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Quarterly



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School of Medicine and Public Health
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

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QUARTERLY

The magazine for alumni, faculty, friends, and students of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health

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** New members as of July 2026; see article on page 14.*

CALENDAR

December 2026

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9
Vital Reads, Health Sciences Learning Center (HSLC) and online

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15
Unfazed, HSLC

January 2027

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21
Operation: Education, HSLC

March 2027

TUESDAY, MARCH 9
Alternative Careers in Medicine panel, online

FRIDAY, MARCH 19
Match Day, HSLC and livestream

April 2027

FRIDAY, APRIL 2
Spring WMAA Board of Directors meeting and WMAA Awards Banquet, Madison

TUESDAY, APRIL 13, AND WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14
Day of the Badger online fundraising event

FRIDAY, APRIL 16, AND SATURDAY, APRIL 17
Denver alumni gatherings

May 2027

FRIDAY, MAY 7
MD Graduate Recognition Ceremony, Memorial Union and livestream

FRIDAY, MAY 14
Medical Alumni Day for spring MD reunions, Madison

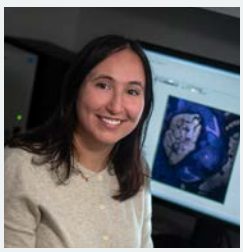
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Please search for @uwmedalum on Facebook and Instagram. Follow us for fun updates!

Fireworks erupt as the Badgers run out of the tunnel for the second half of the Homecoming football game in Camp Randall Stadium on October 3, 2026. University of Wisconsin won 31-3 against Michigan State University. –Photo by Taylor Wolfram/UW–Madison

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Health sciences students excel as they participate in national leadership roles related to their academic interests.

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MIDDLETON SOCIETY
Devoted supporters make a meaningful difference for faculty and staff members, students, and patients in Wisconsin and beyond.

ON THE COVER
At the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association-hosted Badger Cookout to welcome new medical students, Isaac Hayes and Danielle Lehto pose with Bucky Badger. See page 8. –Photo by Sirtaj Grewal/ Media Solutions

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JAY GULLIXSON/MEDIA SOLUTIONS

NITA AHUJA, MD, MBA
Dean, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health
Vice chancellor for medical affairs, UW–Madison

Each academic year, I think about inspiration to share with our school community and beyond. I speak about it for the first time with our incoming medical students at the White Coat ceremony in August, one of my favorite, joy-filled events. This year I chose a metaphor inspired by the Dalai Lama: "The Pebble and the Ripple."

We are each a small pebble. When a pebble drops into water, a ripple forms, extending far beyond the stony constraints of the pebble's diameter. This ripple is our impact, the difference we each make in the world that is uniquely ours.

"We are each a small pebble. When a pebble drops into water, a ripple forms, extending far beyond the stony constraints of the pebble's diameter."

As the nation's first school of medicine and public health, we guide our talented students as the pebbles of tomorrow. Through world-class teaching and mentoring, we mold and form them into leaders who stand ready to make a difference. On the pages of this issue, you can meet many of our incredible faculty members who help train and inspire our students by offering an unparalleled education in medicine, research, and public health.

These students are the brightest minds ready to dive into the water and have a transformational impact in science and medicine and, most importantly, on how we care for people and communities. This is why I am excited for you to read this issue's feature story that highlights three students who are leading the future of medicine. For example, as a student member on the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, which accredits every U.S. medical education program, MD/PhD student Sophia Vrba is helping shape the future of the committee's strategic vision. By amplifying the voice of students, she is advancing the work of institutions that celebrate more than 20,000 graduates each year. How is that for a ripple of impact?

"As devoted alumni and supporters, your ripple continues to extend outward and is needed now more than ever."

As devoted alumni and supporters, your ripple continues to extend outward and is needed now more than ever. Many of the lessons we teach students must extend beyond their initial years of training with us. They are shaped by alumni and supporters who serve as mentors, preceptors, and role models, showing our students what it means to live and lead with compassion and purpose. I see this in the way you engage with the school and support the work we do so that our ripples impact additional lives, and much more. Thank you.

It is a joy to witness countless ripples that got their start at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, each beautiful on its own and even better as our ripples connect and build. Together, I believe we can extend our impact far beyond the walls of the university and individual clinics, into every county of Wisconsin and beyond.

There is something special about coming home. The October 2026 Homecoming weekend reminded us of that in the best possible way as alumni gathered in Madison to reconnect with friends, revisit cherished memories, and celebrate their enduring connections with the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH); see pages 10 through 13.

Of course, schools across the country host Homecoming celebrations. But there is something uniquely special about welcoming *our alumni* back home. Perhaps it's the deep connections forged here, the shared sense of purpose, or the unmistakable pride that comes with being part of our school's tradition. (I mean, who else can take photos with Bucky Badger or visit the Memorial Union Terrace while in town?) The energy throughout the weekend was a powerful reminder that while our alumni may leave Madison, this community never truly leaves them.

That sense of connection was also evident a few weeks earlier at the school's Middleton Society Donor Appreciation Dinner. As you will read on page 34, the evening featured a thought-provoking keynote by Pallavi Tiwari, PhD, as well as updates from Dean Nita Ahuja, MD, MBA, on school priorities and the impact of philanthropy. Our largest Middleton Society gathering since before the COVID-19 pandemic, the event reinforced what can be accomplished when our community comes together to support the school.

The Middleton Society's impact extends far and wide. Through the generosity of alumni and friends, members provide critical, life-changing support for scholarships, research, and other priorities. That commitment is reflected in a remarkable milestone: 43 MD classes now have 10 or more Middleton Society members, with representation spanning more than seven decades, from the Class of 1946 through the Class of 2012. Classes such as 1980 (33 members), 1988 (30), 1968 (27), and 1982 and 1983 (24 members each) exemplify the extraordinary dedication our alumni have shown to advancing the school's future.

If you would like to learn more about Middleton Society membership, or how close you may be to becoming a member, I encourage you to contact Jill Watson, managing associate vice president for medical development, Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association, at **jill.watson@supportuw.org** or **(608) 262-4632**.

Fall is among the most invigorating times of year for the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) team. We recently celebrated the successful conclusion of our annual Stethoscope Campaign. Few moments better capture the spirit of our alumni community than watching new students receive the stethoscopes made possible by donations from those who came before them. I encourage you to read more about this year's Stethoscope Presentation and Badger Cookout on pages 8 and 9.

As you make your way through this issue, I hope you find stories that inspire you and remind you of the many ways alumni make a difference across Wisconsin and around the world. We would love to hear your story ideas and suggestions for future issues. Please reach out via email at **quarterly@med.wisc.edu** to share them with us.

You may also have noticed a change introduced in our last issue: a larger font throughout the publication to improve readability. Thank you to those who shared feedback that helped guide this update.

Finally, I hope you will consider making a gift to the WMAA Fund. Contributions support student engagement opportunities, alumni programs like Homecoming, and the publication of this magazine. Your generosity helps keep our community informed and connected while strengthening the bonds among alumni, students, and the UW School of Medicine and Public Health.

Thank you for all you do and, as always, On, Wisconsin!



TODD BROWN/MEDIA SOLUTIONS

SARAH B. ROTHSCHILD
Executive director, Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association

You can make a difference by contributing to the WMAA Fund at supportuw.org/givetoWMAAFundSR or by scanning this QR code.



Sophia Vrba studies Alzheimer's disease, specifically looking at the brain and lymphatic system.

BY KATIE GINDER-VOGEL

Leading the Future of Medicine

STUDENTS EXCEL IN NATIONAL LEADERSHIP ROLES

The University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) has a reputation for encouraging its students to become high-achieving medical professionals, researchers, and leaders, many of whom build their skills in medical and graduate programs. In the 2026-2027 academic year, sixth-year MD/PhD student Sophia Vrba, graduate student Uma Chatterjee, and fourth-year medical student Kylie Ruprecht are among the students serving in national leadership roles tied to their academic interests.

"It is such a privilege to see these strong leaders growing, developing, and thriving at our school," says Laura Knoll, PhD, associate dean for basic research training. "They have successfully balanced rigorous coursework and research with their national leadership roles to distinguish themselves."

Vrba's Dedication

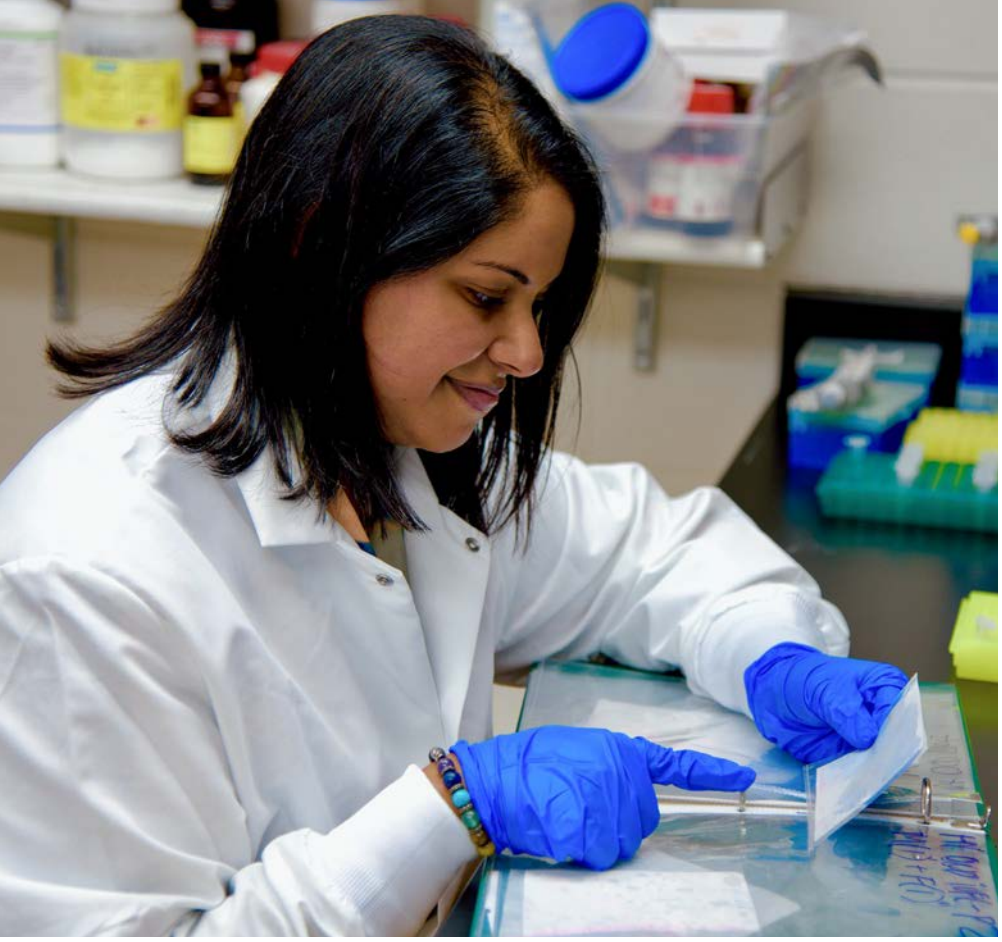
A student in the school's Medical Scientist Training Program – in which students earn both medical and doctoral degrees – Vrba is serving as a 2026-27 student member on the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), which accredits every U.S. medical education program. Acting Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs Gwen McIntosh, MD '96, MPH, and Associate Dean for Medical Education Shobhina Chheda, MD, MPH, nominated Vrba for the position due to her extensive involvement in medical education in the school's Educational Policy Curriculum Committee and Student Subcommittee for Curricular Improvement (SSCI). Additionally, Vrba was president of the Medical Student Association during her first two years of medical school and served as the education policy curriculum representative for her medical school class.

"In that role, I sat on the SSCI, and the deans nominated me to serve on the Independent Student Association, which is part of the LCME. That's how I got involved in the national organization," Vrba says. "I think this is a powerful platform to include student perspectives in accreditation decisions."

The LCME is undergoing a strategic revisioning process to gather comments from medical schools nationwide on accreditation elements and standards. As one of two student board members, Vrba shares her insights related to student well-being and success.

"I hope to provide a perspective on how it would change the experience of students if we adopted these standards and elements," Vrba explains.

Vrba focuses on the health impacts of policy. In her research on Alzheimer's disease, she hopes to improve patient care by



ERIK DENT, PHD/SMPH

Uma Chatterjee reviews materials related to obsessive-compulsive disorder protein quantification studies in the human brain.

developing new therapies and prevention tactics.

"I chose to do my MD/PhD because basic research drives innovation forward," she recalls.

In August 2026, Vrba received a National Institutes of Health (NIH) F30 Award for her project, "Dysregulation of Cribriform Plate Lymphatics as a Mechanistic Contributor to Alzheimer's Disease Pathology." She says her doctoral advisor, Zsuzsanna Fabry, PhD, professor, Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine – a 2026 Distinguished Fellow of the American Association of Immunologists – has created "an amazing research experience and is supportive of my leadership, even when it takes me away from the laboratory."

Dean Nita Ahuja, MD, MBA, also has encouraged Vrba's national service.

"I have met with Dean Ahuja to talk about my involvement and really appreciate her support of my career," Vrba says. "People at UW–Madison are amazing."

After Vrba completes her doctoral and medical degrees, she plans to pursue a career in dermatology practice and research, inspired by her clinical experience with Bridget Shields, MD (PG '19), associate professor, SMPH Department of Dermatology.

"I hope to apply my background in immunology to understanding disease processes in skin," Vrba notes. "I see myself using my innovations to contribute to meaningful change in dermatology research and care, while remaining engaged as a mentor and educator."

Vrba appreciates how much her student perspective has been valued in university and national organizations, including the LCME.

"The UW School of Medicine and Public Health is a great community, where people really care about student perspectives," she says. "I find the same thing on the national leadership level – people are truly invested in improving students' outcomes."

When medical schools and health care systems incorporate students' perspectives and support them to be their best, Vrba says, students are prepared to serve their communities and revolutionize patient care.

Chatterjee's Devotion

When Chatterjee was awarded the 2026 International Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder Foundation (IOCDF) Michael Jenike Young Investigator Award, she received $50,000 to support her research as a doctoral candidate and Yin Fellow in the Neuroscience Training Program. She aims to develop novel therapeutics for obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and is studying its pathophysiological mechanisms and comorbidities, and the mechanisms of action of psychedelics. Part of the funding includes a budget to involve people with lived experience of OCD in the project so they can weigh in on research questions.

"My research, professional leadership, science communication, and lived experience are closely interconnected," Chatterjee says. "That is exemplified by my IOCDF-funded dissertation research."

She serves in several leadership roles connected to her academic interests. For instance, she is on the Society for Neuroscience Upper Midwest Chapter's Board of Counselors, for which she votes on decisions and leads science communication training and outreach initiatives. She also serves on the Lived Experience Council for One Mind, a global organization that evaluates proposals for neuropsychiatric research and advises principal investigator awardees on how to incorporate lived experience perspectives into studies.

"I am a champion for including people with lived experience in

decision-making and research and for taking this into consideration when deciding what research is important," Chatterjee explains. "Lived experience in research is commonly funded in the United Kingdom, but not as much in the United States."

Chatterjee's second and third years of graduate school were supported by a fellowship in the TL1 Training Program offered by the UW–Madison Institute for Clinical and Translational Research and NIH. In the fellowship, Chatterjee's work reflected her extensive lived experience-informed science communication and advocacy. For instance, her podcast, A Chat with Uma, reaches thousands in 125 countries (available on all podcast platforms). Her science communication also has earned prestigious recognition, including the Society for Neuroscience's Next Generation Award in October 2026 and the Museum of Science's Digital Science Communication Fellowship.

Further, Chatterjee has been a global advocate for the International OCD Foundation and serves on the Research Proposal Review Committee for the foundation's annual conference. She previously served as president of OCD Wisconsin, the state-level IOCDF initiative.

Her advisor, Michael Cahill, PhD, an associate professor of comparative biosciences in the UW School of Veterinary Medicine, took Chatterjee on as a graduate student after she approached him about applying the questions he asks in his laboratory about disorders such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and autism spectrum disorder, to OCD.

"I credit him for being a transformative, empowering mentor, which requires a significant investment of his time and trust," Chatterjee says.

Cahill helped Chatterjee procure, from the NIH Human Brain Collection Core, human postmortem tissue from a cohort of people with OCD.

"We are conducting the first-known OCD protein quantification studies in the human brain," Chatterjee says.

Cahill adds, "Uma has an unparalleled ability to bridge her personal life experiences and scientific outreach endeavors with her laboratory-based research. This is highlighted by her ability to obtain human brain samples from understudied neuropsychiatric conditions, with the hope of identifying key molecular targets in the underlying disease pathophysiology."

Ruprecht's Commitment

Ruprecht is a 2026-27 member of the American Medical Association (AMA) Board of Trustees, which entails attending board meetings, contributing to reports, and participating in discussions and the implementation of advisory groups, including a new group on digital health and artificial intelligence.

"The board is full of impressive, distinguished physicians," says Ruprecht. "I am proud to have a voice in that room and be able to share the perspective of a medical student."

Her AMA board mentor is Ilse Levin, DO, MPH, TM, an internist and epidemiologist in Maryland. Ruprecht says all board members value her perspective.

Ruprecht recently shared feedback on a new AMA communications campaign encouraging patients to invest their trust in their physicians' expertise.

She also has visited medical students around the country, including recently at the University of Colorado.

"We talked with the Colorado Medical Society about its sponsorship of medical student memberships and potentially transitioning to an automatic system so all students would get the benefits of AMA membership," she says.

Ruprecht found her way to the AMA board through her ongoing service on the Wisconsin Medical Society's membership committee and board of directors. She also was an at-large medical student

–Continued on page 37



Kylie Ruprecht's advocacy work calls on her understanding of issues students and others care about.

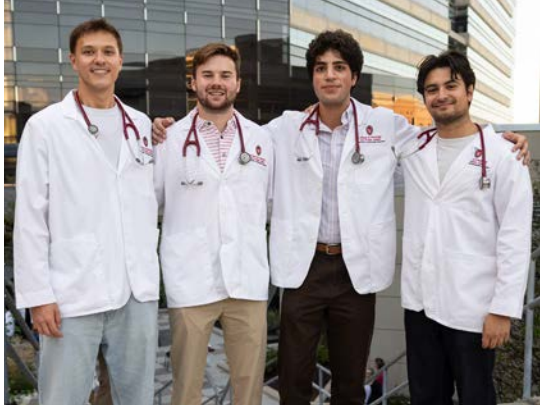
PHOTOS BY SIRTAJ GREWAL AND JAY GULLIXSON/MEDIA SOLUTIONS

A Warm Wisconsin Welcome

WHITE COATS AND STETHOSCOPES DELIGHT NEW MEDICAL STUDENTS













Give the gift of a stethoscope to a medical student by visiting supportuw.org/giveto/Steth or scanning this QR code.

Opposite page, top row (left to right): Students Will Atkinson, Shqipe Ashiku, and Ayat Arrale. Bottom row: Students Heather Jeon, Nicholas Jarman, Tara Janas, Eden Jacobson, and Oluwasemilore Ibitoye. Above, top row: Shawn Mckay, Connor Cleveland, Wali Amin, and Ali Vaseem; Reid Goble; Isaac Karim and John Crossin. Second row: Brianne Seagreaves; Ivan Paredes and Omar Marin; Ella Schroeder and Natalia Obrochta. Third row: Members of the matriculating class at the WMAA Badger Cookout.

by Kris Whitman

As 171 incoming medical students joined the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health in August 2026, the school community welcomed them through Badger traditions.

At the MD White Coat Investiture Ceremony, Dean Nita Ahuja, MD, MBA, told the students, "We are thrilled to witness the start of your journey into medicine .... And it all starts with the white coat. This simple garment speaks volumes!"

Medical students' first white coats are gifts from Wisconsin Medical Society donors.

Later the same week, the school's Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) hosted its annual Stethoscope Presentation and Badger Cookout for these students. Led by Executive Director Sarah B. Rothschild, the association gifts each new medical student a stethoscope made possible by generous donors.

WMAA Board Advisory Council member and annual stethoscope donor Steve Wiesner, MD '85, said, "I will always remember the true joy and appreciation on students' faces as we hand them their stethoscopes. It is inspiring to interact with first-year medical students and be able to show them that the school and WMAA are here to support them throughout their educational journey and beyond."

Wiesner continued, "For me, the Stethoscope Program is a meaningful touchpoint to encourage medical students, boost their sense of pride in their accomplishments, and help them establish a lifelong relationship with the UW School of Medicine and Public Health."

Homecoming

NINE MD CLASSES SHARE MEMORIES AND BADGER TRADITIONS











Top row (left to right): Gwen McIntosh, MD '96, MPH, Bucky Badger, Mary Schroth, MD '86, and Gary Tritz; Patrick Jost, MD '06, Caroline Schmitt, MD '06, Mathew Aschbrenner, MD '06, Michelle Briggs Gerrard, MD '06, Sarah Olson Reck, MD '06, Jackie Busse, MD '06, Danae Mowris Nakoneczny, MD '06, Nichole Mahnert, MD '06, and Pete Halverson, MD '06. Bottom row: Adam Wallenfang, Johnny Tackett, MD '11, MHS, and their daughter; Daniel Chelette, Stacy Smrz, MD '16, MPH, and their children; Kris Spiewak, MD '96, Elizabeth Stewart Nodine, MD '96, Brian Spiewak, and John Penner, MD '96.

SIRTAJ GREWAL/MEDIA SOLUTIONS (5)

by Kris Whitman

An eight-hour drive from Cleveland, Ohio, to Madison, Wisconsin, became a trip down memory lane for Stacy Smrz, MD '16, MPH, with her husband, Daniel Chelette, and their children, Cecilia, 5, and James, 3.

"Returning to the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health for my 10-year reunion was an opportunity to revisit a place that has had a lasting impact on my life, reconnect with friends, and share some of my favorite traditions with my family," shares Smrz, who practices gynecologic oncology at University Hospitals in Cleveland.

They took in all of the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association Homecoming events, beginning with a reception and class dinner at Monona Terrace on Friday, October 2, and continuing Saturday with the Tailgate Party at Union South and the Badgers football game. The family even made time to visit the Farmer's Market, State Street, and the Memorial Union Terrace.

"The weekend exceeded my expectations – it brought back many memories and gave my family a firsthand look at what makes UW–Madison so memorable. Above all, it is special because of the friends, mentors, and colleagues who helped shape who I am today," says Smrz.

Left to right: Nancy Folsom, Bucky Badger, and Bob Folsom, MD '71; Mike Ren, MD '01, Tony Kille, MD '01, Janis Tupesis, MD '01, Vita Kaplan, MD '01.





MD Class Reunions

SIRTAJ GREWAL/MEDIA SOLUTIONS (5)



CLASS OF 1986

Left to right: Steve Fox, Mark Anders, Mary Schroth, Chris Thoresen, Michael Braun, Ellen De Vries, Thomas Smith, Mark Huftel, David Simenstad, Paul Moore.





CLASS OF 1991

Left to right: Scott Samuelson, Tom Murwin, Hugo Higa, Anne Petersen-Fisher, Julie Ericson, Ann Ruscher.

SIRTAJ GREWAL/MEDIA SOLUTIONS (3)



CLASS OF 1996

Front row (left to right): Anne Jacobson, Jenny Goedken, Charles Vega, Jane Skelton Lykins, Craig Wilkerson, Horace Lo, Lori Wendricks House, Don Selzer. Back row: Percy Lo, Kris Spiewak, John Penner, Elizabeth Stewart Nodine, Amy Johnson, Erica Meyer, Thomas McIlraith.



CLASS OF 2001

Front row (left to right): Jeremy Forster, Jani Jensen, Julie Martin, Jennifer Derenne, Nandini Datta, Lyssa Bierig Chacko, Vita Kaplan, Jennifer Jansen Twente, Kellie Hunter Campbell, Heidi Jarecki, Reza Rod, Maria Klein Mandt, Marie Genske Walker. Back row: Brian Schreiber, Tony Mammen, Matthew Sager, Bryan Edgington, James Peterman, Elizabeth Bahn Streby, Russell Frederickson, Janis Tupesis, Michelle Seifert Dorsey, Hubert Dorsey, Amy Haavisto Kind, Tony Kille, Michael Sloan, Paul Weske, Paul Pienkos, Mike Ren.



CLASS OF 2006

Front row (left to right): Pete Halverson, Amber Koch-Laking, Nichole Mahnert, Danae Mowris Nakoneczny, Sarah Olson Reck, Michelle Briggs Gerrard, Jennifer Meyer-Carper, Jackie Geissler. Back row: Dave Gazeley, Patrick Jost, Timothy Kruser, Mathew Aschbrenner, Brent Jensen, Kelly Peters.

SIRTAJ GREWAL/MEDIA SOLUTIONS (3)



CLASS OF 2011

Left to right: Christina Parpart Wiedenhoeft, Miranda Warren Bice, Ravi Patel, Patrick Lee (a 2016 MD/PhD graduate who matriculated with the Class of 2011 before pursuing his doctoral studies), April Zehm, Brian Hong, Johnny Tackett.



CLASS OF 2016

Front row (left to right): Stacy Smrz, Daniel Tonellato, Ashley Nault Privalle, Sarah Sweetman, Hope Villiard Guzzo, Christine Ripp, Phillip Mercier, Liliana Palencia. Back row: Patrick Lee, Jacob Goldberg, Evan Joyce, Robert Bjerregaard, Allie Erdmann, Valerie Mok, Megan Yanny, Jordan Urbanek, Jennifer Wagner, Peter Chulhi Kang.

CLASS OF 2021

Left to right: Catherine Richardson Ahern, Sarah Beilke Smith, Vivian Gama.



New WMAA Board Members

WELCOMING CHIANG, DESAI, FISCHER, HANNEMAN, KAEPPLER, LEBEL, NELSON, AND WIENKERS TO THE ASSOCIATION

Compiled by Kris Whitman

On July 1, 2026, eight new members joined the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) Board of Directors for initial three-year terms.

WMAA Executive Director Sarah B. Rothschild notes, "We are excited to welcome these new members to the WMAA Board of Directors. Their backgrounds span decades of medical education and diverse specialties in communities across the country, reflecting the breadth of our alumni network. Together, they share a lasting affinity for the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) and a commitment to giving back in meaningful ways to future generations of students, alumni, and the school community."



SIRTAJ GREWAL/MEDIA SOLUTIONS

Left to right: Jason Chiang, MD '16, PhD '14; Robert Roger Lebel, MD '82 (PG '85, '87); Caitlin Kaeppler, MD '12; Matt Fischer, MD '15 (PG '19); Wendy Hanneman, MD '84 (PG '87); Kevin Wienkers, MD '81; and Anish Desai, MD '98. Not pictured: Brady Nelson, MD '20.

Jason Chiang, MD '16, PhD '14

Your practice?

I am an interventional radiologist at the University of California, Los Angeles David Geffen School of Medicine.

What moment made you certain that medicine was your calling?

As an undergraduate, I worked in a biomedical engineering lab, where I built brain electrodes for patients with intractable epilepsy. Watching the electrodes being implanted by neurosurgeons and immediately improving patient lives was incredibly motivating and drove me to become a physician-scientist.

Is there a lesson from medical school that shapes your work?

The physician-scientist life requires true collaboration among bench scientists and clinical experts, which I saw with my SMPH mentors in the Department of Radiology: Fred Lee, MD; Louis Hinshaw, MD '00 (PG '04, '05); Tim Ziemlewicz, MD; and Chris Brace, PhD '05. This synergy between bench and bedside remains a core part of my practice.

What drew you to serve on the WMAA Board of Directors?

Our family loves to come back to Madison, and through the WMAA, I hope to stay connected to the institution and community that shaped my career. I want to leave a legacy of mentorship and engagement to help future graduates feel the same support and connection that I have valued in my career.

What medical innovation or trend are you most excited about?

I am very interested in local, image-guided delivery of cell-based immunotherapies. As an interventional radiologist who treats early-stage or oligometastatic disease, I think we have a lot more we can do to advance these next-generation therapies.

Other updates?

My lab was awarded a National Institutes of Health R21 grant to develop antibody-conjugated microbubbles. Shortly after that, we received an R01 to utilize magnetic resonance perfusion to guide yttrium-90 dosimetry. We now have a team of talented post-doctoral and graduate students to support this work.

Anish Desai, MD '98

Your practice?

I am a private practice gastroenterologist in Atlanta, Georgia.

What moment made you certain that medicine was your calling?

Taking an anatomy class in high school and shadowing an oncologist in high school and college were influential experiences. I was impressed by the oncologist's interactions with patients.

Is there a lesson from medical school that shapes your work?

I learned that open collaboration with colleagues is a path to success for me as a physician and for the best care of my patients.

What drew you to serve on the WMAA Board of Directors?

I want to give back to our medical school as it has allowed my successes. When my friend and medical school classmate Ann Liebeskind, MD '98, asked me to join the WMAA, I thought it would be a great way to accomplish that. I believe sharing experiences with medical students helps them make decisions that they may not fully understand without advice from those of us who are working in this environment. I hope to leave a legacy of approachability. I also want to help promote the medical school and show others the high-quality education it provides.

What medical innovation or trend are you most excited about?

I think artificial intelligence, used appropriately, can help improve the quality of patient care and reduce physician stress and burnout.

What's something you are passionate about?

I love to travel and experience life in different cultures. I also am an avid foodie and a die-hard Packers and Badgers fan.

Other updates?

I recently became an empty-nester, as my son is attending UW–Madison as a Navy ROTC scholar. Also, as of January 1, 2027, I will become a managing partner in my practice. I have fond memories of helping co-found the Deans Cup in 1995 when I was a second-year medical student. Everyone had fun in our winning season that year.

Matt Fischer, MD '15 (PG '19)

Your practice?

I am an anesthesiologist practicing interventional pain medicine in Appleton, Wisconsin.

What moment made you certain that medicine was your calling?

In my youth, I wanted to be a cowboy, but since then, I always intended to be a physician. My mom — a retired family practice doctor — has been a role model. Seeing the relationships she has built and the care she provided to patients in our small city confirmed that medicine is the career for me.

What drew you to serve on the WMAA Board of Directors?

I see the positive impact one can make through service on the board, and I hope to support our goal of training physicians who will practice in our great state.

What medical innovation or trend are you most excited about?

This is an exciting time to practice interventional pain management because our subspecialty continues to grow in neuromodulation and minimally invasive spine procedures. There are, perhaps now more than ever, more effective new therapies for patients, and many times we can offer these treatments in a way that obviates the need for "full blown" spine surgery. It is a privilege to be able to offer these therapies in Northeast Wisconsin.

Wendy Hanneman, MD '84 (PG '87)

Your practice?

I practice family medicine with Aspirus Health in Wausau, Wisconsin.

Is there a lesson from medical school that shapes your work?

I remember preceptors who were kind when supporting patients in their health journeys. I wanted to emulate that in my career.

What drew you to serve on the WMAA Board of Directors?

My work has defined me for more than 40 years. I would like to share my passion for medicine by helping to advance the next generation of SMPH students and fostering alumni connections to support the communities we serve.

What's something you are passionate about?

I love to travel and have visited all seven continents. A polar plunge in Antarctica was a recent highlight.

Other updates?

My son graduated from the UW Law School, and my daughter graduated from the UW School of Medicine and Public Health and practices family medicine. I have five young grandchildren who, hopefully, will be our third generation to wear Badger red!

Caitlin Kaeppler, MD '12

Your practice?

I practice pediatric endocrinology at the Medical College of Wisconsin and Children's Wisconsin in Milwaukee.

Is there a lesson from medical school that shapes your work?

Volunteering at the free MEDiC clinics and engaging with the community as a medical student in the Training in Urban Medicine and Public Health Program taught me that everyone has a story worthy of our attention and

curiosity. Understanding factors that shape a patient's health helps us provide more meaningful care.

What drew you to serve on the WMAA Board of Directors?

I want to stay connected to the school and community that have had such an impact on my life. I am grateful for the opportunity to engage fellow alumni in supporting programs that enrich the student experience and our community.

What's something you are passionate about?

After nearly a decade as a pediatric hospitalist, I pursued training to specialize in pediatric endocrinology. I was inspired by my daughter, who was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at age 2. This connection has given my career a renewed sense of purpose.

Other updates?

I met my husband, Mark Kaeppler, MD '12, in our first week of medical school. Our four kids keep us busy and make life fun. It is special to realize that so much of the life we have built together started at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health.

Robert Roger Lebel, MD '82 (PG '85, '87)

Your practice?

Now retired from State University of New York Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, I have been a professor in five departments and served as the chief of medical genetics.

What moment made you certain that medicine was your calling?

As a graduate student in medical genetics, I felt called to be in the room with patients and families rather than in the laboratory.

Is there a lesson from medical school that shapes your work?

There are no substitutes for competence, compassion, and curiosity.

"They share a commitment to giving back in meaningful ways to future generations of students, alumni, and the school community."

–Sarah B. Rothschild

What drew you to serve on the WMAA Board of Directors?

I have a desire to give back by continuing to use my organizational and intellectual skills.

What medical innovation or trend are you most excited about?

My field of medical genetics is being revolutionized by technological advances that expand our diagnostic and therapeutic opportunities.

What's something you are passionate about?

I have decided to be more visible and intentional about ally-ship with the LGBTQ+ community. My wife and I have been involved in PRIDE parades. I always wear a PRIDE pin.

Brady Nelson, MD '20

Your practice?

In inpatient and outpatient internal medicine at Emplify Health in La Crosse, Wisconsin, I enjoy helping people stay healthy and navigate acute illnesses.

What moment made you certain that medicine was your calling?

My grandpa was diagnosed with colon cancer while I was in college, after he missed the routine screening that could have prevented the condition. I wanted to become a primary care physician and help people prevent diseases.

What drew you to serve on the WMAA Board of Directors?

The WMAA helped introduce me to one of my best friends from medical school, and the association has a huge impact on the wellbeing and support of medical students. I want to be a part of that mission.

What medical innovation or trend are you most excited about?

I teach point-of-care ultrasound and the simulation-based curriculum for internal medicine residents. Advancements have been incredible. I enjoy designing simulated scenarios and providing a safe place for students and residents to practice challenging medical scenarios before they encounter them in real life.

What's something you are passionate about?

I am a lifelong Packers and Badgers fan. I enjoy running, weight-lifting, and playing sports. I learned how to downhill ski, which is another way to enjoy Wisconsin winters.

Kevin Wienkers, MD '81

Your practice?

For more than 40 years, I have been a private practice ophthalmologist in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Is there a lesson from medical school that shapes your work?

Over lunch when my medical school acceptance letter arrived, I let our local priest open it for me, for luck. He said, "Glory Be to God." I knew I could not turn back and have been blessed ever since. The most important lesson is that we can never stop learning. Our patients need us to be the best.

What drew you to serve on the WMAA Board of Directors?

I accepted the WMAA position to pay back those who changed my life and to help make our SMPH program the best in the country.

What medical innovation or trend are you most excited about?

I am most excited about electronic medical records because I remember chasing down lab results and X-rays and creating long, handwritten histories.

On Call

THREE NEPHROLOGISTS SHARE WHAT THEY ARE UP TO

Sara Cuadra Aruguete, MD '21



I am a second-year nephrology fellow at the University of Chicago. There, in July 2027, I will begin a one-year transplant nephrology fellowship.

We care for patients from south-side Chicago communities and learn how to manage the health of those with a range of kidney pathology, from end-stage renal disease to newly transplanted organs.

In one memorable case, I cared for a patient with a rapidly progressive, rare kidney condition: crescentic IgA nephropathy with nephrotic-range proteinuria. The patient had hematuria that was attributed to kidney stones. After a biopsy, we quickly started steroids and cyclophosphamide, and the patient's renal function and proteinuria improved quickly.

In medical school, I always loved nephrology but also considered hospital medicine. I completed my internal medicine residency at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and realized that my favorite part of medicine was managing electrolyte disorders and kidney pathology.

This feels like an exciting time in this field because there are many new, innovative treatments that prevent the progression of chronic kidney disease and target immunologic pathways.

Amber Hertz-Tang, MD '14, MPH '14 (PG '17, '20)



As a nephrologist at Northwest Renal Clinics – a private practice in Portland, Oregon – I care for patients with chronic kidney diseases, including those who need transplants. I also oversee in-home and in-center dialysis, and I consult at a cardiac hospital. I regularly discuss patients' goals, including end-of life care. This is emotional but purposeful.

I most enjoy taking someone *off* dialysis when I can help them get a kidney transplant or because their kidneys regain adequate function. I hold close a major success story: A very sick patient had been on dialysis and gone through multiple failed treatment plans, but we found one that worked. He is in remission with normal kidney function.

During medical school, I had an elective rotation with Laura Maursetter, MD (PG '11), whose passion for nephrology spoke to me. I earned my medical degree and completed my residency and fellowship at the great University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health and UW Hospitals and Clinics.

I love this specialty because I am always learning, and my days have so much variety. This is an exciting time with many advancements. The future could hold wearable kidneys and other game-changers during my career!

Thomas Smith, MD '86



In 2025, I retired from my nephrology practice. Since 1992, I was in a private practice that covered St. Vincent, Bellin, and St. Mary's hospitals in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

I provided care for patients with renal failure and those with end-stage kidney disease, difficult-to-control hypertension, and other conditions. I liked working in a variety of inpatient, outpatient, and dialysis clinic settings. While some patients had acute conditions, I could help others remain stable for years.

One patient that I remember fondly was a man with severe hypertension, morbid obesity, and early-onset, Type 2 diabetes. I always advised patients like this to lose weight and explained in the kindest way how to do that. This was one of the only patients whom I influenced enough. When he lost his excessive weight, his blood pressure came down and his diabetes went away.

I completed an internal medicine residency at Mount Sinai Hospital and Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis. Toward the end of my residency, just after a nephrology rotation, I was offered a nephrology fellowship. I consider nephrology to be a highly gratifying specialty.

Class Notes

Compiled by Andrea Larson

CLASS OF 2025



Kristin Kohlmann received the UW College of Agricultural and Life Sciences' Distinguished Recent Graduate Award. She is a pediatrics resident at UW Health.

CLASS OF 2021



Andy Voter, a nuclear medicine resident at UW Health, was selected to the Academy for Radiology and Biomedical Imaging Research's Council of Early Career Investigators in Imaging, in the 2026-27 class.

CLASS OF 2018



Sean Golden was named the co-director of medical student education in the UW School of Medicine and Public Health's (SMPH) Department of Radiology. Golden has focused on connecting with medical students. He manages the Interventional Radiology Interest Group and has mentored medical students and other trainees who are conducting research.

CLASS OF 2013



Jasmine Zapata is on *In Business* magazine's 2026 "40 under 40" list. In 2016, she founded Motivational M.D. Enterprises, which is committed to empowerment, economic advancement, and storytelling. Zapata authored a book to boost girls' self-esteem, resilience, and courage and has helped countless aspiring authors publish their books. She is an SMPH associate professor of pediatrics, and the chief medical officer and state epidemiologist for community health at the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

CLASS OF 2012



Megan Schultz will receive the FY27 Faculty Career Vitality Award. An associate professor of pediatrics and pediatric emergency physician at the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW), Milwaukee, Schultz is the founding director of MCW's Global Child Health Program and co-director of its global health scholarly concentration. With this award, she and colleagues will work for several months in Cape Town, South Africa, to help create the country's first pediatric emergency medicine fellowship. Schultz has been involved in pediatric education and emergency care capacity-building in Africa since 2016. Her involvement with the African Federation of Emergency Medicine led to collaboration with faculty from multiple universities there. Schultz also plans to explore partnerships among MCW, Children's Wisconsin, and children's hospitals across South Africa.

CLASS OF 2011



Matthew Lee is the inaugural director of medical student research in the Department of Radiology, SMPH. He will build a comprehensive, year-round medical student research program that significantly increases participation in research. He previously co-directed medical student education in radiology.

CLASSES OF 2011 & 2009





Erica Knavel Koepsel (MD '11, upper photo) and **Britt Allen** (MD '09, lower photo) became at-large members of the UW Hospitals and Clinics Medical Board in September 2026. The board is the executive committee for the medical staff and monitors quality

of care at the hospital. Knavel Koepsel is an SMPH associate professor in the Department of Radiology, and Allen is an SMPH associate professor in the Department of Pediatrics.

CLASS OF 2009



Angela Gibson was named medical director of the UW Health Burn Center and is the medical director of Wound Healing Services. She also is an SMPH associate professor and vice chair of research in the Department of Surgery.



Joseph Weber was appointed vice president of cancer services for the Wisconsin Division and division clinical vice president for the Cancer National Service Line at Advocate Health. An SMPH clinical adjunct faculty member and breast surgical oncologist, Weber is the medical director of the Breast Center of Excellence at Aurora Medical Center–Grafton.

CLASS OF 2008



Ellen Selkie received the American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Adolescents and Young Adults' 2026 Richard B. Heyman Award. It recognizes an individual who has made contributions to their community to improve health care for teenagers and to educate pediatricians about the health care needs of adolescents. Selkie was selected for her outstanding commitment to improving the health and well-being of vulnerable adolescents locally and nationally.

CLASSES OF 2008 & 1996





James Bigham (MD '08, upper photo) and **Lee Faucher** (MD '96, lower photo) received 2026 SMPH Dean's Teaching Awards. These awards honor outstanding contributions in student education in medical school programs. See article on page 27.

CLASS OF 2007



Amy Fowler, associate professor, SMPH Department of Radiology, will receive a 2026 Honored Educator Award from the Radiological Society of North America at the annual meeting in late November 2026.

CLASS OF 2006



Michael Stadler became the executive director of the Medical College of Wisconsin's Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment on November 1, 2026. He is an associate professor in the college's Department of Otolaryngology and Communication Sciences.

CLASS OF 2004



Jennifer Kraschnewski was appointed vice dean for research, clinical, and translational science within the Office of Research, Graduate Studies, and Innovation at the Pennsylvania State College of Medicine. She oversees the clinical and translational research portfolio and helps guide strategy across its research enterprise while fostering partnerships that advance impact and outcomes. She also directs the college's Clinical and Translational Science Institute and holds a significant National Institutes of Health grant.

CLASS OF 2003



Daniel Jackson became chief of the Division of Allergy, Immunology, and Rheumatology in the Department of Pediatrics, SMPH, in September 2026. Jackson is recognized as being one of the world's leading researchers in childhood asthma.

–Continued on next page

CLASS OF 2001



Wendy Molaska was featured by the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) in the Family Doc Focus series, which highlights academy members who are changemakers in family medicine. The feature, "Award-Winning Doc Addresses Health Equity in DPC (Direct Primary Care)," is available on the AAFP web site. Molaska is a family medicine physician and owner of Dedicated Family Care, her DPC clinic in Fitchburg, Wisconsin.



Michael Taylor was appointed chief of the Division of Cardiology at Children's National in Washington, DC. Previously, he was on the faculty of Dell Children's Medical Center in Austin, Texas.



Michael Zwank was promoted to professor of emergency medicine at the University of Minnesota Medical School, where he oversees student education focused on point-of-care ultrasound. Employed by HealthPartners, he works primarily at Regions Hospital, a community teaching hospital in Saint Paul. Nationally, Zwank serves on the American Board of Emergency Medicine's Advanced Emergency Ultrasound Examination Committee and the Emergency Ultrasound Fellowship Accreditation Council.

CLASS OF 1994



Joan Neuner became an SMPH faculty member in July 2025. She is a professor and associate chief of research in the Department of Medicine's Division of General Internal Medicine in July 2025. She previously led a women's health research program at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee.

CLASS OF 1991



Hugo Higa was honored by the SMPH Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, which established the Hugo Higa Hidden Hero Award. It will recognize faculty, staff, or alumni who embody Higa's spirit of humility, leadership, service, and commitment to improving access to eye care. Recipients will have done extraordinary work but remain in the shadows. Higa helped found a long-running, highly impactful community outreach initiative: the Right to Sight Clinic.

CLASS OF 1989



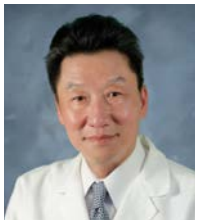
Felix Ankel was elected president of the American Board of Emergency Medicine, which certifies emergency physicians. He is a professor of emergency medicine at the University of Minnesota and a core faculty member of the HealthPartners Institute/Regions Hospital Emergency Medicine Residency Program in Saint Paul.

CLASS OF 1984



David Bernhardt was named the 2026 Andy Hipskind Distinguished Big Ten Team Physician Award. See article on page 32.

CLASS OF 1980



Felix Yip was elected as president of the Medical Board of California, which oversees the enforcement and licensing of physicians and surgeons. He was also reappointed to the board by the governor for another four-year term. Yip has served on the faculty of the Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California, and the Irvine School of Medicine, University of California.

CLASS OF 1962



Richard Geline was elected secretary-treasurer of the Illinois State Medical Society (ISMS) through April 2027. He has served in a variety of ISMS leadership roles since 1998.

In Memoriam

As part of ongoing efforts to keep our alumni records current, we learned of many deaths that had not previously come to the school's attention, some occurring years ago. Because every member of our community matters, we chose to include each individual here and honor their connection to the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health.

Ian R. Gray, MD '44
(Location unknown)
November 11, 2005

Harriet J. Sussman, MD '47
Hilton Head, South Carolina
January 1, 2021

Alex Scott, MD '48
Derby, Kansas
February 24, 2016

Digby G. Seymour, MD '48
Knoxville, Tennessee
April 26, 2017

Sherman M. Holvey, MD '49
Los Angeles, California
April 8, 2018

Gerald P. Gredler, MD '51
Janesville, Wisconsin
December 21, 2024

Rita G. Newman, MD '51
Pompton Plains, New Jersey
July 6, 2024

Walter D. Shapiro, MD '51
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
February 2, 2024

Lester E. McGary, MD '52
Corsicana, Texas
May 31, 2025

Ewald T. Sorensen, MD '52
Rockford, Illinois
July 30, 2021

Thomas C. Brugger, MD '53
Lyndhurst, Ohio
December 14, 2022

Earl H. Jochimsen, MD '53
Sheboygan, Wisconsin
September 10, 2021

Rolf E. Johnsen, MD '53
Carmel, California
July 23, 2024

James A. Tibbitts, MD '53
Cornwall, Pennsylvania
August 19, 2021

Robert C. Edmondson, MD '54
Woodland, California
June 5, 2020

Richard D. Fritz, MD '54
Ephraim, Wisconsin
July 11, 2026

Linton G. Weed, MD '54
Bend, Oregon
June 12, 2016

L. Gilbert Thatcher, MD '55
Plymouth, Minnesota
June 6, 2024

Sonja D. Williams, MD '55
Cincinnati, Ohio
August 18, 2024

Mary A. Zlatnik-Kluiber, MD '55
Bernardsville, New Jersey
April 5, 2022

Diane C. Bohlman, MD '56
Madison, Wisconsin
December 16, 2023

John A. Koepke, MD '56
Warrenton, Virginia
August 11, 2017

Charles R. Starr, MD '56
Seaside, Oregon
November 3, 2020

Warren D. Davidson, MD '57
Rancho Palos Verdes, California
February 9, 2026

Thomas H. Chalkley, MD '58
Las Vegas, Nevada
January 16, 2011

William W. Cotanch, MD '58
Rochester, New York
November 12, 2023

Theodore J. Eckberg, MD '58
Moorpark, California
June 4, 2026

Lawrence, A. Howards, MD '58
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
May 17, 2025

Glenn D. Legler, MD '58
Bethesda, Maryland
April 8, 2024

Robert D. Schmidt, MD '58
Port Saint Lucie, Florida
June 25th, 2026

James I. Wax, MD '58
Omaha, Nebraska
January 23, 2025

John R. Fry, MD '59
Asheville, North Carolina
February 6, 2026

Roy F. Kuboyama, MD '60
Honolulu, Hawaii
September 27, 2023

Jean A. Natter, MD '60
Portland, Oregon
September 23, 2025

Herbert W. Oechler, MD '60
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
January 26, 2024

Donald H. Schmidt, MD '60
Grafton, Wisconsin
April 19, 2022

Marshall H. Benner, MD '61
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
October 11, 2024

Manuel James Falk, MD '61
Green Bay, Wisconsin
November 26, 2023

Charles A. Lipman, MD '61
Coral Springs, Florida
July 27, 2022

Malcolm L. McCutcheon, MD '61
Duluth, Minnesota
August 15, 2023

David L. Moody, MD '61
Brookfield, Illinois
March 8, 2024

Burton Sehler, MD '61
Laguna Niguel, California
November 19, 2024

Richard B. Stafford, MD '61
Neenah, Wisconsin
March 10, 2024

Peter E. Weinberg, MD '61
Boynton Beach, Florida
August 19, 2020

Paul F. Frechette, MD '62
Janesville, Wisconsin
November 5, 2023

Edwin R. Larkin, MD '62
Lansing, Michigan
October 17, 2023

Clark O. Olsen, MD '62
Washburn, Wisconsin
October 25, 2025

R. Larry Schmitt, MD '62
San Diego, California
August 9, 2024

James P. Beck, MD '63
Middleton, Wisconsin
June 19, 2026

David G. Harper, MD '63
Ashland, Wisconsin
February 1, 2023

Irving J. Kohlberg, MD '63
Federal Way, Washington
February 16, 2026

Bernard Luck, MD '63
Goshen, New York
May 15, 2026

Carl W. Manz, MD '63
Eau Claire, Wisconsin
January 18, 2024

David A. Mathison, MD '63
San Diego, California
January 21, 2024

Geoffrey H. Moyer, MD '63
Torrance, California
March 20, 2026

James R. Poole, MD '63
St. Peter, Minnesota
March 10, 2025

Kenneth G. Reeb, MD '63
Chapel Hill, North Carolina
July 2, 2024

Charles O. Slocumb, MD '63
Modesto, California
November 28, 2025

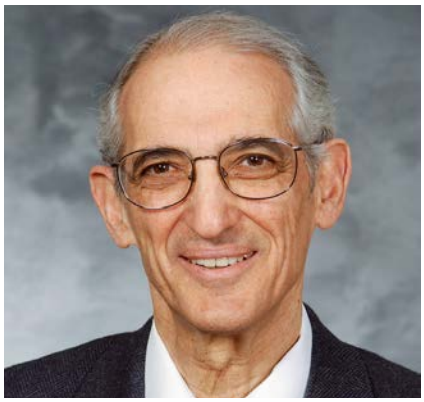
David O. Ritzenthaler, MD '64
Loudon, Tennessee
July 5, 2024

Paul I. Sunahara, MD '64
Honolulu, Hawaii
February 15, 2025

–Continued on page 23

Goodbye Dear Friends

THEODORE L. GOODFRIEND, MD



Theodore L. Goodfriend, MD, died in Madison, Wisconsin, on August 10, 2026, at age 94.

His career at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) spanned nearly five decades, primarily in the school's Department of Medicine and as the chief of staff for research at the William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital in Madison.

"An enthusiastic and nurturing colleague, beloved teacher, and outstanding clinician and researcher, Ted was born to be an academic physician," recalls Dennis Maki, MD '67, MS, emeritus professor of medicine.

A strong advocate for community health, Goodfriend helped found MEDiC, an SMPH student-led organization that runs free health clinics and partners with other free clinics for underserved individuals throughout the Madison area.

He won five teaching awards for his work instructing students, and he served briefly as an SMPH associate dean.

Widely published, Goodfriend's greatest scientific achievement was identifying receptors that trigger high blood pressure. The discovery led to the development of angiotensin receptor blockers that were used worldwide to treat hypertension. For this research, he won the American Heart Association's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2010.

To contribute to MEDiC's care for medically underserved individuals, visit supportuw.org/giveto/medicQ26 or scan this QR code.

PATRICIA A. JOO HEISER, MD '61 (PG '64)



Patricia A. Joo Heiser, MD '61 (PG '64) – known professionally as Patty Joo – passed away on July 15, 2026, in Madison, Wisconsin. She was 91 years old.

Heiser earned her medical degree from the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. She completed a pediatrics residency at UW Hospitals and Clinics and a pediatric hematology and oncology fellowship at Washington University in St. Louis.

She started her career at the UW Clinical Cancer Center (now the Carbone Cancer Center). As an associate professor of pediatrics, she was highly regarded for her ground-breaking work in the treatment of pediatric oncology. She was a member of the UW–Madison team led by Fritz Bach, MD, that performed one of the world's first two bone marrow transplants, simultaneously, at UW–Madison and University of Minnesota in 1968.

According to Paul Sondel, MD, PhD '75 (PG '80), professor and research director, Division of Hematology, Oncology, Transplant, and Cellular Therapy, Department of Pediatrics, "Patty was an inspiring pediatrician who was very dedicated to her patients and the field."

In 1972, through the World Health Organization, Heiser devoted two months in India educating women on breastfeeding and the proper sterilization of water for infant formula.

Following her time at UW–Madison, Heiser continued her successful career in general pediatrics. She was a founding member of the Jackson Clinic and later Physicians Plus Mutual Group in Madison.

In Memoriam
—continued from page 21

Josef F. Vosmek, MD '64
La Crescent, Minnesota
February 8, 2020

Reginald D. Williams, MD '64
San Antonio, Texas
June 13, 2016

Frank L. Wolf, MD '64
Duluth, Minnesota
April 28, 2021

Bernard F. Herzog, MD '66
Brooklyn Center, Minnesota
May 21, 2026

Donald H. Kranendonk, MD '66
Jupiter, Florida
July 22, 2026

Robert L. Lederer, MD '67
Denver, Colorado
February 22, 2025

Richard J. Milligan, MD '67
Wayland, Michigan
August 14, 2022

Darryl R. Stern, MD '67
Tempe, Arizona
May 31, 2026

Dale A. Waters, MD '67
Albuquerque, New Mexico
January 1, 2026

Donald C. Fancher, MD '68
Honolulu, Hawaii
May 15, 2026

Bruce H. Schowalter, MD '68
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
August 20, 2013

Thomas P. Lathrop, MD '69
La Crosse, Wisconsin
September 24, 2026

John C. Kirkpatrick, MD '71
Bay City, Michigan
August 27, 2024

Jay D. Iams, MD '72
Columbus, Ohio
August 19, 2026

Scott Sellinger, MD '73
Sheboygan, Wisconsin
February 13, 2026

Candace K. McKanna, MD '74
Portland, Oregon
February 7, 2026

Richard N. Foltz, MD '75
Presque Isle, Wisconsin
July 31, 2026

Larry Deutsch, MD '77
Bronx, New York
January 30, 2026

Joyce E. Polk, MD '77
New Berlin, Wisconsin
January 1, 2025

Richard L. Ridberg, MD '77
Gilbert, Arizona
November 9, 2021

Charles L. Winterwood, MD '77
Dubuque, Iowa
November 15, 2025

Thomas M. Fox, MD '79
Minneapolis, Minnesota
April 13, 2026

James Ju-I Lo, MD '79
Austin, Texas
June 23, 2018

John D. Carlson, MD '80
Baker, Florida
February 2, 2026

Scott F. Stieber, MD '81
Lancaster, Pennsylvania
August 11, 2026

Cynthia L. Harden, MD '83
New York, New York
May 26, 2026

David L. Scherwinski, MD '84
Waupaca, Wisconsin
September 24, 2024

Brian J. Bohlmann, MD '87
Madison, Wisconsin
July 15, 2014

Patrick J. Scott, MD '87
Readstown, Wisconsin
April 14, 2026

Valeria King, MD '88
Newport News, Virginia
November 27, 2024

Jackson C. Ma, MD '01
Montebello, California
August 10, 2026

David R. Eiler, MD '11
Hanover, New Hampshire
June 28, 2026

Kristin D. Hayes, MD '12
Cadillac, Michigan
August 31, 2026

Former Faculty Members

Theodore L. Goodfriend, MD
Madison, Wisconsin
August 10, 2026

Patricia A. Joo Heiser, MD '61 (PG '64)
Madison, Wisconsin
July 15, 2026

Joseph F. Sackett, MD
Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida
October 15, 2026

James R. Starling, MD
Pittsboro, North Carolina
July 12, 2026

JOSEPH F. SACKETT, MD

Emeritus Professor Joseph F. Sackett, MD – past chair of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health's Department of Radiology – passed away on October 15, 2026, in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. He was 86 years old.

Sackett's leadership helped shape radiology, including magnetic resonance imaging, in Wisconsin and beyond. His landmark 1977 paper demonstrated the safety and efficacy of using metrizamide as a contrast agent in spine imaging.

He earned a medical degree from Tulane University School of Medicine, New Orleans, and completed a radiology residency at Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital, Hanover, New Hampshire, and neuroradiology fellowships in Norway and New York City. He joined the UW School of Medicine and Public Health faculty in 1974.

"During his tenure as chair from 1981 to 1995, Dr. Sackett helped establish our department as a national leader in clinical care, research, and education," says Greg Avey, MD (PG '10, '11), vice chair for clinical operations. "He recognized the importance of investing in emerging technologies, empowering faculty to pursue innovation, and supporting his colleagues and trainees. His legacy endures through the people he mentored, programs he helped build, and advances he made possible."



UW–MADISON ARCHIVES

You can honor this legacy by contributing to the Joseph F. Sackett Professorship in Radiology; contact Sara DeTienne, Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association, at **(608) 320-4513** or **sara.detienne@supportuw.org**.

"I Feel Called to be His Voice"

THE LEGACY OF DAVID WILSEY, MD '39

by Micaela Sullivan-Fowler, MS, MA, based on an interview and background materials provided by Clarice Wilsey

The liberation of humans, both body and soul, is at the heart of this story. In the case of David Wilsey, MD '39, and his family, it encompasses his involvement in World War II and the liberation of Germany's Dachau Concentration Camp. Replete with horrific atrocities and extraordinary acts of service, his experience during the emancipation of others contributed to a private, emotional asylum that neither he nor his wife, Emily Wilsey, ever shared with their children. The second liberation came when their adult children discovered evidence of their father's extraordinary legacy.

From fall 1944 to spring 1945, David Wilsey was on the front lines with the 116th Evacuation Hospital in one of General Patton's U.S. Army battalions. He wrote to his wife throughout his military service, including intense correspondence from post-liberation Dachau.



Emily Wilsey and David Wilsey, MD '39

A box of his letters survived intact through residential moves and a house fire. When Clarice Wilsey and her siblings discovered the box in 2009, after their parents had died, it revealed an unknown story about their father. They also found a box of wartime photographs which 6-year-old Clarice Wilsey had seen decades earlier but had been dissuaded from asking questions about. She first learned of her father's involvement in WWII and his heroic efforts in Dachau through the contents of those boxes decades later.

By the time David Wilsey – from Oconomowoc, Wisconsin – was 20 years old, he had already lost both of his parents. He met his future wife when they were attending the University of Wisconsin–Madison. As a medical student at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health, David Wilsey was inducted into Alpha Omega Alpha. In 1939, he earned his medical degree, and the following year, she earned her bachelor's degree in physical therapy. They shared a devout Episcopalian faith, love of sports, and desire to heal others. Habitual letter writing began when they moved in different directions to continue their studies.

The United States entered WWII in 1941, following the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Germany then declared war on the United States. Although medical professionals were exempt from the military draft, they were desperately needed. David and Emily Wilsey decided he should volunteer for service. They were married in 1943, and he enlisted on February 29, 1944. The couple's son, Terry Wilsey, was born in August 1944. After a short leave to be with his newborn son and an intensive three-month training to care for war casualties, David Wilsey was deployed to Europe as part of the U.S. Army Medical Corps in November 1944; he was assigned to the 116th Evacuation Hospital.



Captain David Wilsey, MD '39, and his Bronze Star

Given only a small window in which to acclimate, David Wilsey and others in the 116th Evacuation Hospital soon faced a constant surge of patients from what came to be called the Battle of the Bulge. This concentrated offensive from Germany, from December 1944 to January 1945, would ultimately be the American military's bloodiest WWII battle.

David Wilsey performed anesthesia and helped complete surgeries on countless soldiers. Correspondence indicates that

he often stood in the middle of multiple patients, with their bodies laid on gurneys in a pattern resembling the spokes of a wagon wheel, as he attended to them in the round — with each soldier receiving the anesthetic and surgical care they needed, one after the other. David Wilsey's acumen in the field earned him a Bronze Star.

"Tell thousands so that millions will know what Dachau is and never forget the name of Dachau."

—David Wilsey, MD '39

The Battle of the Bulge ended in January 1945, and Allied Forces were soon back on the offensive. David Wilsey was constantly on the move as his hospital unit followed the front lines while the Allies raced into Germany. For the next few months, he complained to his wife that his incoming mail was slow to arrive after being re-routed.

David Wilsey began heading his letters with the phrase "Somewhere in Germany" or "Somewhere else in Germany" to protect his hospital's location in case the letters were intercepted. Clarice Wilsey imagines the palpable significance that letters from home had for soldiers and medical personnel. Their blue and red Air Mail envelopes, arriving in a backdrop of trauma and impermanence, must have been transcendent, she says.



Clarice Wilsey

Dachau was one of 44,000 concentration camps in Germany. Between 1933 and 1945, the camps contributed to the mass murder of 6 million Jewish people and tens of thousands of other targeted groups: those with disabilities, people of color, and members of the clergy. On April 29, 1945, David Wilsey aided in the liberation of the Dachau Concentration Camp. Alongside the rest of the U.S. Seventh Army, he found the gruesome evidence of the Nazi genocide, including piles of emaciated corpses. He and fellow practitioners — totaling just 27 at first, with additional doctors sent quickly, according to Clarice Wilsey's research — treated countless prisoners who had survived the camp, many still succumbing to typhus, tuberculosis, or starvation.

On May 8, 1945, David Wilsey wrote to his wife about the recently liberated camp: "Emily, we are sweating, stinking, 'existing' in The-Hell-On-Earth-DACHAU! … Dearest, the atrocity reports are true — and more! For over 8 days I've seen-lived-smelled-'existed' it as one of 78 doctors to try to correct the medical-horror-component of The-Hell-On-Earth."

David Wilsey's letters occasionally described moments of renewal, telling of a wedding between a nurse and doctor at Dachau, a holiday tree festooned with surplus paraphernalia, and the act of unwrapping a gift from home but then rewrapping it to pass along to someone who had not received a package. These



were touchstones of humanity in a landscape of often unimaginable grief.

In one letter, David Wilsey urged his wife to "tell thousands so that millions will know what Dachau is and never forget the name of Dachau."

Because neither David nor Emily Wilsey could bring themselves to tell the world or their children of the horrors their father had witnessed, Clarice Wilsey "decided to take on his request when I found the letters buried in the attic and my parents could not talk about his experience."

She adds, "I feel called to be his voice."

Tens of thousands of health care professionals have served during military campaigns. One hears, anecdotally, that the families of those physicians, nurses, ambulance drivers, and others rarely or never hear about the horrors of wartime triage and care. The practitioners often take their memories to the grave.

Such was the case for David Wilsey, who — after his military service — devoted more than 40 years practicing anesthesia in Spokane, Washington.

In 2006, Clarice Wilsey visited the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., where she — by chance — recognized her father in a film. Three years later, she and her siblings found the letters and

—Continued on page 31

Gold Humanism Honor Society

MEDICAL STUDENTS, FACULTY MEMBERS, AND A FELLOW ARE HONORED FOR THEIR PROFESSIONALISM



JAY GULLIXSON/MEDIA SOLUTIONS

Fourth-year medical student inductees to the Gold Humanism Honor Society in August 2026

by Kris Whitman

At the beginning of the August 2026 White Coat Ceremony for incoming medical students at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH), Elizabeth Petty, MD '86 (PG '89), and other school leaders honored fourth-year medical students, faculty members, and a resident (now a fellow) who were selected for induction into the school's chapter of the Gold Humanism Honor Society (GHHS).

Petty, then the senior associate dean for academic affairs (now retired), told the entering students, "One of the best aspects of your experience here will be your interactions with each other and with peers in other classes. These senior medical students who exemplify humanistic patient care will serve as role models and guides to you."

The Arnold P. Gold Foundation's GHHS aims to "recognize and encourage the development of humanism, compassion, integrity, respect, and service toward patients and colleagues," Petty noted.

Every year, a group of fourth-year students is selected by their classmates for induction into the society based on their demonstration of these traits. The student inductees then elect two faculty members and one resident or fellow to join them in the society. Each inductee received a formal gift of a GHHS pin to symbolize their commitment to the organization's values.

2026 FOURTH-YEAR MEDICAL STUDENT INDUCTEES

- Jeanette Akuamoah
- Cassandra Apiah-Ofori
- Dominick Battistini
- Cole Birch
- Marissa Cutlan
- KaDerricka Davis
- Sakar Gupta
- Madison Harris
- Chloe King
- Anna Knezic
- Fatoumatta Kolley
- Caitlin Liddiard
- Sophia Liu
- Seamus McWilliams
- Avinash Murthy
- Alexander William Nelson
- Christian Pelayo
- Bryn Rourke
- Alexandra Sabgir
- Blake Samsill
- Katherine Satori
- Hana Siddiqui
- Nathan Siewert
- Isabella Sorci
- Noah Tsarovsky
- Hunter Wakefield
- Amanda Webb

2026 FACULTY AND FELLOW INDUCTEES

- Daniel Cho, MD, PhD, assistant professor, Department of Surgery (Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award)
- Wesley Fox, MD '16, clinical assistant adjunct professor, Department of Family Medicine and Community Health, SMPH Northern Academic Campus, Marshfield, Wisconsin
- Zaynab Almothafer, MD, MBS (PG '26), infectious disease fellow, Department of Medicine

Dean's Awards

FACULTY MEMBERS RECEIVE DEAN'S TEACHING AWARDS AND AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN MEDICAL STUDENT RESEARCH MENTORSHIP



SIRTAJ GREWAL/MEDIA SOLUTIONS

Left to right: Ajay K. Sethi, PhD, MHS; Laura E. Birkeland, MS '07, CGC; Lee D. Faucher, MD '96; James Bigham, MD '08, MPH '12 (PG '09, '12); and Syed Nabeel Zafar, MD, MPH

The University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health Dean's Teaching Awards and Dean's Award for Excellence in Medical Student Research Mentorship honor outstanding contributions in student education.

The teaching awardees are selected by a committee of faculty members who have previously been honored for their excellence in teaching, mentoring, and educational leadership. Recipients are:

- James Bigham, MD '08, MPH '12 (PG '09, '12), professor of family medicine and community health
- Laura E. Birkeland, MS '07, CGC, assistant professor of pediatrics
- Lee D. Faucher, MD '96, professor of surgery
- Ajay K. Sethi, PhD, MHS, professor of population health sciences

The research mentorship award recipient is:

- Syed Nabeel Zafar, MD, MPH, assistant professor of surgery

Bigham is the course director for Family Medicine 913: Firearm Injury Prevention and a Phase 2 Department Block Leader for Chronic Preventive Care, in which he provides instruction on firearm injury prevention, vaccine hesitancy, and community engagement. He co-founded a hands-on firearm injury prevention program that bridges the gap between health professions students, clinicians, and the firearm community. He has made substantial contributions to medical student education as a small-group facilitator and clinical preceptor.

Birkeland directs the Master of Genetic Counselor Studies Program and advances genetics education across disciplines. She develops innovative learning experiences that connect classroom concepts to clinical practice and provides mentorship to students, residents, fellows, and other learners across the health professions programs.

Faucher has contributed significantly to the medical school curriculum and demonstrated longstanding leadership in medical education through his service on the Student Promotion and Review Committee. His roles include Phase 3 co-director and medical student mentorship lead for those pursuing surgical careers.

Sethi directs the Master of Public Health Program and teaches health professions and graduate students. An infectious disease epidemiologist, he developed the popular public health selective, Conspiracies in Public Health, to help learners build skills in having difficult conversations.

Zafar showcases clinical and research excellence by providing care to complex cancer patients, publishing manuscripts, and developing innovative programs. He has mentored more than 23 medical students in their research and professional development. His commitment to student success is best exemplified by his mentees' significant achievements in their careers; these include several first-author publications, national conference presentations, and research awards.

2026 Belzer Awards

TEMTE AND TROWBRIDGE HONORED FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENTS



SIRTAJ GREWAL/MEDIA SOLUTIONS

Jonathan L. Temte, MD '87, PhD '93 (PG '93) (left), and Elizabeth (Betsy) Trowbridge, MD '91 (PG '94)

by Kris Whitman

Jonathan L. Temte, MD '87, PhD '93 (PG '93), and Elizabeth (Betsy) Trowbridge, MD '91 (PG '94), received the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health's (SMPH) highest award from Dean Nita Ahuja, MD, MBA, in October 2026. In presenting Belzer Awards, she said, "For decades, these leaders have been at the forefront of our vision for primary care and public health and how we care for our community."

Named for Folkert O. Belzer, MD – a transformational chair in the Department of Surgery and co-inventor of the UW Solution, which extends organ storage time for transplantation – the awards honor lifetime achievements by "our most outstanding leaders who have had a major impact on our school, as well as nationally and globally," said Ahuja.

Temte is a nationally recognized public health leader and vaccine policy expert. An SMPH MD alumnus, he completed a family medicine residency in the school's Department of Family Medicine and Community Health. There, he devoted 33 years to patient care, research, education, and community service. He was the school's associate dean for public health and community engagement from 2019 to 2026.

Now retired, Temte helped align public health education programs, created community engagement programs, and trained countless physicians, residents, and health sciences students while caring for patients at Wingra Family Medical Center. Temte's research team focused on K-12 school absenteeism data to track influenza outbreaks.

He helped inform local, state, and national COVID-19 pandemic responses and served as chair of the U.S. Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

Among other honors, Temte received the John G. Walsh Award for Lifetime Contributions to Family Medicine by the American Academy of Family Physicians and the Medical Alumni Citation – Distinguished Alumni Award from the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association, both in 2026.

"Few leaders have done more for unifying our medicine and public health missions. Dr. Temte embodies the Wisconsin Idea of service to our state and nation," said Ahuja. "Every interaction I've had with him is founded in his commitment to servant leadership, always leading from a place of humility and making sure others feel heard and understood."

Trowbridge's career spanned three decades in the Department of Medicine and the academic medical center before she retired in 2026. Her leadership roles included department vice chair and interim chair; chief, Division of General Internal Medicine; board chair, UW Health Accountable Care Organization; and board member, UW Medical Foundation and UW Hospitals and Clinics Authority.

She was instrumental in UW Health's primary care redesign and innovative, population-based compensation model.

Trowbridge says the privilege of caring for patients for 30 years as a primary care physician has been one of the biggest joys of her life.

She also has been a trusted mentor and advocate for generations of physicians and health care leaders.

Trowbridge's many accolades include the 2010 UW Health Physician Leadership Award and the 2017 American College of Physicians' Helen Dickie Award for Outstanding Woman Physician. She is a Hedwig van Ameringen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine Fellow.

She earned an SMPH medical degree, completed an internal medicine residency in the Department of Medicine, and joined its faculty in 1998.

"Dr. Trowbridge's legacy is one of innovation, collaboration, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to patients and primary care," said Ahuja. "Everyone who knows and has worked with her has told me the same thing: She is authentic, she is genuine, and she listens. Three qualities at the center of caring for patients and mentoring others."



Looking Through the Window

by Alexandra Sabgir

Sometimes when I'm in my patients' rooms, I look out their windows, and I see the outside world. I see my friends' apartments in which I've joked and worried, laughed and cried. I see walking paths through the neighborhood that I trek when my mind is a crumpled sheet of paper full of scratches and scribbles, and I'm in search of clarity. I see my favorite coffee shop that I frequent with such regularity that the baristas know what I'll order and when I'll be by.

The world outside continues, but the world inside has stopped. The life of the person lying in the bed irrevocably altered when their body stuttered and glitched. The outside, just behind the glass, is impossibly far away for the human clad in the wrinkled gown and worn-out sheets. I can't help but ponder: the dichotomy between inside and outside is incredibly stark.

Right now, I sit with this human. I listen. I talk. I comfort. But, at the end of the day, I enter the outside. They're still behind the glass, which feels more like a locked cage than it does a window. I ride the bus home. They lie on an unfamiliar mattress. I make myself dinner. They push away their tray of hospital food. I go for a walk. They look at the sidewalks and trees through their window. I fall asleep in my bed. They toss and turn between the pokes and prods. My life continues. Theirs does not.

And yet, the difference between inside and outside blurs in my mind. When I ride the bus home, I replay our conversation from that morning. When I make myself dinner, I wonder if they were able to eat more of their food tonight. As I walk through the park, I think about their adult children who I spoke with that afternoon. And as I fall asleep, I think about what we'll talk about tomorrow morning when I return inside.

While their outside may not be just through their window, it is as expansive and vibrant as my own. They peer through the glass as they long to return to their beautiful outside. But for now, I'll sit by them each day while they relish the memories.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Alexandra Sabgir is a fourth-year medical student at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. She wrote this essay during her second-year, core clinical rotations.

From Columbus, Ohio, she values the school's commitment to public health and the community. She wanted to attend a medical school that valued looking at health care from a multidisciplinary perspective.

Sabgir is in the UW School of Medicine and Public Health's Medical Education Path of Distinction, participates in medical education committees, and conducts research in the Department of Pediatrics. She plans to pursue a career in which she provides care for children and their families.

In her rare free time, Sabgir loves doing anything active in the outdoors.

VanDommelen at Lambeau

NFL SPORTS MEDICINE PIPELINE PROGRAM ALIGNS WITH HER VALUES

by Beth Pinkerton

Movement has always been medicine for Ava VanDommelen, a fourth-year medical student at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH).

Growing up, she competed in swimming and triathlons, where being underwater soothed her nerves during stressful times. Her mom and stepdad are IRONMAN athletes, and participating in IRONKIDS was an important part of VanDommelen's family life.

"I never felt more alive than during my first half-IRONMAN race: my heart was pounding as I finished an open-water swim at sunrise, flew down the hills of rural Wisconsin on my bike, and saw my friends and family cheering on my run," she says. "Achieving one of my greatest goals, I realized that movement is what makes me feel human."

Over time, her connection to movement became a sense of purpose. VanDommelen hopes to become an orthopedic surgeon, aiming to help others regain freedom of movement to participate more fully in their lives.

In clinical rotations during her second and third years of medical school, she had several interactions with patients in which they emphasized how orthopedic evaluation or surgery had improved their lives. For VanDommelen, this reinforced the importance of understanding the person behind the procedure. In summer 2026, VanDommelen carried that perspective into an entirely different setting: Lambeau Field, home of the Green Bay Packers, in Northeast Wisconsin.



NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Left to right: Michael Ryan, MD, and Ava VanDommelen on the sidelines at Ray Nitschke Field, near Lambeau Field, for a Packers' weekend practice

She is the first SMPH student to complete a clinical rotation with the Green Bay Packers through the National Football League (NFL) Sports Medicine Pipeline Program.

The rotation was available through an application process for students who are interested in orthopedic surgery, pediatrics, emergency medicine, and physical medicine and rehabilitation. SMPH faculty members recommended their top candidates, and the NFL Physician Society made its final selection.

"Ava had a great balance of academic excellence and career goals that aligned with what this rotation offered," notes Sam Lubner, MD '03 (PG '10), SMPH assistant dean for students in the Doctor of Medicine Program's Office of Student Services.

Packers Head Team Physician Michael Ryan, MD – an orthopedic surgeon with Emplify Health in Green Bay – served as a preceptor for VanDommelen. She spent her mornings in the Lambeau Field training room, where players could stop by as needed for evaluation. In the afternoons, at Ryan's community clinic, VanDommelen evaluated athletes ahead of their visits with him, and they both participated in physical therapy rounds. Further, when surgeries were necessary, VanDommelen assisted Ryan in the hospital operating room.

Weekends brought another perspective, with VanDommelen attending team practices and observing the care of players.

A lifelong Packers fan, VanDommelen says she was honored by this opportunity.

"It was such a privilege to connect my passion for movement as a form of medicine to these athletes who are doing this as their job," she reflects. "I have so much respect for how much time and effort they put in and the sacrifices they make."

One specific encounter reminded her that even at the highest level of professional sports, caring for athletes means caring for people.

Just before final roster cuts, a player came into the training room because his knee didn't feel right. The imaging results brought difficult news. VanDommelen remembers Ryan telling the player, "Hey, I know this is devastating for you, but we're on the same page. We want to see you get better."

That interaction stayed with VanDommelen.

"I think about the pressures surrounding a situation like that," she says. "You want to have a season full of wins, but I learned about advocating for the person in front of me. It's not just their career. It's the rest of their life."

The rotation also gave VanDommelen something she hadn't expected: greater confidence in finding her place in orthopedic surgery. As she moved into her next rotation at Duke University, she says she took with her newfound self-assurance in showing up as a woman in male-dominated spaces — something modeled by her mentor, Jacquelyn Dunahoe, MD, assistant professor, SMPH Department of Orthopedics and Rehabilitation, and orthopedic surgeon, UW Health, Madison.

"So many people have treated me with kindness, made me feel like I belonged there and that my hard work got me there. That reinforced my ability to do hard things and to do things in areas where maybe women haven't been seen before," says VanDommelen.

And this gave her a new understanding that simply occupying those spaces can help others.

"That's something I will carry with me, that I can help be a trailblazer for the people who follow after me," she reflects.

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE



Left to right: Ava VanDommelen and Michael Ryan, MD, at Lambeau Field

I FEEL CALLED TO BE HIS VOICE *continued from page 25*

photos in a trunk, in the back of the attic, providing testimony of their father's wartime experiences.

This discovery led to a cascade of emotions and insights that changed the way Clarice Wilsey viewed her father, her upbringing, the world, and her own calling.

Today, she appreciates the letters as a cautionary tale. David Wilsey wanted the realities of the Holocaust, imprisonment, totalitarianism, war, and annihilation to never be forgotten, to be a reminder that humans are capable of great harm. But he was never able to describe this to his children or the public, leaving Clarice Wilsey with the mission to do so.

Clarice Wilsey and her siblings worked with archivists at the University of Washington to digitize David Wilsey's letters and photographs. Unfortunately, Emily Wilsey's letters to her husband did not survive his time in the military.

The family donated David Wilsey's original letters and photographs to the Holocaust Center for Humanity in Seattle, Washington, which houses "The Wilsey Collection."

Further, with Bob Welch, Clarice Wilsey co-authored a book, *Letters from Dachau*, in 2020. She also speaks, for free, to any interested group — she welcomes invitations **(lettersfromdachau@gmail.com)**.

In one of her presentations about her beloved father, Clarice Wilsey stated, "There are five components to this story: mystery, surprise, secrecy, atrocities, and hope."

She says her hope is to help those who carry similar foundational stories. Those stories of resilience and trauma may have value for another generation that may also wrestle with a world compromised by individuals who are capable of malice and destruction.

Above all, she and others thank David Wilsey for his service and hope he rests in peace.

Bernhardt Named the 2026 Andy Hipskind Distinguished Big Ten Team Physician



David Bernhardt, MD '89 (PG '92), has been named the recipient of the 2026 Andy Hipskind Distinguished Big Ten Team Physician Award – a prestigious honor established to recognize excellence, leadership, and service to student-athletes across the conference.

A professor in the Department of Pediatrics' Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, Bernhardt has served for 32 years as a UW–Madison team physician, educator, and leader, guided by the unwavering belief that the athlete always comes first.

Since joining Wisconsin Athletics in 1994, Bernhardt has earned the trust of student-athletes, families, coaches, and administrators through his calm clinical judgment, thoughtful communication, and exceptional humanity. Beyond his direct care across numerous sports, Bernhardt has shaped the next generation of sports medicine professionals through his role as co-director of the Wisconsin Primary Care Sports Medicine Fellowship. Following his retirement in June 2026, his legacy continues to live on in the countless student-athletes he protected, the professionals he mentored, and the standards he helped set for collegiate athletic medicine.

Reeder Receives the International Society for Magnetic Resonance in Medicine's Gold Medal



Scott Reeder, MD, PhD, accepted the International Society for Magnetic Resonance in Medicine's (ISMRM) Gold Medal in May 2026 during the organization's annual meeting in South Africa. He is the chair of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health's Department of Radiology.

The first recipient from UW–Madison, Reeder received the honor for his contributions to the development and clinical translation of advanced magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) technologies focused on some of the most important health challenges facing humanity.

Reeder has championed advancements in MRI, particularly through the Liver Imaging Research Program and his National Institutes of Health-funded research applying MRI to improve detection and quantification of diseases affecting the abdomen. His interests include quantification of liver fat, liver iron overload, and other features of diffuse liver disease, as well as related quantitative strategies.

Actively involved in national and international societies, Reeder was the ISMRM president from 2022-2023. Bringing together the global community of 8,000 physicians, scientists, and engineers has always been a priority for him as demonstrated by his past service on the ISMRM Board of Trustees.

Scerpella Honored for Excellence by the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine



Tamara Scerpella, MD (PG '90), received the 2026 Orthopedic Surgeon Excellence Award from the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine. This national honor recognizes an orthopedic surgeon who exemplifies collaboration, exceptional patient care, mutual respect, camaraderie, and passion for helping athletes and active individuals of all ages.

Scerpella is the A.A. McBeath Distinguished Professor and Chair, Department of Orthopedics and Rehabilitation, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. She draws on more than 30 years of experience in the medical field to oversee and guide the educational, research, and clinical missions of the vibrant, experienced, and nationally recognized department faculty. She emphasizes exceptional patient care and excellence in medical student, residency, and fellowship training, while advancing the department's research footprint.

A nationally renowned orthopedic surgeon, mentor, and researcher, Scerpella has received multiple honors in these areas. She also has served for many years as team physician for the UW Badger Women's Hockey and Softball teams.

Shah Receives a Society for Academic Emergency Medicine Award for His Research Excellence



Manish N. Shah, MD, MPH, received the 2026 Society for Academic Emergency Medicine (SAEM) Excellence in Research Award, the foremost national honor for research achievement in this field. This award recognizes Shah's sustained contributions to training and mentoring future researchers and improving emergency care for older adults and people living with dementia.

In the United States, older adults and people with dementia visit emergency departments at exceedingly high rates. Yet, according to Shah, emergency care systems often are not designed around the complex needs of these patients and their care partners — particularly after discharge.

Shah is a professor and the chair of the BerbeeWalsh Department of Emergency Medicine at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. His research has built evidence for care-transition models that connect the emergency department with emergency medical services, public health, and community-based support for older adults after an acute health event. He has carried that work into major National Institute on Aging-funded research at the school.

Kind Leading Study with Second Round of $30.9 Million in Federal Funding



A large, nationwide study led by Amy Kind, MD '01, PhD '11 (PG '05, '07), at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) has been awarded a second round of funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to continue exploring the relationship between Alzheimer's disease, environmental factors, and lifetime experiences.

The Neighborhoods Study was selected for a $30.9 million funding award, making it the third largest NIH grant now held by UW–Madison.

The study, initiated in 2021, involves 24 research institutions across the country that collaborate to explore the relationship between social and environmental factors such as poverty, education, housing, employment, and toxins (social exposome) and Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD). The study is the largest in the world to connect the social exposome with brain tissues and their disease biomarkers.

"The study's renewal will allow us to deepen our understanding of the relationship between ADRD and lifelong exposure to factors such as lead-laced infrastructure, occupational toxins, and exposure to heavy metals," says Kind, professor of medicine and associate dean for social health sciences and programs, SMPH.

Audhya Leads SMPH Project Funded by Significant, Strategic Gift from WARF



The Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation's (WARF) $27 million investment in August 2026 will fund cutting-edge, interdisciplinary research spanning multiple University of Wisconsin–Madison schools and colleges.

At the UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH), this investment will support a multidisciplinary initiative focused on advancing the clinical application of next-generation, neuropsychiatric therapeutics. Anjon Audhya, PhD, SMPH vice dean for research and professor of biomolecular chemistry, is administratively leading that effort, which brings together experts in neuroscience, psychiatry, pharmacy, sleep medicine, neurophysiology, and clinical research.

"With WARF's support, we can accelerate discovery, strengthen our leadership, attract new partnerships, and expand the impact of UW–Madison research for Wisconsin and beyond … ," says Dorota Brzezińska, PhD, vice chancellor for research.

In a separate honor, Audhya was named a UW–Madison Vilas Research Professor in May 2026. Supported by the estate of William F. Vilas (1840-1908), these professorships are granted to faculty members with proven research ability and unusual qualifications and promise.

Middleton Society

MEMBERS' ENGAGEMENT MAKES A MEANINGFUL DIFFERENCE FOR THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY AND FOR PATIENTS



SIRTAJ GREWAL/MEDIA SOLUTIONS (3)





Top row (left to right): Janet Legare, MD '97, and Elly Ranum, MD '20. Bottom row: M2 Greer Wittenberg shares her Shapiro research with Mary Schroth, MD '86, and Gary Tritz; Richard Welnick, MD '73 (PG '76), Barbara Sheehy, Gregory Sheehy, MD '73 (PG '77), Anna Shen, PhD '80, Katherine Welnick, Sheila Cohen, Marcus Cohen, MD '62 (PG '66), and Kokpeng Yu.

by Kris Whitman

Since its founding in 1989, the Middleton Society has recognized alumni and friends whose extraordinary generosity advances the missions of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH). In celebration of that commitment and impact, the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) and SMPH co-hosted the annual Middleton Society Donor Appreciation Dinner on September 18, 2026.

"Our WMAA founded the Middleton Society with just a small handful of loyal alumni and donors. Yet through the power of community, that seed they planted continues to grow today," SMPH Dean Nita Ahuja, MD, MBA, said to more than 220 attendees from a dozen states.

Ahuja added, "The word 'philanthropy' comes to us from Greek, with a literal translation being 'love of humanity.' And that is what I see as I look around this room: people who care about their fellow human beings and are committed to giving back."

Society members support the dreams and discoveries of SMPH faculty, students, and staff. They help change lives through service to patients and communities, innovative research, and outstanding education.

Keynote speaker Pallavi Tiwari, PhD – Vilas Distinguished Achievement Professor, SMPH Departments of Radiology and Medical Physics, and UW College of Engineering Department of Biomedical Engineering – shared examples of relevant innovations. She has published widely about artificial intelligence (AI), medical imaging, and techniques to make treatments more precise. She leads the UW–Madison AI in Healthcare initiative, co-directs UW Carbone Cancer Center's Imaging and Radiation Science, and directs an SMPH lab that focuses on using responsible AI to help physicians better diagnose diseases, predict outcomes, and personalize treatment for patients with cancer and neurological disorders.

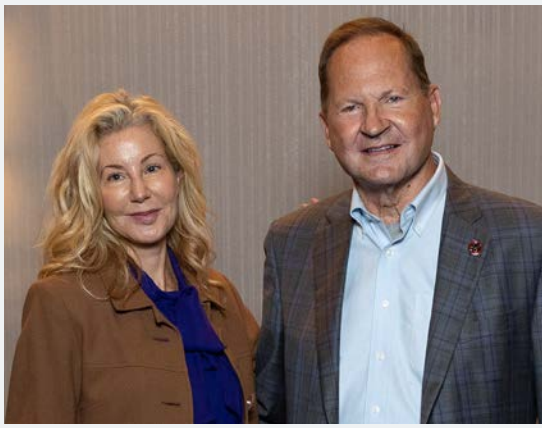


Pallavi Tiwari, PhD

About patients who get cancer, Tiwari said, "Difficult diagnoses,







SIRTAJ GREWAL/MEDIA SOLUTIONS 5)

Top row (left to right): Mary Baird, Sandra Damiani, MD '88, Kay Gruling, MD '88 (PG '91), and Tim Butke; Sanjay Asthana, MD, Susan Asthana, Dan Hathaway, MD '69, and Dean Nita Ahuja, MD, MBA. Bottom row: Lily Johnson, Julie Jagemann, MD '80, Kathryn Vander Molen, Mary Ann Johnson, and Nancy Cawley; Beth Schrader and Charles Schrader; Jill Tanger and Gary Gerstner, MD '76.

conflicting opinions, financial toxicity, and emotional turmoil — these are challenges that patients and their families have to navigate. There's always a risk of over-treatment and under-treatment. … Patients are left to make life-altering decisions based on best guesses and probabilities. Should they undergo a risky, expensive surgery to remove a tumor that very well might be benign? Should they spend their life savings on something that may or may not work? Nobody should have to make these impossible choices."

In contrast, Tiwari described a future in which medical professionals can personalize treatment for each patient based on their family history, disease-risk profile, and environmental exposures, substantially reducing over- and under-treatment.

"We train our models from datasets with known outcomes and predictions. And we feed them into mathematical AI models that can be applied to MRI or CT scans and biopies that we analyze to understand the tumor microenvironment and components that may not be visually appreciable," Tiwari said.

She and her team, which collaborates with multiple U.S. and international institutions, are seeing real-world impacts at UW Health. In the Department of Radiology, Tiwari and colleagues work alongside top industry leaders and have deployed large models that can automatically draft chest X-ray reports in real time. Similarly, the department's new Center for High Value Imaging focuses on clinical translation of AI. This group is working on automated, patient-centered scheduling, vastly improving access.

Ahuja concluded the Middleton Society Donor Appreciation Dinner by telling members and guests, "Your engagement is making a real difference in the lives of our students, faculty, and patients. Thank you!"

Become part of the story in support of these goals — join the Middleton Society! Visit supportuw.org/middleton or scan this QR code.

Faculty Investiture Celebration

SCHOOL HONORS DONORS AND FACULTY MEMBERS



University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health faculty members at the Faculty Investiture Celebration in June 2026

University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health leaders honored 16 faculty members in June 2026 with donor-supported, endowed positions — the highest honor the school can bestow. The Faculty Investiture Celebration, held at the Health Sciences Learning Center, recognized those who created the endowed professorships, chairs, and fellowships and the faculty members who received them.

At the event, a chair, director, or other representative talked about each faculty member's accomplishments and the donor behind the endowed position.

"This gathering is a meaningful time to celebrate our talented faculty and thank the generous supporters who make their work possible," noted Dean Nita Ahuja, MD, MBA. "Our faculty power innovation through their ceaseless commitment to science and medicine. In academic medicine, faculty provide cutting-edge care, conduct leading research, and teach and mentor the next generation."

Ahuja — who was among the honorees — continued, "Our incredible supporters give to champion faculty excellence, unlocking discoveries that advance the health of all — not a specific individual, but humanity. Philanthropy is the catalyst for ideas that change the world. It nurtures the seeds of innovation and feeds the spark of discovery."

To learn more about supporting faculty excellence, please contact Jill Watson, Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association, at **jill.watson@supportuw.org** or **(608) 262-4632**.

2026 HONOREES *(alphabetically by recipient's last name)*

Robert Turell Distinguished Chair in Medical Leadership
Nita Ahuja, MD, MBA, dean, UW School of Medicine and Public Health

Flesch Family Faculty Fellowship in Kidney Transplant Research
Fahad Aziz, MD, MBA (PG '17), associate professor, Department of Medicine

Morgridge Distinguished Chair in Health Services Research *
Courtney Balentine, MD, MPH (PG '16), associate professor, Department of Surgery

Yehle Family Professorship in IBD Research
Freddy Caldera, DO, PhD '24, MS '18, professor, Department of Medicine

Bamforth Research Distinguished Chair in Anesthesiology
Zachary Campbell, PhD, associate professor, Department of Anesthesiology

Dr. Frederic E. Mohs Skin Cancer Leadership and Innovation Faculty Fellowship
Jeanette Comstock, MD '19 (PG '23), assistant professor, Department of Dermatology

Glaxo Wellcome Chair for the Study of Tobacco Dependence
Jessica Cook, PhD, professor, Department of Medicine

Robert and Nancy Bruce Professorship in Regenerative and Stem Cell Biology
F. Jeffrey Dilworth, PhD, professor, Department of Cell and Regenerative Biology

Layton F. Rikkers, MD, Surgical Leadership Endowed Professorship
Luke Funk, MD, MPH, professor, Department of Surgery

John and Tashia Morgridge Chair of Emergency Medicine Research *
Andrea Gilmore-Bykovskyi, PhD '14, RN (PG '16), associate professor, Department of Emergency Medicine

C. Joseph Anderson MD Family Professorship *
Anna Momont, MD '07, associate professor, Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences

Retina Research Foundation Edwin and Dorothy Gamewell Professorship
Ari Rosenberg, PhD, professor, Department of Neuroscience

Susan Nicholas Fasciano Family Foundation Professorship in Inflammatory Skin Diseases
Bridget Shields, MD (PG '19), associate professor, Department of Dermatology

K. Craig Kent, MD, Surgery Chair in Strategic Leadership
John Stulak, MD, professor, Department of Surgery

Flesch Family Professorship in Cardiovascular Medicine
Veli Topkara, MD, MSc, associate professor, Department of Medicine

Stephen Y. Nakada Professorship in Leadership and Mentorship
Daniel H. Williams, IV, MD, professor, Department of Urology

** Matching gift support was provided through the generosity of John and Tashia Morgridge.*

LEADING THE FUTURE OF MEDICINE *continued from page 7*

officer for the AMA, a role in which she conducted policy review and helped connect with medical students across the country.

"I am familiar with the issues students care about, like affordability and public health, and I feel like I can do students proud by bringing that to the board," she reflects. "This helped me realize that I value advocacy work."

As a student, Ruprecht has participated in SMPH Paths of Distinction in research and public health. Her faculty mentors include Tosha Wetterneck, MD, MS '08 (PG '98), professor, Department of Medicine, who is involved in the Wisconsin Medical Society and encouraged Ruprecht to run for national leadership, and Jade A. Anderson, MD (PG '23), assistant professor, Department of Radiology, who helped her get involved with the American College of Radiology (ACR).

Ruprecht has conducted research on the practical implementation of new radiology sequences. As she plans to finish medical school in May 2027, she has applied to diagnostic radiology residencies and anticipates joining the ACR to continue her advocacy.

"Patients face many barriers for access to care and cost of care, and I wish we could streamline the system to make it easier for patients and physicians," she says.

A Bright Future for Student Leaders

These and other student leaders want to improve patients' lives through national leadership, public health advocacy, and research.

"I hope to stay involved with national leadership," says Vrba. "It is a powerful way to help create positive change, so the system overall gets better for people."

With similar goals, Ruprecht hopes to continue using her expertise in public health to inform health policy.

"I am passionate about public and community health – vaccines, preventive health, global health, public safety, and nutrition – things we can do proactively to help people," says Ruprecht.

Chatterjee's vision includes promoting a broader, less stigmatizing view of psychiatric disorders and mental illnesses so these are understood as being the same as other health conditions, such as cancer.

She notes, "I want to contribute to OCD and neuropsychiatric research however I can, to improve people's lives."

Knoll shares the students' enthusiasm and believes strongly in the potential of these student leaders. She says, "They give me so much hope for our future."

Investigators Identify New Target for Reducing Alzheimer's Risk

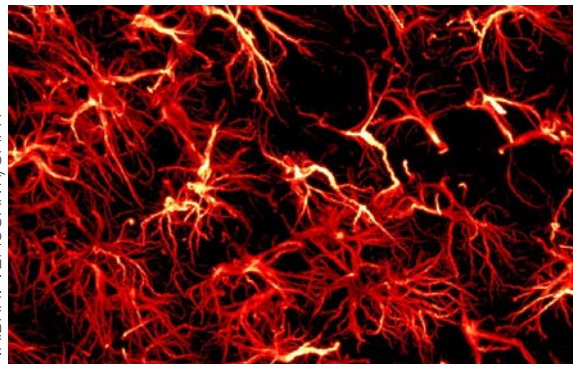
A bacteria-produced compound in most people's digestive tract – imidazole propionate (ImP) – increases the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease (AD) and speeds up cognitive decline in dementia patients, making it a target for a treatment that could reduce Alzheimer's risk, according to a new University of Wisconsin–Madison study published in *Nature Communications*.

A decade ago, researchers led by Barbara Bendlin, PhD, and Federico Rey, PhD, discovered that the microbes in AD patients' intestines differ from those of healthy people.

"We've been trying to figure out how this difference perhaps leads to changes in the brain," says Bendlin, professor, Department of Medicine, UW School of Medicine and Public Health.

ImP has been implicated in Type 2 diabetes and coronary artery disease. With collaborators from the University of California, Los Angeles, and University of Gothenburg, the researchers determined that ImP plays an important role in brain changes that result in AD and cases of dementia. They showed, in mice, that when ImP reaches the brain, it increases build-up of beta-amyloid and tau proteins.

"That process eventually results in the death of neurons, and in humans, it is a key feature of Alzheimer's disease," says Rey, professor of bacteriology, UW–Madison.



VAIBHAV VEMUGANTI/SMPH

Through blood tests, the team found that people with high ImP levels were far more likely to show markers of dementia-related protein and neuron dysfunction. More research is needed to determine ways to implement effective and actionable changes that could reduce the risks.

Researchers Find Promising Target for Drug-Resistant Fungal Infections

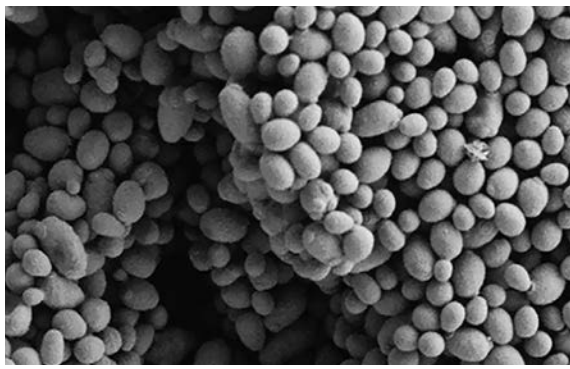
A multidisciplinary team of University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health researchers identified a promising, new therapeutic candidate against *Candida auris*, a fungal pathogen that alarms health officials worldwide because of its ability to resist multiple antifungal drugs and spread rapidly through hospitals and care facilities. Among the three major classes of antifungal drugs, certain strains of *Candida auris* are resistant to all of them.

"It's a global public health threat," says Jeniel Nett, MD '03, PhD '09 (PG '06, '13), professor, Departments of Medicine and Medical Microbiology and Immunology.

With National Institutes of Health funding, she led a team that closely studied the yeast in search of any weaknesses that could be exploited to fight it.

Between 30 to 60 percent of patients who develop a *Candida auris* infection die, usually due to sepsis after the fungus enters their body and bloodstream. Most *Candida auris* infections respond to an intravenous medication, but even that is showing signs of vulnerability.

Nett and her colleagues sought to find a way to short-circuit the skin colonization process. They identified potassium as essential to the growth of the fungus. Further, they discovered that elimination of a single potassium-transport gene was enough to stop *Candida auris* from growing and colonizing on skin and other surfaces.



Having reported this study in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, the team is now investigating strategies to target potassium uptake to treat skin colonization.

Team Engineers Cancer-Eating Immune Cells to Attack Solid Tumors

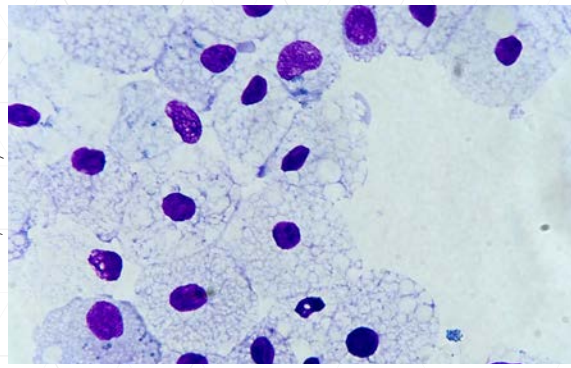
Macrophages seem like ideal weapons to attack cancer because they surround tumors and exist to digest cellular waste, infection, and damaged and dead cells.

Unfortunately, macrophages within solid tumors can promote growth of tumors, including ovarian cancer and neuroblastoma. This is because cancer cells can protect themselves from macrophages by displaying a "don't eat me" signal that tells macrophages not to attack or destroy tumor cells.

A research team at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health combined stem cell and genetic engineering technologies to create macrophages lacking the "don't eat me" receptor, allowing them to attack tumors and continue ingesting cancer cells after the natural macrophages were exhausted, according to Igor Slukvin, MD, PhD, professor of pathology and laboratory medicine.

"This work shows that removing the 'don't eat me' brake makes macrophages better not only at recognizing and destroying cancer cells but also at staying active even after repeated encounters with tumors," he said. "Using induced pluripotent stem cells to produce these macrophages provides a renewable platform for developing new treatments for solid tumors."

Portia Smith, PhD '24, led the research, published in *Molecular Therapy: Oncology*, when she was a graduate student in Slukvin's laboratory; she is now a postdoctoral researcher



PORTIA SMITH, PHD '24/SMPH

in the laboratory of Christian Capitini, MD, director, UW Carbone Cancer Center.

"We have a promising approach that works well in the lab, but more research is needed to improve its effectiveness and determine whether it can be safely advanced to patients," says Smith.

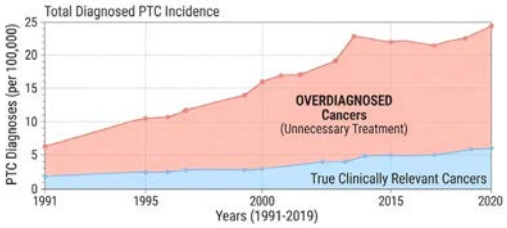
Study Shows that Overdiagnosis of Thyroid Cancer Remains High

Most U.S. cases of papillary thyroid cancer, the most common type, may have been overdiagnosed during the past three decades, meaning they were detected and treated surgically without improving population rates of death due to the cancer, according to a recent study at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH).

Previous studies had shown that this type of thyroid cancer is relatively common and usually does not progress. Using autopsy studies, other researchers have shown that approximately 10 percent of adults have small papillary thyroid cancer nodules at end of life that did not contribute to their death.

The SMPH study analyzed national data and estimated that 72 to 94 percent of papillary thyroid cancers detected from 1991 to 2019 were likely overdiagnosed. Researchers say the increase is largely tied to the widespread use of imaging, particularly ultrasound, which can detect small, slow-growing cancers that are unlikely to cause harm, according to Louise Davies, MD, MS, and David Francis, MD, MS, professors, Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery, SMPH, and Oguz Alagoz, PhD, professor, Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering.

"Even when we account for a potential, true increase in the underlying rates of thyroid cancer, the majority of thyroid cancers diagnosed and treated



over the past 30 years represent overdiagnosis, which can lead to unnecessary surgery or other interventions, with side effects of needing lifelong thyroid hormone therapy, as well as avoidable psychological and financial harm," notes Davies.

Published in *JAMA Network Open*, findings suggest that more selective use of thyroid ultrasound could significantly reduce unnecessary diagnoses and treatments without increasing the risk of death.

Investing in the Future of Excellent Doctors, Lawyers, and Healthy Communities

by Richard J. Boxer, MD '73

The University of Wisconsin Medical School (now UW School of Medicine and Public Health) did not have to admit and invest in me in 1969 – nor UW–Madison in my wife, Barbara Kahn Boxer, in the undergraduate and master's programs that led to her becoming an attorney in 1993. But decades later, we had to invest in the university. If our education had not given us opportunities to care and provide counsel for thousands of Wisconsinites, our family members' lives would have been totally different.

In 2004, when the UW School of Medicine and Public Health built a new campus, the Health Sciences Learning Center (HSLC), our family funded the Boxer Family Passageway that connects the HSLC, bookstore, research buildings, and Clinical Science Center, which includes University Hospital and UW Health clinics. This was a perfect reflection of our passage from undergrad to medical and law students, then on to physician and lawyer, and philanthropists. Soon, we will fund scholarships for law students who are single mothers and do not have the advantages that Barbara had.

All of our family's philanthropic efforts reflect deep-seated roots in history, faith, appreciation, and a desire to improve the world. We have been so fortunate and feel an obligation to share that with others. But for all the gifts and advocacy we have given, we receive far more. Our affiliation with UW–Madison has been and will continue to be a defining part of our lives.

Medicine and the legal profession have long been grounded in a commitment to serve others. And many of the world's religious and philosophical traditions emphasize generosity, compassion, and caring for others. These are the foundations of our giving.

Barbara and I have decided, through estate planning, that we want to continue funding the Boxer Family Passageway and contributing to UW Law School scholarships, with the goal of enhancing the lives of future doctors and lawyers. Although we will no longer be able to "jump around" and sing "Varsity" at football games, our spirits will remain with UW–Madison.

When grateful patients or clients, friends, alumni, or colleagues want to express their gratitude to us, we suggest contributing to funds we have created at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health and/or UW Law School, with assistance from the amazing staff of the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association. The gifts achieve multiple purposes: contributors receive the satisfaction of giving a tax-deductible donation while showing appreciation to us and benefiting the school community.

We encourage readers to find an area of UW–Madison that lights them up with hope and possibility – whether that is education, research, faculty support, or facilities – and invest through lifetime and/or estate gifts. This serves as an example for their families and friends of what appreciation feels like. A gift that keeps on giving has enormous spiritual value. It speaks to the values of the philanthropist.



Barbara Kahn Boxer, BS '72, MS '74, JD, and Richard J. Boxer, MD '73

ABOUT THE BOXERS

Richard J. Boxer, MD '73, is a clinical professor of urology at the David Geffen School of Medicine, University of California, Los Angeles. He received the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association's Medical Alumni Citation Award in 2021. Nationally, he was twice a finalist for U.S. Surgeon General and two-time presidential appointee to the National Cancer Advisory Board. He also served on the board of the American Society of Clinical Oncology's Conquer Cancer Foundation.

Barbara Kahn Boxer, BS '72, MS '74, JD, practiced law and was a political commentator in Wisconsin. She emphasizes the importance of civil discourse, disciplined thinking, and listening to opinions on all sides of the political spectrum.



TODD BROWN/MEDIA SOLUTIONS

I Know YOU

... Or do I?

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

Hint about photo above:

He cares deeply about environmental and occupational public health.

About last issue's photo:

Douglas L. Smith, MD (PG '82), won the drawing and will receive a gift from the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association!



MEDIA SOLUTIONS

In the last issue of *Quarterly*, seven people identified Cynthia (Cindy) Haq, MD (PG '87).

She earned her medical degree from the Indiana University School of Medicine and completed a residency in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health (DFMCH), University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH).

Haq "believes everyone should have access to health care and the basic requirements to live healthy, productive lives." She provided family medicine for patients in rural and urban settings for more than 40 years.

She devoted nearly 30 years on the DFMCH faculty. She and colleagues established the UW Center for Global Health to catalyze education, field programs, research, and partnerships in low-resource settings.

In Milwaukee, Haq founded and directed the Training in Urban Medicine and Public Health (TRIUMPH) Program, in which SMPH medical students work with community partners, care for medically underserved urban populations, and learn to become physician leaders. A high percentage of TRIUMPH graduates select urban residencies, and more than 30 percent return to urban areas of Wisconsin to practice after their residencies or fellowships.

A Fulbright scholar, Haq designed and led medical education programs in other states and countries, including Pakistan, Uganda, and Ethiopia.

In 2018, she became the chair of the Department of Family Medicine at the University of California-Irvine; she is now a professor emerita there.

About Haq, Geoffrey R. Swain, MD, MPH, said, "My long-time, brilliant, and outstanding colleague is a remarkable collaborator, terrific role model, and excellent mentor."

Brian Frederick, MD '10 (PG '13), recalled, "She is a champion of academic and humanitarian pursuits. She spoke at our graduation and asked us – I am paraphrasing here – 'Why should a patient have to choose between a kind physician or a smart physician when they ought to have both.'"

PLEASE SHARE YOUR NEWS!

Please send information about your honors, appointments, career advancements, publications, volunteer work, and other activities. We will include your news in *Quarterly* as space allows. Please include names, dates, and locations. Photos are encouraged.

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