served as director of the Institute for Translational Research and Translational Sciences and the Sealy Center for Molecular Medicine. He has received 10 patents, and his 240 publications have been cited more than 10,000 times.

"Dr. Brasier's work as a highly productive scientist integrates the full continuum of basic, clinical and translational research," notes SMPH Dean Robert N. Golden, MD. "He has special interests in using interdisciplinary team approaches to advance precision medicine, which will be synergistic with many of our evolving research programs."

Brasier succeeds Marc Drezner, MD, who founded the ICTR in 2007 and led it until his retirement in July 2018.

Holt Named Director of the Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine

Joseph Holt, MD, became the director of the Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine (WARM) program at the University of



Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH), effective in May 2018.

A Kentucky native, Holt moved to Wisconsin to attend UW-Madison as an undergraduate, majoring in zoology. He then earned his medical degree and completed his internal medicine residency at the University of Louisville School of Medicine.

Following his residency, Holt practiced rural medicine for 10 years in the Marshfield Clinic-Ladysmith Center.

He joined the SMPH Department of Medicine's Division of Hospital Medicine as an assistant professor in 2011. He provides inpatient care as a hospitalist and has served as the clinical director of hospital medicine and inpatient care for UW Health at the American Center since 2014.

"Dr. Holt views a physician's opportunity to serve patients in a rural community as a privilege," notes Christine Seibert, MD, professor, Department of Medicine, and associate dean for medical student education and services at the SMPH. "His strong desire to encourage students to embrace the rewarding nature of practicing medicine in underserved rural Wisconsin is a perfect fit for this role with the WARM program."

Holt succeeds the inaugural director of the WARM program, Byron Crouse, MD, who retired in May 2018 (see page 36).

Dempsey Honored with National Award for Medical Student Teaching

Robert Dempsey, MD, the Manucher J. Javid Professor and Chair of Neurological Surgery at the University of Wisconsin



School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH), is the third recipient of the Society of Neurological Surgeons' (SNS) Medical Student Teaching Award.

The world's oldest neurosurgery organization and the primary academic society in the field cited Dempsey for his lifelong teaching, including his stewardship of its annual Research Update in Neuroscience for Neurosurgeons course and his more than 25 years of humanitarian work training a generation of physicians in the developing world.

"The fact that a neurosurgeon won the award by a vote of the medical school classes is a testament to Dr. Dempsey's dedication to medical students," noted a representative of the SNS.

At the SMPH, Dempsey is a three-time winner of Clinical Teaching Awards as voted by the students. He was inducted into the Gold Humanism Honor Society in 2014 and named the Best Clinical Teacher Across the Statewide Campuses in 2015.

In addition to his clinical practice, Dempsey's research projects focus on cerebral ischemia, vascular cognitive decline and repair of the injured brain. He has more than 250 refereed publications and 90 research grants. His research has been funded by the National Institutes of Health for more than 30 years.

Dempsey earned his medical degree from the University of Chicago and completed his residency at the University of Michigan Hospital in Ann Arbor.

Gilchrist Honored with National Family Medicine Leadership Award

Valerie Gilchrist, MD, chair of the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health at the University of Wisconsin School



of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH), was honored with the 2018 F. Marian Bishop Leadership Award by the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM).

The award honors individuals who have significantly enhanced the credibility of family medicine through a sustained, long-term commitment to family medicine in an academic setting. Gilchrist was recognized for her professional contributions to the STFM and to other organizations related to family medicine.

Gilchrist has served in her current leadership role at the SMPH for nearly 11 years. During her tenure, the Department of Family Medicine was renamed to include Community Health. Gilchrist previously served as chair of family medicine at Northeast Ohio Medical University in Rootstown and at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina.

She also is the board chair of the Association of Departments of Family Medicine and has served on the boards of the STFM; the North American Primary Care Research Group; and the Ohio, North Carolina and Wisconsin Academies of Family Physicians.

"This is a great honor that speaks directly to my love of family medicine," says Gilchrist.

Lederer Elected to Lead American Association for the History of Medicine

Susan E. Lederer, PhD, was elected president of the American Association for the History of Medicine (AAHM). She



is the Robert Turell Professor of History of Medicine and Bioethics and chair of the Department of Medical History and Bioethics at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH).

The AAHM is the leading American professional association of historians, physicians, nurses, archivists, curators and librarians who pursue the scholarly history of medicine, including the history of public health, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing, allied arts and sciences.

Lederer was previously honored as the AAHM's Fielding H. Garrison Lecturer, given to a scholar distinguished for contributions to medical history or other fields of science and learning.

She earned her doctorate degree in the history of science at UW-Madison. She is widely published, including the book, *Flesh and Blood: Organ Transplantation and Blood Transfusion in 20th Century America*, in 2008.

Lederer's interests focus on medicine and society in 20th century America; race, medicine and public health; medicine and popular culture; research ethics; and the history of medical ethics.

Schneider Receives 2018 Paul LoGerfo Research Award

David F. Schneider, MD, assistant professor in the Department of Surgery at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and



Public Health (SMPH), was awarded the 2018 Paul LoGerfo Research Award from the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons (AAES) for his research utilizing machine learning and patient language to predict quality of life in patients with thyroid cancer.

The AAES is dedicated to the advancement of endocrine surgery, providing surgical expertise in diseases of the thyroid, parathyroid and adrenal glands, as well as in neuroendocrine tumors of the pancreas and gastrointestinal tract.

The Paul LoGerfo Research Award's mission is to enrich the discipline of endocrine surgery and to advance the careers of junior investigators who are interested in careers in academic endocrine surgery. The AAES supports grant proposals that broaden the horizon of endocrine surgery and advance the career goals of junior endocrine surgeons.

Schneider earned his medical degree and masters in clinical research methods at Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine. He completed his general surgery residency and research fellowship at Loyola University Medical Center, and his endocrine surgery fellowship at UW Health. As a junior faculty member, he was a scholar in the KL2 program, where his research focused on clinical informatics. His research investigates the optimization and personalization of care for patients with endocrine diseases.

10TH ANNUAL BIOETHICS SYMPOSIUM

FOLLOW THE MONEY: Ethical Dilemmas in High-Co\$t Medicine



TODD BROWN/MEDIA SOLUTIONS (4)

by Andrew Hellpap

Amid the continued rise in many drug prices nationwide, the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health's (SMPH) Department of Medical History and Bioethics tackled the topic of the price of health care in the United States at its 10th Annual Bioethics Symposium in spring 2018.

Held at the Health Sciences Learning Center, the event featured internationally recognized thought leaders on the ethics of health care delivery, economics and pricing.

As the keynote speaker, Elisabeth Rosenthal, MD, editor-in-chief, *Kaiser Health News*, and author, *An American Sickness: How Healthcare Became Big Business and How You Can Take it Back*, addressed the topics of whether doctors get paid too much and how society should navigate the profit in non-profit health care. Other speakers included Dean Baker, PhD, co-founder, Center for Economic and Policy Research; Alyna Chien, MD, MS, assistant professor of pediatrics, Harvard Medical School;

Clockwise from left: Participants converse after the symposium; Peter Newcomer, MD '95 (center), fields a question; Dean Baker, PhD (left), talks with audience members; Elisabeth Rosenthal, MD, serves on a panel.

and Yousuf Zafar, MD, associate professor of medicine, Duke University, associate professor, Sanford School of Public Policy.

Following the presentations, faculty and staff from the SMPH, UW Law School and UW Health participated in a panel discussion on the implications of duties and obligations created by the high price of Spinraza, the first drug approved in the United States to treat spinal muscular atrophy, a rare neuromuscular disorder.

"We hope attendees walked away with a firmer grasp on why U.S. health care costs so much, what that means for decision-making by doctors, patients and hospitals, and what might be done to 'bend the cost curve,'" says event co-organizer Paul Kelleher, PhD, associate professor of medical history and bioethics. "At the very least, we want people to think about this topic as an ethics issue, and not merely as a finance issue."

FOURTH ANNUAL BIOETHICS ESSAY CONTEST



Mark Kelly (left), fourth-year medical student at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH), received first place for his submission to the fourth annual Dr. Norman Fost Award for the Best Medical Student Bioethics Essay. Kelly's essay explored the theme of the April 2018, 10th annual Bioethics Symposium, "Follow the Money: Ethical Dilemmas in High-Cost Medicine," sponsored by the SMPH and its Department of Medical History and Bioethics. Essays followed criteria in reaction to a stated scenario. This essay was edited for publication in *Quarterly*; the unedited essay, including endnotes, references and the criteria, are available at med.wisc.edu/bioethics-essay.

Patients Deserve to Know the Price: The Ethics of Discussing Medical Costs

by Mark Kelly

The American health care system is exceptional in how frequently it threatens patients with financial ruin. Medical care routinely causes non-medical harms: "illness or medical bills contributed to 62.1 percent of all bankruptcies" in 2006; 20.4 percent of cancer survivors report "material financial hardship associated with cancer;" and medical costs lead to home foreclosure, food insecurity, homelessness, worsened health and non-adherence to treatment plans. Ethical and effective medical practice requires that American physicians acknowledge these harms to acquire informed consent, respect patient autonomy in decision-making and provide high-quality care.

The ethical notions of informed consent and patient autonomy rest on the belief that patients are the best stewards of their own interest. When medical costs compete with housing payments (and threaten bankruptcy, foreclosure and homelessness), only the patient is positioned to allocate their own funds sensibly. American physicians must proactively inform patients of the cost of care so that they have the requisite information to protect themselves from non-medical harms. Without these discussions, true informed consent and patient autonomy cannot exist.

A discussion of cost also is essential to the provision of high-quality patient care. Cost-related non-adherence to therapy is rampant in American health care, affecting 12.6 percent of elderly Medicare enrollees, 29.4 percent of disabled Medicare enrollees and 24 percent of cancer patients. Physicians who neglect discussions of cost will prescribe medications that patients cannot afford and will not take, remain misinformed about the treatment that patients receive and mislead other providers about their patients' current treatment status. Proper patient care and concern for patient safety, therefore, provide a pragmatic rationale for discussion of health care costs.

Some may argue that discussing costs with patients will force the burden of care rationing onto the patient and that such coarse economic discussions risk poisoning the physician-patient relationship. They are correct. However, this burden and corruption originate from the discriminatory role that cost sharing plays in deciding who receives care in America, not from physicians discussing medical prices with patients. These discussions merely permit patients to evaluate the relative value of medical care compared to the burden of medical expenses. Indeed, frank discussion of cost may actually improve physician-patient relationships by acknowledging sources of patient frustration, distrust and inability to comply with care plans.

In America, where bankruptcy is only a hospital stay away, respect for patient

autonomy and decision-making makes the discussion of cost with patients an ethical and practical necessity. However, discussions of cost are not ethically required in countries where there is universal health coverage and minimal cost sharing, because patients can receive health care without altering their consumption of other goods and services. The ethical requirement is an artifact of the arbitrarily assigned and punitively expensive prices of American health care. Physician disclosure of costs is an improvement over non-disclosure of costs, but only marginally.

As many countries (and America's own Veterans Administration) demonstrate, the ethical burdens on physicians and the financial liability of patients can be simultaneously eliminated through health systems that are free at the point of care and require minimal cost sharing. Ultimately, implementing such a system nationwide would be the most comprehensive means of resolving the ethical questions surrounding the discussion of cost in American health care.

Common Treatment Doesn't Prevent Asthma Flare-Ups



Increasing the dosage of inhaled steroids when asthma symptoms start does not prevent severe flare-ups in children, according to a University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) study published

in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. This common medical practice also may be associated with slowing a child's growth.

Asthma flare-ups in children are common and costly. To prevent them, health professionals often increase doses of inhaled steroids at the onset of symptoms, such as coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath. Until now, researchers had not rigorously tested the safety and efficacy of this strategy in children with mild to moderate asthma.

The research team, led by Daniel Jackson, MD '03

(PG '10), associate professor in the Department of Pediatrics, studied 254 children—ages 5 to 11—for nearly a year. All the children were treated with low-dose inhaled corticosteroids, and half of them received an increase to high-dose inhaled steroids when signs of a potential asthma flare-up appeared. Despite 14 percent more exposure to inhaled steroids, children in the high-dose group did not have fewer severe asthma flare-ups. The number of asthma symptoms, length of time until the severe flare-up and the use of albuterol (rescue

inhaler) were similar between the two groups.

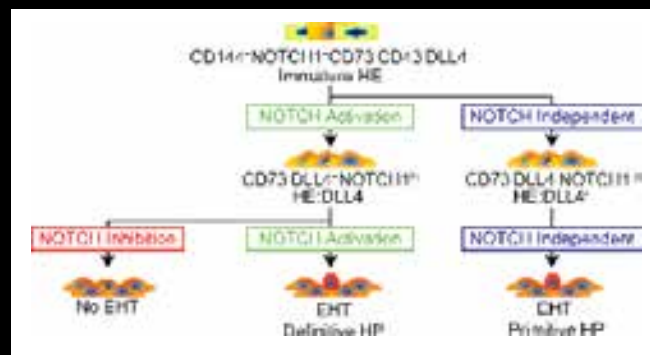
Additionally, investigators found the growth rate of children in the high-dose group was about 0.23 centimeters per year less than those in the low-dose group. More frequent or prolonged high-dose steroid use in children might increase this adverse effect on growth, the researchers caution.

"Our study affirms that low-dose inhaled steroids should remain the cornerstone of daily treatment in affected children—more isn't better," says Jackson.

Blood-Forming Cells Function as Lymphoid Precursors

Scientists at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) have used human stem cells to make blood-forming cells and demonstrated that they can function as lymphoid precursors. Published in *Nature Communications*, these findings may be helpful for treating a variety of blood cancers, according to Igor Slukvin, MD, PhD, professor in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine and the lead scientist of the research studies.

"Among the vast potential of human pluripotent stem cell research is a possibility of



using them for manufacturing blood products for treating cancer and genetic diseases," Slukvin says. "To achieve this, it is critical to identify how nature makes blood cells and apply that knowledge."

During embryonic development, blood cells emerge from vessels by budding from a unique

population of hemogenic endothelial cells. Although blood production through hemogenic endothelium occurs in different types of vasculature, cells with the ability to become lymphoid and hematopoietic stem cells arise only from arteries.

To learn whether arterial programming can produce the

type of hemogenic endothelium with lymphoid potential from human pluripotent stem cells, the team focused on a NOTCH signaling that cells use to communicate information that leads to establishing arterial programming in endothelial cells. By activating the signaling, they produced an arterial type of hemogenic endothelium that could be manipulated to create lymphoid cells and adult-type blood cells.

"With these findings, we can apply known pathways regulating arterial specification to improve production of lymphoid and hematopoietic stem cells from pluripotent stem cells," Slukvin notes.

Cell Therapy Offers Potential for Treating Diseases

Mesenchymal stromal cells are the most-studied cell therapy that is not yet approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, says Jacques Galipeau, MD, director of the Program for Advanced Cell Therapy (PACT) at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH). Drawn from certain body tissues, this type of cell shows enormous potential to treat a range of diseases.

Galipeau's program is seeking federal approval to be able to use of these cells and other novel cell types to

treat patients at UW Health's University Hospital. A report that he co-authored, published in *Cell Stem Cell*, describes the cells' potential, along with the challenges to approval of the cell's use in the United States.

"The use of manufactured living cells to treat disease is entering mainstream medical practice in Europe," says Galipeau, who is the Don and Marilyn Anderson Professor of Oncology and the inaugural assistant dean for therapeutics discovery and development at the SMPH. "Mesenchymal stromal cells have been under study for nearly 20 years and

are poised to impact patients with Crohn's disease and graft-versus-host disease."

The mesenchymal stromal cells, which have regenerative and anti-inflammatory properties, are harvested from bone marrow or adipose tissue, and then grown in a laboratory to produce large quantities. A key to effective living-cell drugs is their fitness. When there is a long lag between the time cells are extracted, manipulated and frozen, to when they arrive at the location where they will be thawed and used, the cells become less effective. By placing the lab that treats



Cellular pharmaceutical manufacturing at the PACT facility.

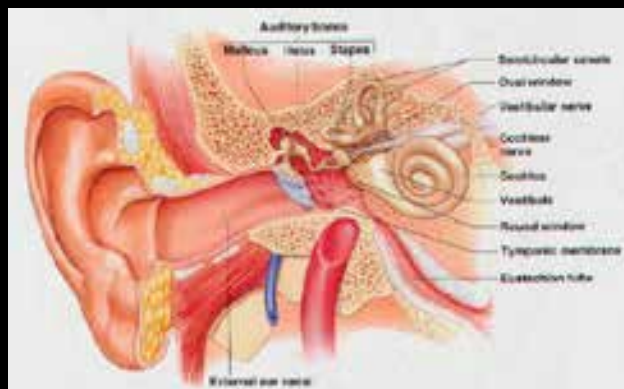
the cells in the health care setting, the transportation problem is eliminated, and better treatments are possible, Galipeau explains.

STEVE SCHREIBER

Kidney Function and Hearing May be Connected

Researchers at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) found that reduced kidney function may increase the likelihood of developing hearing impairment. The study was published recently in the *Journal of the American Medical Association Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery*.

Led by Carla Schubert, a researcher in the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, the research team examined data from the long-term, population-based Epidemiology of Hearing Loss



Study (EHLS) conducted in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin.

The EHLS began baseline examinations in 1993, and participants were examined about every five years, with the most recent exams conducted from 2014 to 2016. There were 863 participants, age 48 to 86

years and without hearing impairment at baseline, included in this study.

Schubert and the team of researchers looked at the marker cystatin C, a protein measured in blood that can be used to estimate kidney function. They found that some

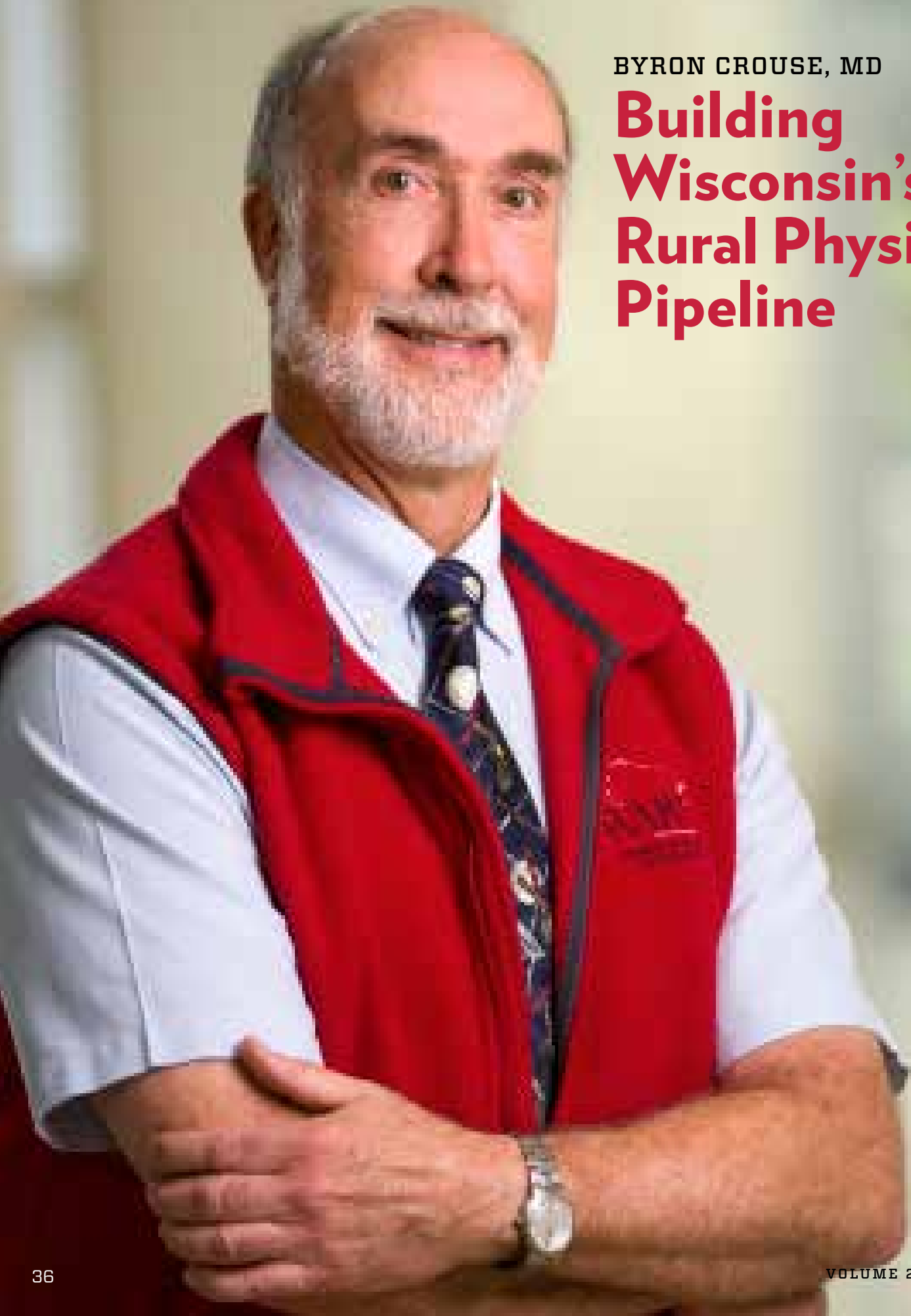
age-related hearing impairment may occur as the result of reduced kidney function.

"This is an innovative study that spans 20 years," notes Schubert. "We can't say there is a direct correlation, but we did see an increased likelihood that reduced kidney function could also affect hearing."

This is the first study to look at kidney function and hearing loss using the long-term data from the EHLS. Karen Cruickshanks, PhD, professor in the Departments of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences and of Population Health Sciences, is the principal investigator of the EHLS.

BYRON CROUSE, MD

Building Wisconsin's Rural Physician Pipeline



by Andrea Schmick

A part of Byron Crouse, MD, never really left his first medical practice in rural Spooner, Wisconsin.

Throughout his 17-year career at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH)—most recently as the associate dean for rural and community health—Crouse has kept a steady focus on developing the vision and skills of future physicians to serve rural areas of the state and nation.

Well known for his compassion, humility and collaborative spirit, Crouse has accomplished this through one-on-one student mentoring, but more importantly, through his leadership of programs that span the continuum of medical education—and reach every corner of the state.

A Rural Rotation Takes Root

Having earned his medical degree from Mayo Medical School in Rochester, Minnesota, Crouse completed a residency at the Duluth Family Practice Residency Program and practiced medicine for six years. He joined academic medicine in 1986, when he became the assistant director of the Family Medicine Residency Program at the University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth. In 1994, he became the first head of that school's Department of Family Medicine. And two years later, he led the development of the interdisciplinary Minnesota Rural Health School, which linked three University of Minnesota colleges and two private colleges that were involved in educating health care professionals.

"We were fortunate to recruit Dr. Crouse in 2001 to our faculty, where he has been a tireless, thoughtful champion of rural health," says SMPH Dean Robert N. Golden, MD, adding that Crouse has experienced many "firsts."

In 2001, he became the SMPH's first assistant dean for rural and community health, focusing on programs aimed at attracting and retaining physicians to practice

in rural Wisconsin, with the goal of easing health disparities in rural communities.

Crouse piloted the SMPH's Longitudinal Rural Rotation, an integrated 20-week experience that combined three existing requirements: the third-year Primary Care Clerkship, fourth-year Preceptorship Program and fourth-year Surgery Clerkship. Students completed the rotation in one of four rural Wisconsin communities—Rice Lake, Mauston, Black River Falls or Prairie du Chien—so their clinical experiences closely mirrored rural practice.

"In rural settings, students get more autonomy and hands-on management experience," explains Crouse, the rotation's inaugural director. "They do more things, such as deliver babies, perform intubations, first-assist with surgery and see patients who have not already had work-ups."

WARM Heats Up

The success of the rural rotation and the release of the 2004 Wisconsin physician workforce report, "Who Will Care for Our Patients?" paved the way for a formal rural medical education pipeline program at the SMPH.

Thanks to startup funds from the Wisconsin Partnership Program and support from former and current SMPH Deans Philip Farrell, MD, PhD (PG '72), and Golden, respectively, the Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine (WARM) launched in 2007 with Crouse as its director from the beginning through his spring 2018 retirement.

Functioning as a "school within a school," WARM seeks students who have a strong desire to practice rural medicine in Wisconsin, a rural background or connections, and a strong record of community involvement. It provides trainees with a rural-focused curriculum and required clerkships at rural sites throughout the state. Studies show that these factors, in addition to a future residency at a rural medical center, are the biggest predictors of the ability to recruit and retain physicians in rural areas.

"I first met Byron Crouse at the WARM Symposium before I was in medical school, and found his passion and calm demeanor comforting; he helped convince me to apply as a WARM student," recalls Mathew Herbst, MD '15 (PG '18), who completed a family medicine residency in the SMPH Department of Family Medicine and Community Health's Baraboo Rural Training Track.

"As a WARM student, I had hopes and aspirations that I would get more hands-on experience, as well as be the small-town doctor that so many movies depict," Herbst shares. "In general, it was all true, and I got much more hands-on experience than my colleagues in the regular program."

WARM has grown from admitting five students per year to 26 per year, and it has graduated 154 students. Of the 55 graduates who are now practicing medicine, 89 percent (49) are doing so in Wisconsin, 47 percent (26) in rural Wisconsin, and 35 percent (19) in their hometowns.

"It really helps students to have someone within the school who can talk about wanting to be a rural physician," notes Crouse, who proudly shared his practice experiences while mentoring WARM students.

For H. Clay Dean, MD '11, one of WARM's first graduates, who now practices general surgery at Sauk Prairie Healthcare in Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin, the program offered valuable skills and helped him see that rural physicians are not just doctors, but leaders.

"The WARM program allowed me to obtain a substantial amount of autonomy with patients, which let me hit the ground running during my residency training," Dean reflects. "It showed me firsthand how important rural physicians can be to their communities and the sense of pride that the communities have in their hospitals, clinics and physicians."

Building Rural Residency Capacity

Crouse's work also addressed another important factor about rural health care—that physicians' residency locations can play

a key role in where they choose to work. One study found that 76 percent of graduates of a rural track residency program entered rural practice. Crouse and other school leaders recognized that Wisconsin needed more rural residency positions to retain graduates.

Through their collaborative efforts, in 2010, the Wisconsin legislature provided funding for the Wisconsin Rural Physician Residency Assistance Program (WRPRAP), which distributes grants to rural hospitals and educational institutions statewide to help them develop rural residency programs, tracks and rotations. Administered by the SMPH Department of Family Medicine and Community Health (DFMCH), WRPRAP was first led by William Schwab, MD, DFMCH vice chair for education, and then—starting in 2011—by Crouse.

“WRPRAP is not just the DFMCH, the SMPH or UW-Madison. We’re working with partners and health care systems across the state,” Crouse notes.

To date, WRPRAP has awarded 74 grants to support the development of rural residency programs, rural tracks within urban residency programs, and other graduate medical education (GME) opportunities for rural residency programs, hospitals and clinics. In collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services’ GME Initiative, since 2010, WRPRAP grants have helped establish 36 new first-year rural resident and fellowship positions across six specialties—family medicine, general surgery, internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics and psychiatry—that are critically needed in rural communities. Program leaders project that by 2020, Wisconsin will have 208 residents and fellows participating in rural programs, compared to 67 in 2010.

Local and National Recognition

In recognition of his accomplishments, Crouse has been invited to serve in many local, state and national leadership roles, including co-chair of the Rural Medical Educators group of the National Rural Health Association. Among his many honors, in

2018 Crouse was inducted into Alpha Omega Alpha and earned the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award, *Marquis Who’s Who*. He also received the American Academy of Family Physicians Thomas W. Johnson Award; Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians Educator of the Year Award; National Rural Health Association Distinguished Educator Award; and Society of Teachers of Family Medicine Bishop Fellowship.

A Legacy of Partnerships

Crouse is proud to have brought together statewide partners to help strengthen the rural physician pipeline—from medical school admission to rural residency capacity building—which represents work that “exemplifies the Wisconsin Idea,” he says.

“The past 17 years at the SMPH have been exciting and rewarding. When I started, I was charged with developing programs to address health care disparities in rural Wisconsin. I found that there were already several rural initiatives at the SMPH, but they were like a jigsaw puzzle that had been scattered around,” Crouse reflects. “With the help of many committed and passionate rural health advocates, we were able to get the pieces in one place, create the missing pieces and put the puzzle together. We now have a robust set of programs that complement each other and other initiatives in Wisconsin to help promote the health of people who live in rural Wisconsin.”

As Crouse retires and returns to live north of Rice Lake, Wisconsin—25 miles from where he first practiced medicine—he plans to remain engaged in community opportunities, including volunteering for community medical education projects and “hammering some nails” for Habitat for Humanity.

“I will miss many colleagues, friends and students as I leave Madison. However, I look forward to living full-time in the Rice Lake/Spooner area and enjoying the wonders of northern Wisconsin,” he reflects, adding that he and his wife, Pam Crouse, also will

spend time with their two grown children and their families.

Crouse adds, “I’m not much different from some of the medical students who talk with me about careers in rural medicine. I love science, I love working with people, and I want to make a difference.”

“While I am extremely pleased with the outcomes of the WARM program, I am even more excited about future opportunities. The SMPH is in the midst of implementing the new ForWard Curriculum, and I am proud of the number of features we started in WARM that are now part of the new curriculum. It is time to strategically look at opportunities to enhance WARM. I think it will be very exciting for the new director—Dr. Joseph Holt—and the many WARM partners to develop a ‘WARM 2.0.’”

Crouse’s efforts have left an indelible mark on Wisconsin’s current and future rural physicians and communities.

“It is hard to put into words how good Dr. Crouse has been at his position as the head of the WARM program,” remembers Herbst. “He has a calming presence and has always been a great active listener.”

Herbst continues, “Dr. Crouse was there from my first year throughout graduation, helping me along my path to figure out what kind of doctor I wanted to be, as well as what factors in my practice are most important to me. I am glad that he was there to help me through my course through medical school and ultimately to become a family physician.”

Dean agrees with Herbst and others.

“What Dr. Crouse has done for the UW School of Medicine and Public Health and the WARM program will leave a lasting impact on rural health care for generations to come,” notes Dean. “I feel honored to be a very small part of that legacy.”

Preparing for Internship

FORWARD CURRICULUM'S INTERNSHIP PREPARATION COURSE

“**E**motions run high for graduating medical students, who will face big changes as they enter residencies,” says Sara Johnson, MD '07, assistant professor, Department of Medicine, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH).

With this in mind, the school's innovative Internship Preparation Course provides practical know-how and interpersonal communication skills essential for students to assume responsibility for patient care in their internships. Formerly an elective in three departments, the enhanced course is required for all graduating medical students.

“This training focuses on consolidating knowledge and skills—which students have gained throughout their medical education—in a way that lets them draw upon these things while under pressure as new interns. One activity includes mock paging sessions in which students respond to nursing calls and receive feedback,” notes Will Aughenbaugh, MD '97 (PG '01), professor and vice chair for education, Department of Dermatology, and director, ForWard Curriculum's Phase 3.

In spring 2017, Aughenbaugh coordinated establishment of the required course. It is co-directed in Madison by Johnson, Jamie Hess, MD, associate professor, Department of Emergency Medicine, and Amy Liepert, MD, assistant professor, Department of Surgery; in La Crosse by Kyla Lee, MD '98, FACP, and Kimberly Lansing, MD, PhD, clinical adjunct associate and assistant professors, respectively; in Marshfield by Lori Remeika, MD, clinical adjunct professor; and at Milwaukee's Aurora Health Care by Jessica O'Brien, MD (PG '16). Leaders depend on faculty and staff in many primary care and specialty departments to develop and teach intensive, small-group sessions that constitute a large part of this course.

According to Christine Seibert, MD, associate dean for medical student education

CLINT THAYER/DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE (2)



Hands-on clinical simulations are one way fourth-year medical students hone their skills.

and services, “We have incorporated team-based activities and a lot of hands-on skills training in the simulation center, such as how to do intubations and ultrasounds.”

Liepert's research related to the internship preparation curriculum focuses on student anxiety and confidence surrounding technical skills and clinical decision-making scenarios. Having adapted a national curriculum to prepare students for general surgery internships, she ensures that students are prepared to perform basic essential skills. For instance, the curriculum includes hands-on simulation activities related to IV placement, sterile technique, suturing and laparoscopy, as well as perioperative clinical decision-making.

Sections of the two-week Internship Preparation Course are taught by residents from several departments, who ramp up their teaching abilities to feel confident in lectures and simulation settings. For instance, internal medicine residents learn teaching skills through a Resident as Educator curriculum launched in 2015 by Johnson and Jessica Tischendorf, MD '13 (PG '16), former chief resident who is an honorary/associate fellow, Section of Infectious Diseases, and fellow, William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital. Residents choosing this opportunity engage in graduated teaching responsibilities and hone their instructional skills. The Internship Preparation Course has



become so popular as a venue for resident teaching that now residents from multiple departments teach in the course.

The course keeps getting better. In 2018, leaders added a novel experience in which medical, nursing and pharmacy students participated in a clinical simulation focused on interprofessional communication and teamwork. Working with high-fidelity mannequins and standardized patients, interprofessional groups received targeted training and real-time feedback about their teamwork and communication from the standardized patients and faculty facilitators.

A student shared, “Having a standardized patient play an anxious family member in the room was a good addition to the case because it added complexity and problem-solving that was required by the team.”

Hess notes, “This simulated interprofessional experience reinforces the critical role teamwork plays in internships to ensure safe, high-quality patient care.”

Associate Dean for Medical Education Shobhina Chheda, MD, MPH, concludes, “The ForWard Curriculum is full of new innovations, and the Internship Preparation Course—which requires intensive dedication among our faculty, staff and residents—is the perfect capstone experience, launching our students successfully into internships throughout the nation.”

Master of Science in Biotechnology

PROMOTING TRANSLATION OF RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

The University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) is deeply committed to translating research discoveries to practical application, a process that often involves the development and commercialization of technologies. Many results of SMPH research—such as cell-based cancer therapies, novel imaging modalities and new models of patient care—exemplify the beneficial impact of translation.

Wisconsin's robust biotechnology industry is focused on the development of innovative products and processes designed to improve health and quality of life for our citizens. In 2002, to address the growing need for this type of professional workforce, the SMPH launched the Master of Science in Biotechnology Program, a first-of-its-kind offering that has contributed significantly to the state's workforce. The program accepts 25 to 30 students annually.

Interdisciplinary Education

Since its inception, the program has graduated over 315 professionals, more than 75 percent of whom are employed in Wisconsin companies and related organizations. A key to the program's success is its unique curriculum, which blends academic rigor with industry practices and perspectives.

The program focuses on the practical application of research findings by offering courses in workplace settings. Most courses are taught in University Research Park—on Madison's west side—which is home to nearly 200 start-up companies focused primarily on the development and commercialization of technologies resulting from UW-Madison investigations. Hands-on courses are taught in industry laboratories through a partnership with the Biopharmaceutical Technology Center Institute in Fitchburg, a non-profit educational institute affiliated with Promega Corporation.

In consultation with program faculty and business partners, staff oversee and

continually refine the curriculum. Its evening and weekend schedule is designed for working professionals, allowing students to contribute to their companies while gaining skills and perspectives that increase their effectiveness. The curriculum features topics in science, business and law that focus on the processes used to transform discoveries to products. Team teaching by UW-Madison faculty and industry experts integrates the complementary perspectives of academic disciplines, cutting-edge research and applied processes. Key elements of the curriculum are designed to hone communication and leadership skills.

Graduates' Perspectives

Program graduates and their companies place high value on its interdisciplinary approach to education, giving rise to benefits in many forms. For Jason Mlsna, Class of 2012, a national account manager for GlaxoSmithKline, the program offered an opportunity to better understand Madison's biotechnology landscape.

"I had worked in the pharma industry for a number of years, and the program offered me the opportunity to really take my career to another level. What keeps me in Madison is the qualified workforce, quality of the science, and quality of the people," says Mlsna.

The quality Mlsna references also is evident to students who relocate to Wisconsin to pursue the degree, such as Jake Lindall, Class of 2018, who moved from Minneapolis.

"I relocated to Madison for the Master of Science in Biotechnology Program due to the well-rounded curriculum and experienced faculty. What I didn't realize were the opportunities that would be available to me outside of the program in terms of biotech jobs. I ended up gaining incredibly valuable experience as a quality assurance technician for Exact Sciences during my time in the program, leading to familiarity with a position I never expected to have," Lindall notes.

New Horizons

The program's successful collaboration with regional companies led to the formation in 2014 of the SMPH Office of Industry Engagement, which is dedicated to increasing the breadth and depth of such partnerships. Other initiatives include development of international relationships that foster varied cultural perspectives while training promising professionals, many of whom relocate to Wisconsin. The SMPH also is enhancing the program by developing subject-area tracks, such as federal and industry regulatory strategies, therapeutics discovery and development, regenerative medicine and precision medicine.

For 16 years, this program has benefited from the creativity, commitment and contributions of its students, alumni, faculty and partners. The future of biotechnology is bright throughout the nation. We look forward to continuing to contribute to Wisconsin's role as a leader in the translation of research breakthroughs to improved health and quality of life for people in our state, nation and world.



Richard L. Moss, PhD (left)

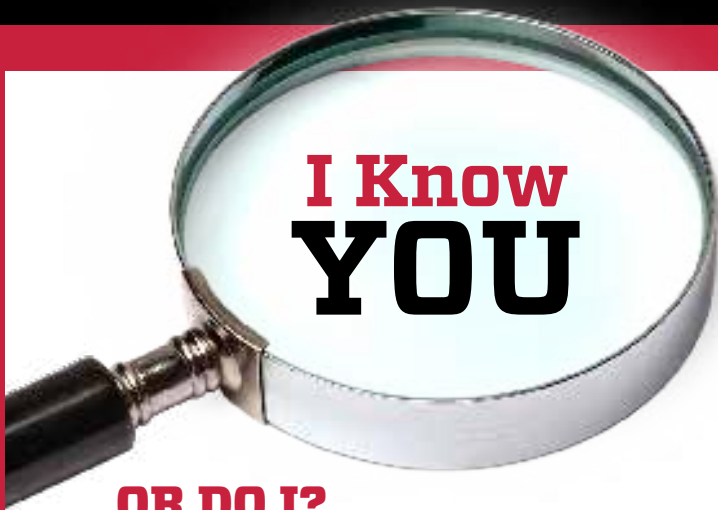
Senior associate dean for basic research, biotechnology and graduate studies, SMPH

Kurt Zimmerman, MS

Director, Office of Industry Engagement and Master of Science in Biotechnology Program, SMPH



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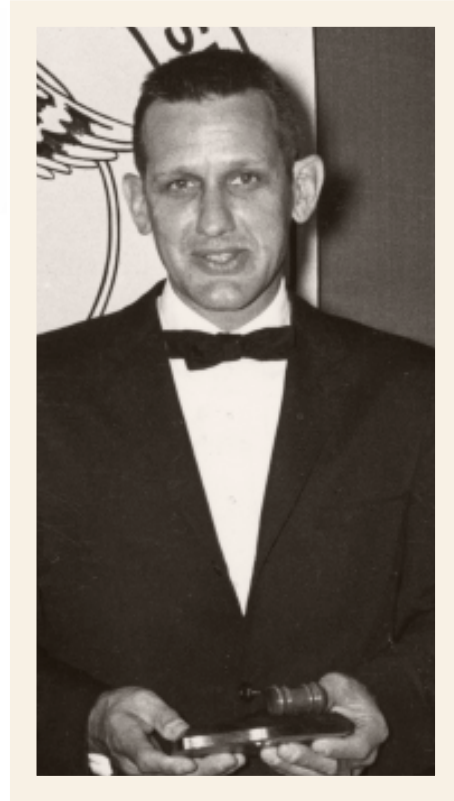
... OR DO I?

If you think you can identify the person in the photograph at right, send your guess to quarterly@med.wisc.edu. We'll draw one of the correct responses and announce the winner in the next issue of *Quarterly*.

For the last issue (see below), Robert Schlotthauer won the prize drawing and will receive a gift from the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association!

HINT ABOUT NEW PHOTO AT RIGHT:

William S. Middleton, MD, requested his service.



ABOUT LAST ISSUE'S PHOTO:



In the past issue of *Quarterly*, three people correctly guessed the identity of Margaret Ward Orsini, PhD, professor emerita of anatomy at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH).

A New York native, Orsini earned a doctorate degree in histology and embryology from Cornell University. From 1946 to 1949, she was an instructor at Duke University. In 1949, Orsini joined the SMPH Department of Anatomy, initially with a postdoctoral fellowship from the National Institutes of Health and later as a faculty member. She ultimately became a professor in 1973. She retired in 1987 and died in 2004.

At the SMPH, Orsini consistently made important contributions to the understanding of female reproductive anatomy and physiology, amassed a bibliography of more than 40 peer-reviewed publications and participated in many professional societies. Her research was supported by the National Institutes of Health or the National Science Foundation throughout her career.

She married Count Gian Napoleone Giordano Orsini, PhD, a UW-Madison professor of comparative literature, which made her—through her marriage—an Italian countess.

"When Dr. Orsini traveled to Italy, she was considered royalty. But when she was in Madison, she was very down to Earth. She wore blue jeans and rode a moped," recalls Ralph Hawley, former executive director of the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association.

Barbara Knox, MD '02, SMPH professor of pediatrics, and her husband, Robert Schlotthauer—who leads the school's Body Donation Program—shared memories of Orsini. Schlotthauer described her as a dedicated researcher who focused on the implantation of eggs in the uterine wall.

We Want to Hear From You

Please send us information about your honors, appointments, career advancements, publications, volunteer work and other activities of interest. We'll include your news in the Alumni Notebook section of the *Quarterly* as space allows. Please include names, dates and locations. Photographs are encouraged.

Have you moved? Please send us your new address.

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