

Quarterly

WISCONSIN

PARTNERSHIP

PROGRAM

20 YEARS OF SUPPORT FOR
EDUCATION, COMMUNITY
SERVICE, AND RESEARCH p. 4

MD GRADUATION p. 8

20,000TH ORGAN
TRANSPLANTED p. 10

Dr. Sebranek
PHYSICIAN



School of Medicine
and Public Health
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



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QUARTERLY

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

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CALENDAR

August 2024

FRIDAY, AUGUST 23

White Coat Ceremony

Memorial Union and livestream

September 2024

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

Middleton Society Dinner

Concourse Hotel

October 2024

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25-26

Fall WMAA Board of Directors Meeting, MD Class Reunions for the Classes of 1984, '89, '94, '99, 2004, '09, '14, and '19, and Homecoming Activities
See wmaa.med.wisc.edu/homecoming-weekend/

November 2024

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19

Alternative Careers in Medicine Panel
Zoom; 5:30-6:30 pm CST

January 2025

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16

Operation Education
Health Sciences Learning Center

March 2025

TUESDAY, MARCH 4

Alternative Careers in Medicine Panel
Zoom; 5:30-6:30 pm CST

FRIDAY, MARCH 21

Match Day

Health Sciences Learning Center and livestream

To register, visit wmaa.med.wisc.edu/events/

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



Known to spread cheerful vibes, tulips are a sure sign of spring and early summer on the University of Wisconsin–Madison campus.

CONTENTS

4



WISCONSIN PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The school community is celebrating 20 years of support for education, community service, and research made possible by this program's grants.

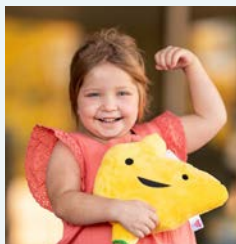
8



MD GRADUATION

As members of the MD Class of 2024 celebrate, their commitment to healthy people and communities unites these physicians.

10



20,000 ORGANS

Building on more than 55 years of evolving expertise, transplantation faculty and staff achieve a life-saving milestone.

ON THE COVER

Jenna Sebranek, MD '13, practices at Elroy Family Medical Center and Mile Bluff Medical Center in central Wisconsin. She earned her medical degree in the UW School of Medicine and Public Health's Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine; the program – which trains medical students who are committed to improving health in rural communities – received initial funding from the Wisconsin Partnership Program.

-
- 14 Alumni Notebook
 - 20 Alumni Profile
 - 25 Goodbye Dear Friends
 - 27 Awards
 - 32 Impactful Giving
 - 34 Spotlight
 - 38 Research Advances
 - 40 Perspectives
-



ROBERT N. GOLDEN, MD

Dean, University of Wisconsin
School of Medicine and
Public Health
Vice chancellor for medical affairs,
UW-Madison

Twenty years ago, an extraordinary gift catalyzed the creation of the Wisconsin Partnership Program.

The program was made possible by the conversion of Blue Cross & Blue Shield United of Wisconsin from a non-profit to a for-profit corporation, with proceeds donated equally to Wisconsin's two medical schools. At the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH), we have used this incredible endowment to support innovative research and educational programs, as well as grants to community organizations throughout the state, all with the aim of advancing the health of people and populations in Wisconsin.

This issue of *Quarterly* also highlights the 20,000th organ transplanted by our faculty physicians. We describe the history of advancements in this field by pioneering faculty members, who propelled the UW Health Transplant Center into one of the nation's premier programs – the first and only program in the Midwest to surpass the 20,000-organ-transplant mark. We thank the organ donors and their families, true heroes who have given the gift of life.

In late spring and early summer, we honored outstanding members of our school community. These include the 35 fourth-year medical students, five SMPH faculty members, and seven UW Health residents and fellows who were inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha national honor medical society. We also celebrated the graduation of 172 MD students. We are certain each of these new Badger physicians will make a profound difference as they advance the health of their patients and communities over the course of their careers.

On Medical Alumni Day in June, the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) hosted reunions for the Classes of 1959, '64, '69, '74, and '79, and the Half-Century Society for those who earned medical degrees more than 50 years ago. Classmates were excited to reminisce about their time at the SMPH and catch up on each other's life events.

At the spring WMAA Awards Banquet, WMAA and SMPH leaders honored several alumni and faculty members for exceptional contributions to the school, its students, and their fields of practice. Earlier this year, the association also presented the WMAA Teaching Awards; and at our school's annual Medical Education Day in late May, we presented Dean's Teaching Awards and the Dean's Award for Excellence in Medical Student Research Mentorship. All our award recipients have fostered the development of the next generation of clinicians and academicians and moved the field of medicine forward.

We observed the passing of the baton from WMAA President Kyla Lee, MD '98, FACP, to the association's new president, Peggy Scallon, MD '92 (PG '97). We thank these dedicated alumni for their longstanding support of the WMAA and our school's missions.

The Impactful Giving section shares shining examples of ways our school's alumni, faculty, and staff support future physicians. The annual Scholarship Reception featured talks by UW-Madison Assistant Vice Provost Emerita Gloria Hawkins, PhD – a beloved former leader at our school, who described why she donates to scholarship funds – and by two graduating medical students, who are grateful for the scholarships they have received from altruistic donors. Lee Tyne, MD '67, and Margaret "Marge" Tyne share the reasons why they created a scholarship for medical students with financial need. Their fund's inaugural recipient, Janmesh Patel, describes how this gift is helping him pursue his dreams.

As we enjoy the height of summer in Madison, we encourage you to consider a visit to your alma mater. This is a prime season for paddling on our beautiful lakes, strolling around a farmer's market, or catching a sunset from Picnic Point. We would love to give you a tour of the myriad places and programs associated with *your* school of medicine and public health.

Acts of service have been described as “love in action.” I have seen how a commitment to compassionate bedside care, transformational research, heartfelt public service, impactful teaching, and inclusive leadership make alumni and friends of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) love this organization. In this spirit, I have found it to be a privilege to engage with our alumni and medical students during my two years as president of the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA). I am grateful for the “love in action” I have witnessed, including through my role as director of the SMPH ForWard Curriculum’s Acute Care Block at the Emplify-Gundersen Health System/ Western Academic Campus.

Working with Dean Robert N. Golden, MD, has been a great honor. He is highly regarded for his relentless sense of justice that upholds our school’s mission. He has done an incredible job recruiting SMPH faculty members and WMAA leaders; strengthening transformative research; and bolstering educational programs aimed at meeting the needs of today’s learners, employers, and patient populations. As an example, fairly recently, the SMPH launched the LGBTQ+ Health Fellowship to help address disparities often experienced by people who identify as LGBTQ+. On the school’s Medical Education Day in late May, keynote speaker Markus Brauer, PhD, described how powerful a sense of belonging can be in terms of achievement and success for all learners.

In April, the WMAA hosted the annual WMAA Awards Banquet. We saw how the WMAA Awards Committee, led by John Kryger, MD ’92 (PG ’97), again selected an amazing cohort of award winners from across our nation. Among the awardees was a member of the association’s board of directors, Tito Izard, MD ’96 (PG ’99). See pages 29 and 30 for details about award recipients.

I have enjoyed participating in rites of passage for our medical students, including the MD Class of 2024’s graduation in May. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these individuals started off attending virtual classes and mastered the art of virtual residency interviews. We are thrilled that nearly 40 percent of these graduates are staying in Wisconsin for their residencies.

In this farewell message, I want to recognize many people who have helped guide me along the way. For instance, many wise past presidents and board members shared perspectives that have changed my thinking and moved us ahead.

I share another huge thank you to the dedicated WMAA staff: Andrea Larson, Maureen Brady, and Hannah Shaw. They create such a welcoming place for our medical students and alumni, including me. Also, thanks to Jill Watson and Sara Dillivan-Graves from the UW Foundation and Alumni Association for helping create meaning behind the critical financial gifts shared by generous donors. And I am in complete awe of how the WMAA is growing under the leadership of Executive Director Sarah B. Rothschild. She embodies excellence and continues to build important strategic relationships. A special thanks to Karen Peterson, WMAA executive director emerita, and Patrick McBride, MD ’80, MPH, professor emeritus, WMAA board member and past president, who recruited me to the board of directors more than 15 years ago and mentored me along the way.

Although my term as president has just ended, I will continue serving this outstanding school as a WMAA past president. And I share a big welcome to our new WMAA president, Peggy Scallon, MD ’92 (PG ’97). She brings deep insight and an inclusive nature to this role.

Thank you all for sharing your “love in action” with the SMPH and WMAA! And – as always – On, Wisconsin!



KYLA LEE, MD '98, FACP

(she/her/hers)

*Immediate past president,
Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association*

BROOKE DOVAL/EMPLIFY-GUNDERSEN HEALTH SYSTEM



At Elroy Family Medical Center – with photos of her family in the background – Jenna Sebranek, MD '13, admires a baby she delivered and meets with the parents.

Wisconsin Partnership Program

20 YEARS OF SUPPORT FOR MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION, COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND RESEARCH

Being the sole doctor in a physician-shortage, resource-limited area of central Wisconsin would not be everyone's cup of tea, but for Jenna Sebranek, MD '13, her rural practice is a dream come true.

Her days at the Elroy Family Medical Center are varied and full. She may do a well-baby checkup, perform a colposcopy, and help an elderly patient find supportive care to continue living at home. Further, she delivers babies and is chief of staff at Mile Bluff Medical Center in nearby Mauston. Located in picturesque Juneau County, Elroy is home to fewer than 1,500 people, and Mauston around 4,300.

On her 40-minute drive home via country roads, she is eager to catch up with her twins, who soon will enter first grade. Sebranek delivered nearly half of their classmates. This is the life she dreamed of when she joined the Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine (WARM), a University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) program that trains medical students who are committed to improving the health of rural communities.

"I truly believe there's no better place to practice medicine than a small town," says Sebranek. "I'm proud to be a graduate of a school that stresses public health and of the WARM program."

WARM is one of many public health and education investments supported by the Wisconsin Partnership Program (WPP) since it began making grants 20 years ago – and one of the many ways the WPP has helped the SMPH transform into the nation's first combined school of medicine and public health.

Charged with improving the health of the people of Wisconsin – in ways such as training health care providers and public health leaders; promoting research and discovery; and creating community partnerships that address health disparities and advance health equity – the WPP has awarded 636 grants totaling \$301 million since 2004. In turn, grantees have leveraged more than \$776 million in funding from other sources to sustain their projects.

SMPH Dean Robert N. Golden, MD, says, "The Wisconsin Partnership Program is the engine that drove our transformation into the nation's first school

of medicine and public health. Today and into the future, it will continue to drive the advancement of health in our state through strategic investments in research, education, and community programs."

History

The WPP's roots go back to 1999, when Blue Cross & Blue Shield United of Wisconsin announced it was converting from a non-profit to a for-profit corporation, with proceeds to be donated equally to Wisconsin's two medical schools: the UW Medical School (now the SMPH) in Madison and Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. The transfer occurred in early 2004.

"The purpose of the gift," says Thomas Hefty, retired chief executive officer of Blue Cross/Blue Shield, "was for public health, scholarship, and faculty support."

The initial Blue Cross/Blue Shield gift totaled more than \$300 million to each school and had terms that are still followed today, including that 35 percent of its grants go to community health projects and 65 percent to research and education; requirements for oversight and accountability; and the call for then-Dean

Highlights of WPP's Roots, Impact

The Wisconsin Partnership Program (WPP) represents a commitment by the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) to improve the health of people in Wisconsin now and for years to come. Entries below represent a sample of the history and impact of the WPP and programs it supports.

- **1999** Blue Cross & Blue Shield United of Wisconsin announces its conversion to a for-profit company, donating assets to the two Wisconsin medical schools; UW Medical School (now the SMPH) leaders conduct listening sessions in communities throughout the state.
- **2000** Insurance commissioner approves conversion, sets terms for the endowment's oversight and accountability, including five-year plans; the plans have been approved at that interval starting in 2003.
- **2004** Schools receive initial funds; the WPP launches under its original name: Wisconsin Partnership Fund for a Healthy Future; Eileen Smith becomes inaugural executive director; first round of 20 community grants total \$485,000.
- **2005** First six New Investigator Program faculty grants total nearly \$600,000; Master of Public Health Program enrolls first students; Survey of the Health of Wisconsin is launched; Innovations in Medical Education is created; the UW Medical School changes its name to the UW School of Medicine and Public Health.
- **2006** Population Health Service Fellowship Program's first cohort begins working in public health settings.
- **2007** First round of seven Collaborative Health Sciences Program grants total \$2.1 million; Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine enrolls its first medical students; Institute for Clinical and Translational Research receives initial WPP funding.
- **2009** Innovations in Medical Education expands to become Transformations in Medical Education and begins planning MD curriculum changes.
- **2014** Preventive Medicine Residency Program is accredited.
- **2015** Community Impact Grant Program begins; initial awards total \$4 million.
- **2016** The WPP hosts Advancing Health Equity Conference for school and statewide partners; the SMPH's transformed ForWard Curriculum is launched for medical students.
- **2020** First round of 24 COVID-19 Response Grants total \$2.9 million.
- **2021** Amy Kind, MD '01, PhD '11 (PG '05, '07), named WPP executive director; first round of eight Maternal and Infant Health Grants total \$1.2 million.
- **2023** Native American Center for Health Professions receives a \$1.2 million grant to increase the number of Indigenous students in health sciences.
- **2024** The WPP celebrates its 20th anniversary of grantmaking, with \$301 million awarded to 636 projects since 2004.

Philip M. Farrell, MD, PhD (PG '72), and Medical College of Wisconsin president Mike Bolger to jointly lead listening sessions to learn about health needs.

"We traveled the entire state, meeting with communities all the way up to Ashland on Lake Superior," Farrell recalls. "We talked about the community-academic partnership theme. This was a natural for the SMPH – our school was pursuing the Wisconsin Idea."

A pediatrician and cystic fibrosis expert and now an emeritus dean, Farrell says it was his dream to create the country's first combined school of medicine and public health; he notes, "I realized that with our excellent Department of Population Health Sciences, world-class epidemiologists, and the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene on our campus, we had a strong core to become a school of medicine and public health. Would we have been able to do it without the Blue Cross/Blue Shield money? Absolutely not."

Reflecting about hiring Eileen Smith as the first WPP director in 2004, Farrell says, "We were very fortunate to have Eileen in that leadership position."

Smith came to the school from UW Hospital and Clinics (now UW Health), where she played a significant role in the complex conversion of the hospital from a state agency into a public authority. With Tonya Mathison – who is now the WPP's administrative director – by her side, Smith pored over the insurance commissioner's directives for disbursing the Blue Cross/Blue Shield funds. They created a program from the ground up, with no models in the medical school for what they needed to do.

About the insurance commissioner's plans for creation of the Oversight and Advisory Committee (OAC), which oversees the community grants, Smith says, "We ensure that the community's voice is represented through our governance committees."

An OAC member since the beginning is Greg Nycz, chief executive officer of the Family Health Center of Marshfield, Inc. A strong advocate for rural health, Nycz – who also serves on OAC's sister committee, the WPP's Partnership Education and Research Committee (PERC), which oversees grants for

research and education – recalls that, initially, some people expressed distrust about the university conducting research in northern Wisconsin.

“I think we’ve gone a long way to allay the distrust we heard about,” Nycz says. “I think the program has done a lot more to engender pride about being from Wisconsin and having a great university. We’re getting out there with our health programs, working collaboratively with communities. We’re thinking through the impact of the work on the people of Wisconsin.”

Nimbleness

During early discussions, renowned cancer researcher Paul Carbone, MD, said the grant money should be used broadly, not for a specific medical field, Hefty recalls; he elaborates, “[Dr. Carbone said] medical science changes rapidly, and we don’t know what issues will be important in 10 or 20 years, but Blue Cross/Blue Shield has given the UW the resources and freedom to follow the science.”

The COVID-19 pandemic showed why it is critical for the WPP to be able to pivot quickly to meet a sudden health threat, says Amy Kind, MD ’01, PhD ’11 (PG ’05, ’07), WPP executive director and SMPH associate dean for social health sciences and programs.

“In March 2020, the entire world shut down,” Kind says. “Here at the WPP, we were one of the first entities to move forward to get funding out to address pandemic-related needs. We were able to allocate more than \$6 million for rapid dissemination to support research and education and to help community groups address this horrible pandemic.”

On May 1, 2020, the WPP awarded its first round of 24 COVID-19 Response Grants, totaling \$2.9 million, including grants for virus screenings in homeless shelters; support for people with food insecurity; and community health outreach programs in Hmong, Latino, American Indian, and Black communities. The WPP also funded critical research projects. A second cycle of awards followed.

“To be part of the WPP at that time seared into my soul the importance of nimbleness. When the health of the state



A community health worker with ConnectRx Wisconsin serves as a coach for a new mom; the organization provides social supports aimed at improving birth outcomes.

requires us to move quickly, we must do so,” Kind shares.

Community

Since 2004, the WPP has allocated nearly \$100 million for 363 community grants to address a wide range of complex health challenges facing Wisconsin communities. The following examples represent a small selection.

Recent grants have addressed the statewide opioid crisis, including a grant to Marinette County-based Biehl Bridges to Recovery to support recovery-friendly workplaces. The WPP also supports a collaboration between the Wisconsin Hospital Association and Randall Brown, MD, PhD ’09 (PG ’04), professor,

SMPH Department of Family Medicine and Community Health, to improve access to care for people struggling with substance-use disorders in rural Wisconsin. Brown also earned a PERC grant to prevent opioid addiction in people recovering from traumatic injury.

The WPP has been dedicated to improving outcomes for Black newborns and their mothers because Black infant mortality remains a serious health disparity in Wisconsin. A \$1 million grant supports ConnectRx Wisconsin, which provides community health workers (CHWs) and doulas to address essential perinatal and non-medical health factors and provide social support, including

–Continued on page 36

PHOTOS BY TODD BROWN/MEDIA SOLUTIONS AND SARAH B. ROTHSCHILD/WMAA

MD Graduation

A COMMITMENT TO HEALTHY PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES
UNITES THE NEW BADGER PHYSICIANS



Above, top photo: A graduate received a well-earned hug. Above, bottom row (left to right): Graduates of the Training in Urban Medicine and Public Health program showed their Badger pride; graduates of the Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine gathered at Vilas Park. Opposite page: At their MD Graduate Recognition Ceremony, members of the Class of 2024 relished the moment, received their hoods, celebrated with loved ones, and recited the Declaration of Geneva.



Members of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health MD Class of 2024 share a commitment to empathy, compassion, remarkable patient care, and innovative research.

At their MD Graduate Recognition Ceremony on May 10, 2024, Dean Robert N. Golden, MD, said, "You are a very special class. Most of you started your training here during the dark, early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. You have emerged from that fiery crucible with strong mettle, and hopefully with several lessons learned beyond what is taught through our formal curriculum."

He added, "COVID taught us about the need to continue to integrate medicine and public health, and it demonstrated the wisdom of societal investments in research, which made it possible for us to quickly develop safe, effective vaccines and treatments. ... We see this every day in other important areas, such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, and autoimmune disorders."

The faculty speaker – Maxfield Flynn, MD, PhD, assistant professor of medicine – shared, "Our training as physicians is long, and it is inevitable that we will go through trials. Yet, through some of the hardest times, I have seen you offer comfort and

support to each other. And I've seen you express incredible kindness and empathy to our patients."

Joshua Martens, MD '24, the student-selected speaker, noted, "Our graduation represents the culmination of years of tireless work and great sacrifices of time, energy, and opportunity. Moreover, we stand on the shoulders of many family members, friends, and mentors who sacrificed so much to allow us to succeed."

Of 172 MD graduates, 13 participated in the Training in Urban Medicine and Public Health program and 28 in the Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine; eight earned dual MD/PhD degrees.



Lucy Sughroue received a liver transplant at American Family Children's Hospital.

20,000 Organs

TRANSPLANT CENTER CELEBRATES A LIFE-SAVING MILESTONE

More than 55 years after surgeons performed the first kidney transplant at University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics (now University Hospital) in 1966, the UW Health Transplant Center became the first and only transplant program in the Midwest to surpass 20,000 transplanted organs, according to Dixon Kaufman, MD, PhD, FACS, medical director of the center.

"We are incredibly proud that our team's expertise has transformed the lives of thousands of people," says Kaufman, also the Ray D. Owen Professor in the Division of Transplantation, Department of Surgery, UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH).

Gary Grosklaus, who received the 20,000th organ during his kidney-pancreas transplant in February 2024, had been managing Type 2 diabetes for more than 15 years. The Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, native was surprised to learn he was a "milestone" patient.

"I want to thank everyone who cared for me and share my gratitude for my



Gary Grosklaus (left, pictured with his brother) received the 20,000th organ.

donor," says Grosklaus. "Together, they saved my life."

Kaufman comments, "Our program consistently ranks as a national leader in simultaneous kidney-pancreas transplants, making this milestone a full-circle moment."

Adds David Foley, MD (PG '03), a professor and the Folkert O. Belzer Chair of the Division of Transplantation in the SMPH Department of Surgery, "Patients have traveled to Madison from all 50 states and several countries to receive the gift of life. Our rich history, focus on patient and family care, and unending

desire to lead in research and innovation prove that our success is built on a strong framework."

Looking Back

Transplantation is one of the fastest growing fields of medicine. Just 70 years ago, two physicians in Boston performed the first successful transplant when a brother donated a kidney to his identical twin. Over the following decades, medical centers across the nation began exploring how they could build transplant programs. University Hospital was among the first few programs when William Kiskan, MD (PG '63); Fritz Bach, MD; and Richard Rieselbach, MD, launched a kidney transplant program for adults in 1966. A year later, the program performed its first pediatric kidney transplant on a 14-year-old patient, who continues to thrive and marvel at the miracle that saved her life.

Work to establish a broader offering of transplants at UW Health was led by Folkert O. Belzer, MD, former chair of the SMPH Department of Surgery, who was recruited in 1974 and tasked with creating a world-class transplant program. He built a talented team –



Nicole Knoblock (left) became UW Health's 4,000th living donor when she donated a kidney on behalf of her neighbor, Sam Zimmerman (right).

including Hans Sollinger, MD, PhD, FACS (PG '80); Munci Kalayoglu, MD; John Pirsch, MD (PG '85); Anthony D'Alessandro, MD (PG '89); and Robert Love, MD (PG '91) – to provide comprehensive care in kidney, pancreas, liver, and lung transplantation, and expand research activities.

Belzer was known internationally for developing the first kidney perfusion preservation machine. He brought in biochemist James Southard, PhD, and in 1984 they created a synthetic solution to preserve kidneys. By 1986, they expanded and improved the solution for use in livers and pancreata. Patented and marketed with the help of the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, the "UW Solution" became the gold standard for kidney preservation. The UW Transplant Program, which evolved into today's array of programs and services, established a legacy as one of the foremost organ-preservation-research laboratories in the world.

Fast forward to November 2022, when Kaufman performed UW Health's 12,000th kidney transplant, placing the program among a handful in the United States to reach that milestone. A few months later, the team celebrated the 4,000th living donor.

"Those were remarkable early years when UW physicians were continuously achieving transplant 'firsts' by inventing techniques and medications to improve

Faculty and staff in the HLA Laboratory work to ensure histocompatibility among organs and recipients.

outcomes," says Kaufman. "The passion of those who built these programs continues today, allowing us to transplant more organs and reach new milestones."

Expanding the Legacy

As the transplant program continued to enhance its national reputation, collaboration with various departments proved successful. Growth in transplant activity and organ donations; improvements in outcomes, quality, and regulatory compliance; and expansion of a partnership with the UW Health Human Leukocyte Antigen (HLA) Laboratory provided integrated delivery of high-quality, patient-centered care. Expanding on this model in 2020, leaders created the UW Health Transplant Center to administratively align care across the health system. Kaufman became the medical director, and Melissa Roberts, RN, MSN, became the senior director.

The center model unifies the efforts of 12 transplant programs at UW Health that serve adults and pediatric patients, and the HLA Laboratory, which works to ensure histocompatibility. The UW Health Transplant Center works closely with UW Organ and Tissue Donation, a highly successful recovery program.

As the UW Health Transplant Center grew, so did its need for clinical space. In 2022, the center opened the Pleasant T. Rowland Transplant Clinic, made possible through the generosity of its namesake, a local educator, entrepreneur, philanthropist, and recipient of a kidney from a living donor.

The 16,000-square-foot clinic is designed to serve the needs of living

organ donors and adult transplant patients. Using state-of-the-art technology and special touches, patients are supported throughout their journey. Displays honor living donors of kidneys and/or a portion of their livers.

"Conceptualizing, building, and opening the new clinic was a highlight of many of our careers," says Roberts. "We want this journey to be comfortable and easy to navigate for patients, families, and staff members."

Digital systems allow staff members to monitor patients as they progress through their appointments, track lab work, and assist with safe medication administration.

"We've seen a 32 percent growth in patient visit volume since the Pleasant T. Rowland Transplant Clinic opened," says Roberts. "We are thrilled to be able to provide more access to patients seeking organ transplant and living donation options."

Calling on special services at American Family Children's Hospital (AFCH), the UW Health Transplant Center built on its 55-year history of serving children in need of transplants by launching the Kids Heart Transplant and Ventricular Assist Device (VAD) Program in 2023, making this the only Wisconsin center that is certified in pediatric heart, kidney, liver, lung, and pancreas transplantation – matching UW Health's five-organ capabilities for adults.

"Our pediatric cardiologists were seeing a rise in the number of children who required heart transplantation, and their families wanted to stay at UW Health and the AFCH," says Joshua





Sezar Alm Mustafa (pictured with his dad, Sam Alm Mustafa) was the first pediatric patient to receive a heart transplant at American Family Children's Hospital.

Hermesen, MD (PG '11), surgical director, UW Health Kids Heart Transplant and VAD Program, and associate professor, SMPH Department of Surgery. "It was time to combine our expertise in pediatric heart care and transplant."

According to Sonya Kirmani, MD, assistant professor, SMPH Department of Pediatrics, and medical director, UW Health Kids Heart Transplant and VAD Program, "Organ failure and transplantation can be quite overwhelming. We make sure families know they are joining our large, supportive team and we will care for them into adulthood."

Discoveries usher in new programs. For instance, when physicians learned that a kidney surgery could relieve chronic flank pain suffered by thousands of people, the center created the Renal Autotransplant Program, the nation's largest of its kind. The team treats children and adults who have kidney-related compression disorders that can cause debilitating flank pain.

"After thorough examination, we can consider patients for surgery to remove their kidney and place it lower in their abdomen to eliminate the compression and pain," says Foley, who leads the program. "It is rewarding to see patients who no longer suffer from their pain and are able to return to active, happy lives."

Forecasting Success

Transplantation relies greatly on the generosity of others. Organ donation from deceased and living donors allows a second chance at life that more than 100,000 Americans await. Nearly 88,000 of these people need a kidney.

"Today, almost one-third of kidney transplants come from living donors," says Didier Mandelbrot, MD, medical director, UW Health Kidney Transplant Program, and professor, SMPH Department of Medicine. "New opportunities for living donors to donate are saving thousands of lives each year."

UW Health was among the first centers to join the National Kidney Registry, which helps match living donors and recipients nationwide. Rather than waiting to find an exact match, the program relies on people willing to donate an organ on behalf of a recipient. But the shortage of donated organs continues to drive the need for new ways to save lives.

"We are studying xenotransplantation, most specifically through genetically modified pig organs, which could alter the dire need for donated human organs," says Kaufman. "We also are researching ways for transplanted organs to last longer, so patients do not require retransplant."

Another area of focus is reducing transplant patients' difficulty managing the effects of lifelong anti-rejection medications. In their National Institutes of Health-funded research, Kaufman and his team use total lymphoid irradiation and hematopoietic cell transplantation to induce in recipients a mixed chimeric state in which their immune systems are part kidney donor, part kidney recipient, thus increasing biocompatibility.

"Knowledge being gained through the rhesus tolerance-induction model is having direct relevance on a wide variety of clinical transplants," says Kaufman, who worked with researchers from the SMPH, UW School of Veterinary Medicine, Wisconsin National Primate Research Center, and other centers and biomedical laboratories across the country.

Recent changes in the allocation of organs from deceased donors improved the distribution to those most in need but increased travel time for donated

55+ years

20,000 organs transplanted at this five-organ transplant center for adults and kids



Heart: Almost 1,000 organs transplanted; launched Kids Heart Transplant Program in 2023



Kidney: 12,500 organs transplanted; among the nation's largest programs



Liver: 3,200 organs transplanted; record-breaking year in 2023



Lung: 1,455 organs transplanted; ranked #1 program in the nation



Pancreas: 1,980 organs transplanted, largest program in the nation

Living kidney and liver donation:

4,100 donors; among the nation's largest programs

Renal autotransplant: 180 surgeries; largest program in the nation

Transplant surgery fellowship programs:

40 years of training success that builds upon strong clinical and research programs

organs. This led to the development of methods to preserve and reperfuse donated organs. UW Health uses normothermic preservation to maintain and improve donated livers, making more livers suitable for transplant for longer periods. Such preservation is increasingly common for lungs and hearts and is being studied for kidneys. The UW Health Transplant Center team is working to establish a five-organ preservation laboratory to increase the number of transplantable organs and achieve better outcomes than were previously possible.

Reflecting on UW-Madison's involvement since the early days, Kaufman says, "We embrace and are excited by the future we are creating. We have the team, the experience, and the passion to continue this legacy, and we recognize and honor the thousands of organ donors and their families who have shared the gifts of life. Their impact is immeasurable."

Medical

Alumni

Day

FESTIVITIES ATTRACT ALUMNI FROM THE MD CLASSES OF 1959, '64, '69, '74, AND '79, PLUS THE HALF-CENTURY SOCIETY

Above: Bucky Badger greets Alan Erhardt, MD '59, and Burton Friedman, MD '59. Opposite page, top row (left to right): The Class of 1969 tours the Health Sciences Learning Center; the Class of 1974 enjoys lunch; middle row: Maria Bayer, Bucky, and Gerald Bayer, MD '74; Michael Schuldt, MD '64; bottom row: Diane Norback, MD '74, Leah Reimann, MD '74, Nancy Homburg, MD '74, Jane Lukowicz, MD '74, Barbara Quissell, MD '74, Margaret Draeger, MD '74; James Klamik, MD '79, Charles Schmitt, MD '79, Jeffery Scherer, MD '79, Thomas Calvy, MD '79.

Just as they had no shortage of great music on the radio or their eight-track tapes when they graduated from medical school in 1974, these University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health alumni had no shortage of stories to tell about their time together in Madison and their lives since then.

About the Class of 1974's 50th anniversary gathering on the June 7, 2024, Medical Alumni Day, Class Representative Milt McMillen, MD '74, says, "Turnout was triple our previous reunions. Everyone who desired to speak

had a chance to share thoughts with the class after we received our 50-year pins."

Having helped plan class reunions every five years since 1974, McMillen says this year's festivities for his class – as well as for the Classes of 1959, '64, '69, '79, and the Half-Century Society of alums who graduated more than 50 years ago – offered many ways to reconnect with their alma mater.

"The Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) went all out with student-led tours of the current school and entertaining lectures by faculty members. The association provided

a nice luncheon, with tasty-as-ever Babcock ice cream. The evening reception and reunion on the Capitol Square continued our time to reminisce with classmates."

A Madison native who retired from his medical practice in La Crosse, Wisconsin, and still enjoys ties to the capital city, McMillen says, "Everyone had an enjoyable and memorable gathering!"

In addition to tours of the Health Sciences Learning Center, Medical Alumni Day featured a "State of the School" address – moderated by Mark Fenlon, MD '84, WMAA



'64; bottom row:



past-president – with insights from Elizabeth Petty, MD '86 (PG '89), senior associate dean for academic affairs; David Rakel, MD, professor and chair, Department of Family Medicine and Community Health (DFMCH); and Hannah Ray, MD '24, a recent medical school graduate who is poised to begin a residency in the DFMCH.

Petty spoke about the SMPH's success in setting new records in National Institutes of Health research funding and in the number of applicants to its high-quality MD education program.

"This gives us a large pool of talented, passionate individuals from which to select our entering class of medical students," Petty noted, adding that alumni play an important role in sharing information about the MD program with qualified candidates.

"We continue our trend of welcoming students from backgrounds historically underrepresented or marginalized in medicine. For the last several years, students from these backgrounds made up about a third of the class. This helps us uphold our deep commitment to expanding the clinical workforce to

optimize health for diverse populations in Wisconsin and beyond, and we are very proud of our progress," Petty shared.

Crediting alumni and other donors for supporting more than 200 scholarships, she said, "This is a major factor in the school's growing ability to attract the very brightest, dedicated, and diverse group of future physicians. We could not recruit great students without you!"

Further, focusing on the SMPH's ability to retain superior faculty and recruit national leaders, Petty stated, "We remain highly attractive to top-notch individuals in medicine and science."

MD Class Reunions

MEDIA SOLUTIONS (5)



CLASS OF 1959

Left to right: Alan Erhardt, Burton Friedman.



CLASS OF 1964

Left to right: William Brennom, Asaph C. "Van" Elston, Michael Schuldt, Andrew Horvath, Peter Raich, David Jaecks, Thomas Handrich.



CLASS OF 1969

Left to right: Richard Marchiando, Marshall Segal, Carol Rumack, John Hansen, Dan Hathaway, Ivars Gailans.



CLASS OF
1974

Front row (left to right): Stephen Lukowicz, Robert Whitehouse, Diane Norback, Barbara Quissell, Margaret Draeger, John Hermann, Jan Weber, F. Jeffrey Field, Milton McMillen. Back row: Robert Helminiak, Jane Lukowicz, David Good, Nancy Homburg, David Goldman, William Scheibel, Leah Reimann, Dean Schraufnagel, Gerald Bayer, David Hendrickson, Robert Lowe, Timothy Peterson, Todd Hammer, Tom Dow, James Sanger, Timothy Huebner, Richard Johnson, Jeffrey Menn.



CLASS OF
1979

Front row (left to right): Jean Thierfelder, Maureen Mullins, Ann Merkow, Lauree Thomas, Jeanne Medina, Charles Schmitt. Back row: Sandra Petersen, Thomas Calvy, F. Martin Brutvan, Joseph Drinka, Joseph Layde, James Klamik, Jack Potts.



Kimberly Stepien, MD '02, an ophthalmologist at UW Health, examines a patient.

JOSHUA VRABEC, MD '05 (PG '09)

I practice ophthalmology at Clear Vision Center in Rochester, Michigan, where I have a private practice. My typical cases entail cataract and refractive surgery (LASIK).

A memorable case is a recent cataract surgery on a patient who had become functionally blind. Due to multiple health issues and the COVID-19 pandemic, she had delayed her cataract surgery for nearly four years, resulting in her functional blindness. She travelled from several states away to see me for her surgery, which was an immediate success. She burst into tears in the recovery room after she saw

her husband's face for the first time in many years!

Before my medical school years, I spent time with my uncle, Michael Vrabec, MD '83 (PG '87) – an ophthalmologist who earned his medical degree from the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) and completed postgraduate training at UW Health – on a mission trip to Haiti. I credit this time as formative for me. Seeing the miracle of sight sold me on this field.

After I earned my medical degree at the SMPH, I completed a residency at UW Health and established my practice in Michigan.

I am a member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology; the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery; and the Michigan Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons.

I find that there is nothing more rewarding than giving the gift of sight to a patient!



LUCY YOUNG, MD '81, PHD, FACS

At Harvard Medical School's Massachusetts Eye and Ear (MEE), I am an associate professor of ophthalmology and have been on its Retina Service since 1990.

After I earned my medical degree from the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, I received my doctorate in biology from Harvard University and completed an ophthalmology residency and vitreoretinal fellowship at the MEE.

My clinical interests include diabetic retinopathy, age-related macular degeneration, retinal vascular diseases, and trauma- and drug-related retinal complications.

A memorable patient was a young woman I saw as a third-year medical student, with Richard Appen, MD (PG '72). This patient had bad migraines and developed a retinal arterial occlusion that caused a permanent deficit. Dr. Appen also showed me his collection of findings about patients with carotid artery disease. With me as first author (my first paper!), we published about those findings in the *Archives of Neurology*. This experience cemented my interest in ophthalmology.

In my beautiful journey at MEE, I initially published prolifically and presented my work at professional meetings. Over time, my focus changed

to clinical work and teaching medical students, residents, and fellows, plus other trainees worldwide. I direct the Lancaster Course in Ophthalmology, the world's oldest ophthalmic education review program. Thanks to generous supporters, I can offer the annual course to trainees from underserved countries. I also direct the Altschuler Ophthalmology Surgical Training Laboratory, which strengthens residents' pre-operative surgical skills. This laboratory was built in my honor with a huge donation from the parents of a patient for whom I repaired a retinal detachment.

I have co-authored more than 100 peer-reviewed



articles, reviews, and book chapters and participated in more than 25 clinical trial reports, but I get the most joy from helping patients restore or maintain vision and teaching others how to help in this way.

NIKHIL WAGLE, MD '94

I am a partner at Eye Surgeons Associates, PC, an ophthalmology and optometry group in the Quad Cities, with offices in Bettendorf, Iowa, and Rock Island, Illinois, and a surgery center in Davenport, Iowa.

After I earned my medical degree from the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, I completed an ophthalmology residency and glaucoma fellowship at Duke University Eye Center.

In my comprehensive practice, I spend 75 percent of my time seeing patients for cataract evaluations and glaucoma consults; performing laser procedures;

and treating retina conditions. I devote the other 25 percent of my time to cataract surgeries, minimally invasive glaucoma surgeries, and advanced glaucoma surgeries.

One of my most memorable patients was a marathon runner who was significantly near-sighted and had glaucoma. She always wanted to do a triathlon, but she faced major challenges with contacts and/or glasses. I mentioned that we could surgically treat her cataracts and glaucoma and eliminate her near-sightedness. She was thrilled when she realized her dreams could become a reality. The year after her successful eye surgery, she

completed the IronMan Triathlon in Hawaii – a lifelong dream. She brought me her IronMan medal to remind me how instrumental I was in helping make her dream come true.

I am a member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery. The governor of Iowa appointed me to serve on the Iowa Board of Medicine from 2019 to 2022. Also, I am in my 11th year as a member and my fourth year as the president of a school board in Bettendorf.

I find it incredibly gratifying to help restore people's vision and perform surgeries



that allow them to depend less on glasses and maintain independence as they age. This has been an exciting time of technological advancements in this field.

New WMAA

President

PEGGY SCALLON,
MD '92 (PG '97),
FOCUSES ON
KEEPING HER
PATIENTS ACTIVE

by Kris Whitman

The ambience of a playground feels natural for Peggy Scallon, MD '92 (PG '97), because physical activity and its mental health benefits are values she has instilled in her children and her patients at Rogers Behavioral Health in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin.

For Scallon – who began a two-year term as president of the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) Board of Directors on July 1, 2024 – staying active through various types of sports has been a driving force throughout her life. Even a bicycling mishap at age 18 had a “silver lining” that helped shape her future.

Recalling her bicycle accident shortly after she graduated from high school in Madison, Wisconsin, she says, “I got pretty banged up, and my broken jaw had to be wired shut. It was difficult and painful, but it also was inspirational. The compassionate and skilled medical care I received when I was injured and scared has always stayed with me.”

Scallon continues, “I knew I wanted to have a mission-driven career in a helping profession. My observations as a patient in the hospital sparked my interest in medicine.”

That fall, she started college and later received a bachelor's degree in zoology from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Next, she earned a medical degree from the UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) and completed a psychiatry residency at University of Colorado–Denver and a child and adolescent psychiatry residency at UW Health.

Scallon first worked in private practice and later became a clinical associate professor in the SMPH Department of Psychiatry's Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. There, she provided psychiatric care to children, adolescents, adults, and families; taught and supervised medical students; led the SMPH consultation service to Madison public schools; facilitated the medical student elective, Healer's Art, in which students explored issues like grief, death, and dying; and served as the training

director of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Residency Program.

Meanwhile, Scallon and her husband, Mark Redsten, raised their two children: Oliver, now an attorney in Chicago, and Genevieve, now a reporter in Milwaukee. For 20 years, their home's front window overlooked the frequently visited playground at the kids' grade school, Shorewood Hills Elementary.

Today, Scallon and Redsten – a fellow Badger and the longtime president and CEO of Clean Wisconsin, a statewide non-profit organization that focuses on clean water and air – live on Lake Mendota near UW–Madison. They enjoy kayaking, water skiing, spending time with friends on their pontoon boat, and walking past the beloved playground in Shorewood Hills.

In 2016, while continuing her role as an SMPH clinical associate professor but leaving her practice in Madison, Scallon moved her career 63 miles east to Rogers Behavioral Health, which offers outpatient, inpatient, and residential care for patients of all ages. Initially serving as the medical director of an adolescent-residential-care unit, she was promoted in April 2024 to the role of senior medical director of Rogers' Oconomowoc Campus. While overseeing 16 programs, she continues to serve as an attending psychiatrist on a 24-bed unit for adolescents with mood disorders. Generally, her patients have had multiple inpatient stays elsewhere before coming to Rogers for approximately eight weeks.

“Rogers' Oconomowoc setting is on a beautiful, wooded campus situated on a lake. We offer outdoor lake activities, games, and walking paths. It is a lovely, restorative place,” Scallon says, adding that the indoor facilities are equally inviting.

“Residential care is a great model.

The kids are fully immersed in skills-based therapies, including cognitive and dialectical behavioral therapy, and behavioral activation aimed at developing coping skills to deal with depression and other mood disorders,” she explains.

In describing behavioral activation, Scallon says, “It is like our grandmothers used to tell us: if we are feeling

down, we should get active or do something meaningful, such as helping someone. Rather than waiting to get ‘un-depressed’ to change our behavior, we change our behavior, and our mood will follow.”

This process involves routine tasks like maintaining hygiene and keeping a schedule; valued activities such as getting exercise or doing homework; and enjoyable activities such as listening to music or creating artwork.

“Small actions can result in micro mood improvements. If you take a shower or brush your teeth, you feel better than if you don't. Through a series of micro mood improvements, eventually you say, ‘Today was a pretty good day.’ Your mood is often the last thing to get better, but you can start to feel good about your productivity,” explains Scallon. “We incorporate these activities into plans as the teens transition home.”

Residents' structured days at Rogers often start with mindfulness practices, schoolwork, and recreation therapy. They may work in an on-site greenhouse, experience the ropes course, and engage in activities in the community, such as playing mini golf, going bowling, exploring museums, or visiting parks or an apple orchard.

About the unit's no-screen policy other than for homework and group movies, Scallon says, “Screens are so compelling – they overtake their schoolwork, sleep schedule, socialization, family interactions, and exercise. Kids often say they are glad for the break from their phones and other screens. And it is fun to see them do old-fashioned things like playing board games, reading books, knitting, and doing Rubik's cubes.”

Reflecting on the most rewarding part of her career, Scallon shares, “We change the trajectory of kids' lives here. It is dramatic and positive. We hear from kids later that they are doing so much better and have gotten re-engaged in their lives.”

She elaborates, “They often come in resistant, and they don't want to be here, but most of them get a lot better. By the end of their time here, they talk about how meaningful it has been,

–Continued on page 37

Class Notes

Compiled by Andrea Larson

CLASS OF 1976

Richard Heuser received the 2024 Global Cardiovascular Award for Innovation in Cardiac Surgery by the Endologix Detour System.



The system creates a percutaneous leg bypass to potentially avoid surgery. Heuser of Phoenix, Arizona, and Jim Joye, DO, of San Jose, California, created the device, which was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in May 2023. Heuser held 26 patents with nine devices on the market, two of which continue to be used in most catheterization labs that perform angioplasty. Heuser edited or coedited seven textbooks. The most recent was *Renal Denervation: Treatment and Device-Based Neuromodulation*, second edition, by Springer Publishing, London. (This post was published after Heuser died on May 23, 2024.)

CLASS OF 1982

Mark Supiano began his term as president of the American Geriatrics Society at the society's annual scientific meeting in May 2024. He is the co-chief of research at the University of Utah Geriatrics Division and executive director of its Center on Aging.



CLASS OF 1985

David Wargowski retired in June 2024 following three decades in a diverse career of clinical genetics and regional outreach.



As a professor in the Division of Genetics and Metabolism of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health's Department of Pediatrics, Wargowski has served tirelessly to address genetically based diseases and health conditions for children in the region served by American Family Children's Hospital and UW-Madison's Waisman Center.

CLASS OF 2002

Christine Virnig is publishing, through Simon & Schuster, *A Bite Above the Rest*, a novel that is expected to be available by August 2024. She wrote the spooky-but-funny novel for kids ages 8 to 12. Virnig now spends her days writing gross-but-educational, middle-grade, nonfiction publications, in addition to middle-grade novels that are spooky and funny. A former pediatric allergist, she also creates picture books that feature inanimate objects as the main characters.



CLASS OF 2003

Kristopher Schroeder received the John F. Kreul, MD, Education Fellowship for Anesthesiology.



This fellowship was developed to support educational grants for faculty members who seek opportunities that benefit patients and their families. As a recipient of the fellowship, Schroeder has been admitted to the Johns Hopkins University Krieger School of Arts and Sciences' master's degree program in organizational leadership.

Daniel Jackson was inducted into the American Society for Clinical Investigation, one of the nation's oldest medical honor societies. It



focuses on the special role of physician-scientists in research, clinical care, and medical education. A professor in the Department of Pediatrics' Division of Allergy, Immunology, and Rheumatology in the UW School of Medicine and Public Health, Jackson conducts research on methods to prevent and treat childhood asthma. He is the principal investigator (PI) of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases-funded Childhood Asthma in Urban Settings Research Network Leadership Center and of two National Institutes of Health-funded trials related to asthma prevention. He also serves as the PI or co-PI for other significant studies.

Matthew Solverson

was presented with the Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative's Rural Ambassador Award. The honor recognizes employees at critical access hospitals throughout Wisconsin who have gone above the call of duty to promote their organizations and have made significant contributions to rural health care. He is a family medicine physician at Memorial Hospital of Lafayette County in Darlington, Wisconsin.



CLASS OF 2006

Dan Sklansky

has been named by the Association of Pediatric Program Directors (APPD) as the chair-elect of the APPD Program Directors Executive Committee. Later in 2024, he will begin serving one year as chair-elect, one as chair, and one as past chair. Sklansky is an associate professor in the Department of Pediatrics' Division of Hospital Medicine and Complex Care at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health. Sklansky is the program director of the Pediatrics Residency Program.



CLASS OF 2007

Dustin Deming

received the 2024 Young Investigator Award from the Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group and the American College of Radiology Imaging Network Cancer Research Group for his research in colorectal cancer. The award is one of the research group's highest distinctions to honor one outstanding researcher



each year for making extraordinary scientific achievements under age 46. Deming is an associate professor of medicine at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health.

CLASS OF 2009

Adam Gepner

received the 2024 Dr. Benjamin and Marian Schuster Prize, which was established to advance the study of cardiology and physiology at UW-Madison. Gepner also has been awarded a \$1.6 million Veterans Administration (VA) Merit Award for a four-year, multi-site, randomized controlled trial to evaluate a new way to personalize blood pressure care for older adults. Gepner is a VA-funded physician-scientist with expertise in advanced imaging of the cardiovascular system to better understand and improve upon cardiovascular health in older adults. He is a clinical associate adjunct professor in the Division of Cardiovascular Medicine of the UW School of Medicine and Public Health's Department of Medicine. His primary practice is at the William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital.



CLASS OF 2011

Anne Getzin

received the 2024 Marge Stearns Community Partner Legacy Award. It is nominated and selected by faculty of the UW School of Medicine and Public Health's (SMPH) Training in Urban Medicine and Public Health program. Getzin is a faculty member with the Aurora Family Medicine Residency Program at Midtown Health Center, Milwaukee, and a clinical adjunct faculty member at the SMPH.



CLASS OF 2014

Daniel Shapiro

has been selected to serve as section editor for the urologic oncology section of the journal *Surgical Oncology Insight*. He completed his urology residency at UW Health and is an assistant professor in the UW School of Medicine and Public Health's Department of Urology. He specializes in urologic oncology and minimally invasive surgery.



CLASS OF 2015

Andrew Wentland

received the Society of Abdominal Radiology's Morton Bosniak Award for his study, the Evaluation of Central Non-Enhancement in Solid Renal Masses. He earned his medical degree and doctorate in medical physics in the Medical Scientist Training Program at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health. Wentland completed a radiology residency at Stanford University and an abdominal imaging fellowship at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health, respectively. At the latter, he is an assistant professor of radiology.



Correction

Incorrect wording was used in the headline of the top Research Advances article on page 39 of *Quarterly*, Volume 26, Number 1, 2024. It should have read, "Pancreatic Beta Cell Transient Senescence Protects Against Type 1 Diabetes." We corrected the headline in the online version of the magazine. We regret the error.

In Memoriam

Gloria Sarto, MD '58,
PhD '71 (PG '63)
June 8, 2024
Madison, Wisconsin

Jordan N. Fink, MD '59
May 10, 2024
Mequon, Wisconsin

John E. Schowalter,
MD '60
June 20, 2024
Hamden, Connecticut

George M. Kopf, MD '61
March 18, 2024
Zanesville, Ohio

Ronald O. Bergom, MD '63
February 14, 2024
Bemidji, Minnesota

Joel J. Teplinsky, MD '65
January 30, 2024
Encino, California

John F. Frost, MD '71
March 26, 2024
Oconomowoc, Wisconsin

Michael A. Weiner, MD '74
November 3, 2023
Madison, Wisconsin

Richard R. Heuser, MD '76
May 23, 2024
Phoenix, Arizona

Meghan E. Hanson,
MD '06
March 22, 2024
Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Former Faculty and Staff Members

Ralph A. Hawley
March 10, 2024
Oregon, Wisconsin

V. Craig Jordan, PhD, DSc,
FAACR
June 9, 2024
Houston, Texas

Robert A. Rancourt
April 4, 2024
Wausau, Wisconsin

Wausau Alumni Unite



Left to right: The keynote speaker, Howard Bailey, MD (PG '91), poses with representatives of the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association: Mark Fenlon, MD '84, MBA, past president; Kay Gruling, MD '88, board advisory council member; and Mathew Aschbrenner, MD '06, president-elect.



M4 Aynsley Hartney (left) and M4 Andy Kosharek, participants at the WMAA event at Wausau's Tebo & Tilly, enjoyed the eclectic décor at the venue.

On June 5, 2024, the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) hosted a dinner and presentation by Howard Bailey, MD (PG '91), for MD alumni and students from the area around Wausau, Wisconsin. Bailey is the director of the University of Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center and the associate dean for oncology at

the UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH).

The venue, Tebo & Tilly, offered the chance for those who earned their medical degrees at the SMPH and established their careers in the Wausau region to learn about the latest in cancer research being conducted at the school. Medical students who are training in Wausau – including Aynsley Hartney and

Andy Kosharek – also attended. Hartney is doing a rural elective rotation in Wausau, and Kosharek is enrolled in the SMPH's Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine there; both are in their fourth year of medical school at the SMPH.

Wausau, with a population of 40,000 in central Wisconsin, calls itself a medium-sized city in the middle of rural territory.

Goodbye Dear Friends

RALPH A. HAWLEY

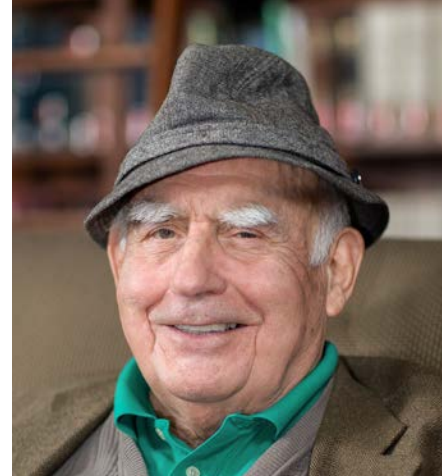
At age 97, Ralph A. Hawley died on May 10, 2024, in Oregon, Wisconsin. He was born and spent his youth in Stockbridge, Wisconsin, and later moved to Green Bay. He earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from University of Wisconsin–Madison, where he was selected for Phi Beta Kappa.

Following service in World War II, Hawley moved back to Green Bay, where he met and married Nell Hawley; they soon moved to Madison. In 1955, he was hired by then–Dean John Bowers, MD, at the UW Medical School [now the UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH)] to be the business manager. Hawley soon became the first executive director of the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA), and he eventually was promoted to associate dean and

assistant vice chancellor roles at the school. Having served the SMPH for 34 years, Hawley retired in 1989, freeing up time to pursue his hobbies, including playing poker and golf; listening to jazz; and reading poetry.

After his retirement, the WMAA created the Ralph Hawley Distinguished Community Service Award, which is bestowed annually upon MD alumni who have made outstanding contributions to their community through medical practice, teaching, research, or other humanitarian activities.

WMAA Executive Director Sarah B. Rothschild notes, “Ralph was the architect responsible for the lasting foundation of the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association. He was a problem-solver whose solutions were the seeds of programs that continue to thrive



TODD BROWN/MEDIA SOLUTIONS

at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health.”

To contribute to the Ralph Hawley WMAA Student Fund visit supportuw.org/giveto/HawleyFund

GLORIA SARTO, MD '58, PHD '71 (PG '63)

Emerita Professor Gloria Sarto, MD '58, PhD '71 (PG '63), passed away on June 8, 2024. For nearly 60 years, she focused her remarkable intellect and sense of compassion on lifting the status of women's health and health equity.

She earned her medical degree and a medical genetics doctoral degree at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH), and she completed an obstetrics and gynecology residency at UW Health. Sarto joined the school's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology faculty in 1966; moved her career to Illinois and New Mexico for 22 years; and in 1998 returned to the SMPH department.

Sarto treated countless women and delivered their babies; taught and mentored students, residents, and faculty members; and served as a national voice for women's health-related curricula, research, and public policy. Her

nationwide impact is immeasurable, says Ellen Hartenbach, MD, the Ben Miller Peckham, MD, PhD, Chair in Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Further, Sarto helped establish the National Institutes of Health Office of Research on Women's Health, and she obtained funding for the Health Disparities Research Scholars Program. The latter, now based in the SMPH Department of Population Health Sciences, has received continuous federal funding and graduated more than 30 postdoctoral scholars. Recently, Sarto established the non-profit Foundation for Neighborhood Health Education to improve health literacy in Dane County.

According to Hartenbach, the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology owes its health-equity-related leadership to Sarto. The department celebrates her impact with the annual Gloria Sarto Reproductive Health Equity Symposium, which she



founded in 2005 to connect health care and population health professionals and community advocates. Faculty members carry on her legacy through the Gloria E. Sarto, MD, PhD, Chair in Women's Health and Health Equity Research, an endowed professorship that supports academic leadership. Visit supportuw.org/giveto/SartoMemorial for details about how to support this chair.

V. CRAIG JORDAN, PHD, DSC, FAACR

V Craig Jordan, PhD, DSc, FAACR, considered the “Father of Tamoxifen” because he was the first researcher to identify the breast cancer prevention properties of that therapeutic drug, died on June 9, 2024, in Houston, Texas. He was 76 years old.

Born in Texas and raised in Britain, Jordan earned a doctorate in pharmacology from the University of Leeds, England. In 1977, he was a visiting investigator in the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health’s (SMPH) Department of Human Oncology, and he joined the school’s faculty in 1980, rising to professor of human oncology and pharmacology at the SMPH and director of the Breast Cancer Research and Treatment Program at the UW Comprehensive Cancer Center (now the UW Carbone Cancer Center).

Jordan’s career focused on the treatment of hormone receptor-positive

breast cancer, the most common subtype, and specifically on the development of selective estrogen receptor modulators. These medicines, discovered during Jordan’s tenure at UW–Madison, have improved women’s health by treating and preventing breast cancer and osteoporosis with the potential to prevent coronary heart disease and strokes.

Still used around the world, tamoxifen has been credited with saving millions of lives and preventing the development of breast cancer in women at high risk.

After he left UW–Madison in 1993, Jordan held faculty and leadership positions at Northwestern University, Chicago; Fox Chase Cancer Center, Philadelphia; Georgetown University, Washington, DC; and University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston.

“Dr. Jordan had an exemplary career that has impacted the lives of countless women with breast cancer,” says Paul M. Harari, MD, former chair of the SMPH



MD ANDERSON CANCER CENTER

Department of Human Oncology. “Many of his key discoveries took place at UW–Madison, and his research was subsequently translated into pivotal, international clinical trials.”

In May 2020, UW–Madison bestowed upon Jordan an honorary doctorate in recognition of his extraordinary accomplishments. Among his other honors, he was elected to the National Academy of Sciences and National Academy of Medicine.

JOHN E. SCHOWALTER, MD '60

John E. Schowalter, MD '60, passed away on June 20, 2024, in Hamden, Connecticut. Born, raised, and educated in Wisconsin, he earned his medical degree from the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH). He completed an internship in pediatrics, as well as his psychiatry and child psychiatry residency training at Yale University.

Schowalter achieved national and international recognition as a leader in his field. His psychiatry career focused on pediatric liaison, adolescent care, and professional training, and he has been recognized for outstanding clinical, academic, and research accomplishments.

After two years in the U.S. Army, Schowalter joined the faculty of the Yale Child Study Center, where he became a professor and, in 1989, became the first Albert J. Solnit Professor at Yale–New Haven Hospital/Yale University, where

he worked for 40 years. He served as the center’s interim director in 2001–2002 and retired in 2003, but he continued to consult much longer.

Schowalter was involved in many national organizations, including the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP), for which he served as president. He formed and chaired the AACAP Member Group, which supports medical students and residents. The organization takes annual applications for the John E. Schowalter, MD, Resident Member of Council.

Further, Schowalter was president of the Society of Professors of Child Psychiatry; the Benjamin Rush Society; and other groups. He also chaired the Child Psychiatry Examination Committee of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.

He received the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association’s Medical Alumni



JOHN WINGREN/MEDIA SOLUTIONS

Citation – Distinguished Alumni Award in 2014.

SMPH Dean Robert N. Golden, MD, shares, “Dr. Schowalter was a giant in child psychiatry. In college, I had the enormous good fortune to enroll in his senior seminar in child development, an experience that propelled my interest in psychiatry. He will be dearly missed and always remembered.”

Alpha Omega Alpha

MEDICAL STUDENTS, FACULTY, RESIDENTS, AND FELLOWS INDUCTED INTO NATIONAL HONOR MEDICAL SOCIETY



Student inductees (left to right): Lauren Penn, Ban Dodin, Joshua Martens, Rachel Craven, Monica Cho, Vansh Jain, Grace Seibert. Middle row: Michael Gui, Amy Holzer, Katherine Tippins, Laura Kelble, Annalise Panthofer, Sabrina Fleege, Mark Hancher. Back row: Kenneth Fiala, Jackson Hoang, Cory Call, Isabel Breyer, Ryan Ingebritsen, Madeline Arzbecker, Evan Polce. Not pictured: Abigail Boeck, Kari Borowski, Alexandra Frank, Samuel Krabbenhoft, Crystal Lan, Eduardo Miranda Mora, Momin Mohis, Justyn Nguyen, Taylor Penn, Hannah (Robiolio) Raabe, Juliette Schefelker, Laura Steenberge, Quinn Steiner, Margaret Zwick.

TODD BROWN/MEDIA SOLUTIONS (3)



Resident and fellow inductees (left to right): Devashish Joshi, MD; Simon Ammanuel, MD; Breanna Aldred, MD '21; Melissa Ricker, MD '20 (PG '24); John Gravelle, MD. Not pictured: Andrew Bigham, MD; Devon Miller, MD.



Faculty inductees (left to right): Cat Burkat, MD (PG '05); Blaise Nemeth, MD, MS '03 (PG '03, '04); Vincent Cryns, MD; Christie Bartels, MD (PG '05, '07). Not pictured: Sara Damewood, MD.

In April 2024, Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) welcomed 35 fourth-year medical students and five faculty members from the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH), as well as seven residents and fellows from UW Health.

Associate Dean for Students Gwen McIntosh, MD '96, MPH – who serves as the AOA councilor for the Wisconsin Chapter – notes, “Alpha Omega Alpha recognizes individuals for their excellence in scholarship, professionalism, leadership, and teaching. Student

inductees are at the top of their class and have demonstrated the honor society’s ideals. In turn, the students nominate residents and fellows whom they believe exemplify the ideals of AOA, and faculty members and school leaders recommend faculty inductees. We arrive at an incredible, diverse AOA class representing our most outstanding students, residents, fellows, and faculty members.”

At the induction ceremony, Cynthia Haq, MD (PG '87), served as the 2024 AOA Dr. David de Harter and Diane de

Harter Visiting Professor and shared an address. Haq is widely known as an inspirational leader with a passion for health equity, noted Dean Robert N. Golden, MD. Over her nearly 30-year career in the SMPH’s Department of Family Medicine and Community Health and Department of Population Health Sciences, she had enormous impact as a mentor, teacher, clinician, and visionary leader. She was the founding director of the school’s Training in Urban Medicine and Public Health program and of the UW–Madison Global Health Institute.

Dean's Teaching and Research Mentorship Awards

by Kaine Korzekwa

Recipients of the annual Dean's Teaching Awards and Dean's Award for Excellence in Medical Student Research Mentorship were recognized in May 2024 at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH).

At the SMPH's annual Medical Education Day, Elizabeth Petty, MD '86 (PG '89), presented the awards on behalf of Dean Robert N. Golden, MD. Petty noted that, each year, previous award winners select the new recipients.

"Being recognized by one's peers is an incredible honor. Each of these faculty members exhibit excellence in teaching and mentoring. Their work helps advance our school's academic mission and bolster the success of the next generation of physicians and physician-scientists."

Dean's Teaching Awards

KATIE KASTNER, MD

Kastner, an assistant professor in the Department of Pediatrics, has highly specialized expertise in child development. She works tirelessly to improve training for students to care for people with disabilities, and to encourage students to consider careers in disability-related specialties. She does significant work with pediatrics residents, interdisciplinary teams, and community physicians. Additionally, she is an assistant block leader for the Phase 1 Human Family Tree course in the MD curriculum and oversees a developmental-behavioral pediatrics elective.

CLAUDIA L. REARDON, MD '06 (PG '10)

Reardon, a professor in the Department of Psychiatry, is dedicated to compassionate patient care and sports psychiatry through her work

in educational leadership, curriculum development, and teaching. She has mentored nearly 20 medical students, residents, and fellows, many of whom have published their research. At the SMPH, she helped develop an advocacy-related curriculum thread and serves as a quality improvement coach for first- and second-year medical students. In addition, she has developed two medical student public health selectives.

W. NICK ROSE, MD

Rose is an associate professor in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine. He has extensive expertise in transfusion medicine and is passionate about sharing that knowledge with learners. Rose is highly involved in teaching residents and fellows, as well as undergraduate pre-medical students. He created and directs four Phase 3 selectives. Rose also created an educational website and co-created the UW Pathology International Observership Program, and he has been a longitudinal teacher coach.

IRINA SHAKHNOVICH, MD

Shakhnovich is a clinical adjunct faculty member at the SMPH and a vascular surgeon with the Emplify-Gundersen Health System. She is heavily involved in teaching surgery to medical students in Phases 2 and 3 at the school's Western Academic Campus in La Crosse. This includes serving as the site director for the Surgical and Procedural Care Block for traditional medical students and those in the SMPH's Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine (WARM). She played a leading role in developing the new curriculum for Gundersen. Shakhnovich also has developed and continually improved a surgical simulation laboratory program for medical students and is among the co-leaders of the yearly rural disaster training day for WARM students from across the state.



TODD BROWN/MEDIA SOLUTIONS

Left to right: W. Nick Rose, MD; Irina Shakhnovich, MD; Katie Kastner, MD; Claudia L. Reardon, MD '06 (PG '10).

Dean's Award for Excellence in Medical Student Research Mentorship

MEGHAN LUBNER, MD '03 (PG '09)

Lubner is a professor in the Department of Radiology and is the chief of clinical and research computed tomography in that department.

She has served as a mentor to student researchers on more than 100 manuscripts and another 100 posters and presentations. Many of her Shapiro scholars have returned in later years to further pursue research. Lubner also mentors students about their career paths and is involved in several national and international professional societies.



WMAA Awards

ANNUAL BANQUET HONORS DISTINGUISHED RECIPIENTS

SIRTAJ GREWAL/MEDIA SOLUTIONS (9)

In April 2024, the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) and University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) honored the individuals featured here for their exceptional contributions to the school, its students, and their fields of practice and communities.

Noting that the awards program relies on a strong effort by the WMAA Awards Committee, Kyla Lee, MD '98, FACP, then-president of the association, shared, "This event inspires me each year and serves as a reminder of how remarkable this community is."

MEDICAL ALUMNI CITATION – DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Christine A. Wanke, MD '80

Having earned her medical degree from the SMPH, Wanke was the associate chair of the Department of Public Health and Family Medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine, Boston, and chief of its Division of Nutrition and Infection until she retired in 2017. Her global health advocacy led to decades of research focused on the complex intersections of nutrition and infectious disease; she amassed nearly 200 peer-reviewed publications. With an interest in conditions that disproportionately impact children in resource-limited areas, Wanke has done extensive work related to HIV and nutrition. She sought to identify evidence-based, cost-effective interventions to improve the health of the global village. Wanke has helped develop guidelines for nutrition and HIV, and she has mentored and trained individuals from the United States and abroad. Her international work has included projects in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, Thailand, India, Kenya, and Vietnam.



RESIDENT/FELLOW CITATION – DISTINGUISHED RESIDENT AWARD

Allan D. Kirk, MD, PhD (PG '97)

Kirk earned his medical degree from Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, and completed a fellowship in multi-organ transplantation at UW Health. His career began with a passion for music, but an interest in the burgeoning field of organ transplantation led him down the path to medicine. Today, Kirk is the chair of the Department of Surgery at Duke University Medical Center. He is a highly regarded pioneer in kidney and pancreas transplant surgery and is internationally recognized for his research in immunosuppressive medication management, transplant tolerance, co-stimulation pathway blockade, immune monitoring, and immunology of injury. He has more than 250 peer-reviewed publications and has held more than 50 National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants. His most recent seminal achievements came in May 2016 when, at Duke University Medical Center, he led a large surgical team to perform North Carolina's first-of-its-kind hand transplant.



EARLY-CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Laura H. Jacques, MD '07

Jacques earned her medical degree from the SMPH and is an associate professor and director of medical student education in the school's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She

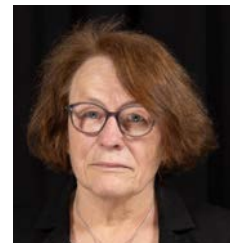


led her department through the transformation of the school's ForWard Curriculum for medical students. She advocates for and coaches students, and her efforts have led to nurses, upper-level medical students, and residents being incorporated into medical student training. She also mentors undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral trainees. Jacques' practice focuses on complex family planning; as a leading advocate for reproductive care, she worked with others to create guidelines for women facing complex pregnancy issues. She also helped develop a statewide curriculum to educate medical students about health care equity and participated in a national project to optimize aspects of obstetrics and gynecology residencies.

BASIC SCIENCES EMERITI FACULTY AWARD

Mari Palta, PhD

An SMPH professor emerita in the Departments of Population Health Sciences and of Biostatistics and Medical Informatics, Palta is a renowned biostatistician.



For decades, she helped advance the mission of the SMPH and her departments. Through millions of dollars in NIH grants, she led work to develop statistics and epidemiology methods. Palta's efforts contributed to how providers assess numerous diseases, including diabetes and sleep disorders. She also focused on assessing neonates for life-threatening and developmental diseases and their prognoses. Palta authored a seminal textbook on the use of quantitative methods in population health. She led the development of an interdisciplinary graduate program and served as vice chair and director of graduate programs at the SMPH.

—Continued on next page

CLINICAL SCIENCES EMERITI FACULTY AWARD

Dennis J. Baumgardner, MD

An SMPH emeritus professor of family medicine and community health, Baumgardner retired in 2021 after an outstanding career



as a clinical adjunct professor. At the SMPH's Advocate Aurora Health/Eastern Academic Campus, he shared his passion for primary clinical care, research, and teaching. For more than 40 years, he designed and conducted research, particularly on issues facing Wisconsin, in areas such as fungal diseases, human relationships, and family dynamics. Baumgardner also founded and led the *Journal of Patient-Centered Research and Reviews*, which aims to improve patient care and outcomes. His commitment to teaching is illustrated by his nine Teacher of the Year awards from local, state, and national organizations.

RALPH HAWLEY DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

David T. Bernhardt, MD '89 (PG '92, '94)

Bernhardt earned his medical degree from the SMPH and completed a pediatrics residency at UW Health and a sports and



adolescent medicine fellowship at the SMPH. He is a professor of pediatrics and of orthopedics and rehabilitation at the school. Through his clinical work, research, and community engagement, Bernhardt has become a national expert in the care of young athletes. As a team physician for the UW-Madison Athletic Department, he is a figurative and literal supporter of the Badgers. He also works as an athletic physician for high schools and for events such as the Madison Marathon. Bernhardt has helped organize

free sports physicals for students. At the SMPH, he directs the Primary Care Sports Medicine Fellowship. In 2012, he helped pass state legislation aimed at protecting young athletes. And in 2000, he served as the physician at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado.

WMAA SERVICE AWARD

Tito L. Izard, MD '96 (PG '99)

Izard is known as an outstanding physician, educator, and medical administrator; his career emphasizes urban health disparities. He earned his medical



degree from the SMPH and completed a family medicine residency through UW Health. In 1999, he became the first African American family physician to be appointed as an assistant professor in the SMPH Department of Family Medicine and Community Health. In 2006, his passions led him to dedicate his practice to central Milwaukee. Today, he is the president and CEO of Milwaukee Health Services, Inc., an independent, not-for-profit, federally qualified health center that has revolutionized how to provide care for underserved communities and how to recruit and retain diverse clinicians. Among other initiatives, he and his wife, Delicia Randle-Izard, MD, founded a mentoring program, Pipeline to Practice, with the goal of increasing the number of American Descendants of Slavery Wisconsin residents practicing as physicians.

SIGURD SIVERTSON MEDICAL EDUCATION AWARD

Nathaniel Stepp, DO

Stepp is a rural emergency medicine and urgent care clinician at Gundersen Health and Critical Access Hospitals; he is based in Whitehall, Wisconsin. Previously, he



practiced in the Marshfield Clinic Health System. Highly sought as a preceptor, he often serves as the primary or sole preceptor for multiple rotations, in addition to family medicine-related electives. Stepp's students say he seamlessly incorporates them into patient care, takes time to answer questions, and gives constructive feedback. He brought this passion for education to Gundersen in late 2022. A prior Navy physician, Stepp is highly engaged in his community as a Veterans of Foreign Wars member; a grade-school basketball coach; and a suicide review board and overdose review team member. In January 2024, he led the opening of an opiate treatment clinic.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP IN THE WMAA AWARD

Sara A. Dillivan-Graves

Having joined the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association in 2018, Dillivan-Graves immediately began to make her mark on the SMPH.



She has distinguished herself as a tremendous advocate for students – working with alumni and donors to create more than 40 new, endowed scholarship funds. She did not miss a beat during the pandemic. It is no wonder that Dillivan-Graves has been successful – she attends every alumni event, picks up the phone to thank SMPH donors each week, and develops relationships with donors to truly understand their goals. Her authenticity, compassion, and kindness shine through the thoughtful extra touches she provides for donors, from providing rides to events, reconnecting alumni with beloved faculty members, and so much more.

To learn more about these WMAA honors, including award criteria and how to nominate yourself or other candidates, please visit wmaa.med.wisc.edu/awards

WMAA Teaching Awards

Every year, fourth-year medical students at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) nominate and select recipients of the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) Teaching Awards, which recognize a distinguished clinical teacher in each of the school's five major teaching locations, plus a resident. The 2024 honorees are:

- **Green Bay:** Chung Chen, MD
- **La Crosse:** Paul Bergl, MD '10
- **Madison:** Mary Westergaard, MD
- **Marshfield:** Stephen Holthaus, MD
- **Milwaukee:** Michelle Buelow, MD '11, MPH
- **Outstanding Resident Teaching Award:** Alma Farooque, MD '23

Chen, a hospitalist at Aurora BayCare Medical Center, earned his medical degree from Universidad de Ciencias Medicas in Costa Rica

and completed an internal medicine residency at MetroWest Medical Center in Framingham, Massachusetts. Students call Chen an incredibly supportive attending physician who makes them feel heard during rounds. He excels with students who are just beginning clinical rotations. He gives students an appropriate amount of autonomy and takes their suggestions into consideration when developing patients' plans of care.

Bergl is a critical care physician at Gunderson Health System. He earned his medical degree from the SMPH and completed an internal medicine residency at the University of Chicago. A medical student



wrote, "Dr. Bergl was one of the first physicians to teach our class diagnostic reasoning during our Acute Care block of clerkships. This award highlights his effort on intensive care unit (ICU) rotations, where we watched him work tirelessly for critically ill patients while making the time to ensure that we were taught core ICU bedside procedures along with instruction on how to safely manage ICU patients. Dr. Bergl also was an inspiration on our non-ICU rotations, during which we watched him respond to medical response team codes by bringing his calm, thoughtful, well-reasoned, and confident approach to each encounter."

Westergaard

is a professor in the SMPH's BerbeeWalsh Department of Emergency Medicine. She earned her medical degree from the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, Maryland, and completed an emergency medicine residency at Denver Health Medical Center, where she was the chief resident. She serves as a mentor in the Academic and Career Advising Program and teaches medical students in the emergency department. She advocates for inclusivity in medicine and has shared profound insights on academic, professional, and personal development. Learners look up to Westergaard for her commitment to their education and wellbeing.



Holthaus is a family medicine physician in the Marshfield Clinic Health System; he practices in Rice Lake, Wisconsin. After earning his medical degree from Northwestern University School of Medicine in Chicago, he completed a family medicine residency at University of Minnesota Hospitals and Clinics

in Minneapolis. Medical students say Holthaus is a fantastic physician, mentor, teacher, and role model. As the SMPH's Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine site director, he gets to know each of his students, helping them develop skills to succeed in medical school and beyond. He takes time to go through case studies and provides hands-on training opportunities.

Buelow, a family medicine physician at Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers, earned a master of public health degree from Emory



University in Atlanta and a medical degree and certificate in global health from the SMPH, where she was in the first cohort of graduates in the Training in Urban Medicine and Public Health program. A medical student shared, "Joining Dr. Buelow in clinic at Sixteenth Street was one of the highlights of my medical school training. She is an outstanding preceptor who is deeply committed to her patients. Through her constant support, encouragement, and constructive feedback, she helped instill further confidence in my clinical abilities."

Farooque, a first-year resident in the SMPH Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, earned her medical degree at the SMPH.



Medical students say she epitomizes kindness, inclusivity, and mentorship. Juggling numerous responsibilities, she thoughtfully integrates students into patient care, creating a sense of value and belonging in the team. She discusses difficult topics, articulates her reasoning, and actively seeks students' input. Trainees say they strive to emulate Farooque's patient care and teaching.

Scholarship Reception

FUND RECIPIENTS AND A DONOR DESCRIBE THEIR GRATITUDE



Top row (left to right): M4 Annalise Panthofer; Matt Fischer, MD '15, M2 Barnabas Shiferaw, Jacklyn Fischer; Rom Stevens, MD '82, M2 Merci Mino, Mark Asplund, MD '82. Bottom row: M1 Piayeng Thao; M2 Obie Oniah, Gloria Hawkins, PhD, Roger Smith; David Hartberg, M2 Amy Frenkel.

At the 2024 Scholarship Reception – held by the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) and University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) – medical students who have received scholarships shared their deep gratitude with donors. Speakers described how scholarships reduce indebtedness for future physicians.

Gwen McIntosh, MD '96, MPH, said, "Today, more than ever, the generous support of our donors is vitally important. This year, more than 350 students received financial assistance from scholarships and awards."

UW–Madison Assistant Vice Provost Emerita Gloria Hawkins, PhD, shared observations from her 34 years in leadership roles at UW–Madison, including 20 at the SMPH. She has long supported scholarships and recently helped create the Ronald W. Smith–WMAA Scholarship Fund.

"I was fortunate to work closely with students as they grew personally and academically. ... Medical students I have known over the years are now making an impact on patient care. They inspire me to support others. I share with you the joy of giving – an expression of my love for

this university that has given so much to me," said Hawkins.

Fourth-year medical students Ryan Anderson, MPH, and Annalise Panthofer expressed how scholarships have helped them fulfill their dreams.

Panthofer – the first in her family to attend college – said, "I vividly recall getting my first scholarship and the instant relief it provided. I was working part-time while being a full-time student, and I had the feeling of someone investing in my future without knowing me personally. ... Your contributions are a lifeline for me and other students like me!"

Tyne Family Pays it Forward

JANMESH PATEL RECEIVES THE FIRST TYNE SCHOLARSHIP

by Michael Felber

Throughout his 41 years in practice as an orthopedic surgeon and the ensuing 11 years since his retirement, Lee Tyne, MD '67, and his wife of 62 years – Margaret “Marge” Tyne – have exemplified a generous sense of gratitude to the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH).



Janmesh Patel (left) and Lee Tyne, MD '67

“Going to medical school in Madison was a life-changing event for me,” says Lee Tyne, age 86. “I enjoyed my professors and classmates in medical school and learned to be a competent, caring physician. I just felt that I owed something back. Marge and I had been contributing to the [SMPH] Class of 1967 Great People Scholarship Fund for several years, but lately we thought the time was right to enhance our level of giving.”

The Tynes acted on this goal by creating the Dr. Lee M. and Margaret R. Tyne Scholarship Fund, which provides financial support for an SMPH medical student with demonstrated financial need.

A Family History of Learning and Serving

A native of Sterling, Illinois, Lee Tyne spent the first three of his undergraduate years at UW–Madison – where he met Marge Tyne in 1957 – before completing his bachelor’s degree at the University of Illinois Urbana–Champaign. Returning to Madison in 1963 to begin medical school at the SMPH, Lee Tyne earned his medical degree in 1967. He completed an orthopedics residency at Michael Reese Hospital and Medical Center (now closed) in Chicago and a hand surgery fellowship at Passavant Memorial Hospital, one of two entities that in 1972 combined to form today’s Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

Marge Tyne grew up in West Allis, Wisconsin, and graduated with a bachelor’s degree from UW–Madison, where she studied child development. She received her nursing degree from Cardinal Stritch University in Fox Point, Wisconsin, and worked as a cardiology nurse at Froedtert Hospital in Milwaukee for 20 years.

Lee and Marge Tyne live in Brookfield, Wisconsin, where they raised their family and where the practice that Lee Tyne co-founded – Aspen Orthopedic and Rehabilitation Specialists – is still based. The couple has four daughters: Elisabeth Jozwiak, JD, an attorney; Kari Tyne, MD '02, a family physician; Shannon Nies, a marketing professional; and Michelle Selby, a teaching assistant. They also have nine grandchildren.

One daughter, Kari Tyne, is a Badger physician like her father. She earned her medical degree from the SMPH and established a family practice in Bend, Oregon.

When it comes to helping others, Lee Tyne’s deeds beautifully complement his family’s financial generosity. Twice annually for more than 15 years, he traveled on mission trips to Guatemala, where he performed



Lee Tyne, MD '67, and Margaret “Marge” Tyne

orthopedic surgery on countless patients. Other medical missions have taken him to the Philippines and Haiti.

Gratitude from the Inaugural Scholarship Recipient

Selected in fall 2023 as the initial recipient of the Tyne Family Scholarship is Janmesh Patel, who will begin his third year of medical school at the SMPH in September 2024. A native of India, Patel and his family moved to Jacksonville, Florida, when he was a small boy. When he was in seventh grade, his family moved to Green Bay, Wisconsin, the city he proudly calls home.

Highly advanced in mathematics, physics, and work he can do with his hands, Patel majored in biomedical engineering at UW–Madison, graduating as part of the “COVID class” of 2020.

“I wasn’t especially drawn to medicine initially,” Patel says. “As an undergraduate, a small group of engineering students and I worked on projects that had a strong medical foundation. One was a self-removable, intrauterine device, while another was a

–Continued on page 37

Morris is the New Chair of the Department of Human Oncology

Zachary Morris, MD, PhD, MSc (PG '16), an associate professor in the Department of Human Oncology at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, is the new chair of that department.



Morris, who practices radiation oncology at UW Health, joined the school's faculty in 2016; two years later, he was selected as department vice chair.

One aspect of his cutting-edge research looks at combining radiation and immunotherapies to make cancer cells more susceptible to attack by the body's immune system. Another research emphasis is an "in situ vaccine" that attracts immune cells to a tumor and activates them so they recognize and kill cancer cells at the tumor site. The technique trains the immune system to retain a memory of the particular cancer similar to the way infectious-disease vaccines cause the immune system to recognize disease-causing bacteria and viruses.

As a lead or co-principal investigator, Morris has secured more than \$25 million in grant funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for this highly collaborative work. He is a former Rhodes Scholar.

Among other honors, Morris was named the 2021 Innovator of the Year by the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation. He also earned a 2020 Society for Immunotherapy in Cancer Team Science Award and a 2017 NIH Director's Early Independence Award.

Dean Robert N. Golden, MD, says, "Dr. Morris has a long-standing record of exceptional leadership. His strong background in research, education, and clinical care will shape the continued evolution of this department into the best in the nation."

Keck, Schwartz Elected Fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science

Two faculty members of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) have been elected Fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the world's largest general scientific society.



James Keck, PhD (top photo), professor, Department of Biomolecular Chemistry, was chosen in the biological sciences category. The AAAS cited Keck's "distinguished contributions to the field of genomics, DNA replication and repair, and protein chemistry, particularly in uncovering the many proteins and their role in DNA replication and repair." Keck's laboratory uses biochemical, structural, and cell biology approaches to answering key questions in genome biology.

Brad Schwartz, MD (PG '82) (bottom photo), professor, Departments of Medicine and Biomolecular Chemistry, was selected in the medical sciences category. He was honored for his distinguished contributions to hematology, in particular for research and treatment of disorders of protease cascades, which are involved in numerous physiological processes. A physician-scientist, his clinical work focuses on patients who have bleeding and clotting disorders. Schwartz also is the chief executive officer of the Morgridge Institute for Research at UW-Madison.

In 2024, 502 scientists, engineers, and innovators were chosen to be AAAS Fellows. They reflect the highest standards of scientific integrity and professional ethics.

Bluemke, Lee, and Pickhardt Receive High Honors in Radiology Organizations



Three faculty members of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health's Department of Radiology have

been awarded the highest honors from professional associations.

David Bluemke, MD, PhD, MsB (top/left photo), professor of radiology, received the Society for Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonances' 2024 Gold Award. A specialist in thoracic and cardiovascular imaging, he has held leadership roles in radiology societies and has published more than 800 studies in peer-reviewed journals. He led the first multi-center National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute population study using cardiovascular magnetic resonance imaging.

Fred Lee, Jr., MD (top/right photo), professor of radiology and biomedical engineering, accepted the Society of Interventional Radiology's 2024 Gold Award, which honors his unwavering commitment to the field. Lee's work has resulted in 300 scientific publications, 22 book chapters, and 25 patents and inventions. He founded the UW Tumor Ablation Laboratory, an international leader in developing ablation devices.

And Perry Pickhardt, MD (bottom photo), professor of radiology, received the Gold Medal from the Society of Abdominal Radiology. The chief of gastro-intestinal imaging in his department, he has published widely about CT virtual colonoscopy and artificial intelligence.

Nine Faculty Members Receive Honors Supported by the Vilas Estate



Nine members of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health faculty were honored in spring 2024 with awards supported by the estate of Professor, U.S. Senator, and UW Regent William F. Vilas (1840-1908). The faculty members' photos are placed in the order (left to right, top to bottom) listed below:

Angela Byars-Winston, PhD, MA, professor of medicine, and Joshua Lang, MD, MS, associate professor of medicine, were named to Vilas Distinguished Achievement Professorships.

Jacob Brunkard, PhD, assistant professor of genetics; Roomasa Channa, MD, assistant professor of ophthalmology and visual sciences; and Tyler Ulland, MS, PhD, assistant professor of pathology and laboratory medicine, received Vilas Early-Career Investigator Awards.

Jonathan Engle, PhD '11, associate professor of medical physics and radiology, and Andrew Mehle, PhD, professor of medical microbiology and immunology, received Vilas Faculty Mid-Career Investigator Awards.

Karola Kreitmair, PhD, MSc, associate professor of medical history and bioethics, and Ke Li, PhD, associate professor of medical physics and radiology, are among 24 UW-Madison winners of the Vilas Associates Competition for their research.

10 Faculty Serving as Presidents of National or International Organizations



As of May 2024, these University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health faculty members are serving as presidents of national or international professional organizations. Photos are placed in the order listed below:

- Steven Barczy, MD (PG '96), professor of medicine; president, Association of Specialty Professors
- Allan Brasier, MD, professor of medicine; president, Association for Clinical and Translational Science
- Lee Eckhardt, MD, professor of medicine; president, Cardiac Electrophysiology Society
- Allison Grayev, MD (PG '08), professor of radiology; president, Alliance of Medical Student Educators in Radiology
- Dudley Lamming, PhD, FAAA, FGSA, associate professor of medicine; president, American Aging Association
- Stephen Y. Nakada, MD, FACS, FRCS, professor and chair of urology; president, American Urological Association
- David Schneider, MD, FACS, FAMIA (PG '12), associate professor of surgery; president, Endocrine Surgery Quality Foundation
- Manish N. Shah, MD, MPH, professor and chair of emergency medicine; president, Society for Academic Emergency Medicine Foundation
- Héctor H. Valdivia, MD, PhD, professor of medicine; president, Cardiac Muscle Society
- Ben Zarzaur, MD, MPH, FACS, professor of surgery; president, Eastern Association for the Surgery of Trauma

Wisconsin Partnership Program Continued from page 7

rental and job assistance; mental health care; and food-pantry referrals. Ninety percent of babies supported by the doulas and CHWs reached full gestational age, and 84 percent were born at healthy weights.

WPP funding also helps address the needs of Wisconsin's aging population, such as a grant to the United Community Center that supports dementia-related health care and caregiver support for Latino people in southeastern Wisconsin.

In northern Wisconsin, the WPP funds Oneida and Menominee Nations initiatives to promote traditional food practices and increase access to nutritious food.

Rural public health issues were the focus of a \$1 million grant to Marshfield Clinic Health System for its innovative Community Connections Team.

Through this funding, when providers in central and northern Wisconsin learn that patients need help with non-medical needs, they connect them with Universities of Wisconsin health professions students, who help find community resources. The project has resulted in 17,000 referrals to supportive services.

"The Wisconsin Partnership Program has made such a positive impact on Wisconsin by funding essential initiatives that are innovative, move health forward, and fund the most intractable challenges for our state," Kind says. "We work very carefully to ensure that a wide range of applicants hear about the program and have the opportunity to submit proposals."

Education and Research

With more than \$201 million allocated since 2004 to research and education initiatives, the WPP's investments have been catalytic in transforming research and education at the SMPH.

"The WPP has helped transform the way medical students are taught at the SMPH," says Elizabeth Petty, MD '86 (PG '89), senior associate dean for academic affairs, using as examples the 2007 launch of the successful WARM program and support for the 2016 launch of a new MD curriculum, for which the WPP helped develop and deliver

innovative, integrated strategies that address health equity issues statewide.

The WPP has similarly influenced the breadth and depth of research by faculty members and trainees, notes Richard Moss, PhD, emeritus professor of cell and regenerative biology and past chair of PERC; he says, "WPP funding and grant program reviews by WPP committee members have further strengthened what is now a robust continuum that spans basic, translational, clinical, and public health research, all in the interests of scientific discovery and application to improve health and health care."

For instance, the PERC awarded a grant for a project to investigate microbiological areas of public health importance, headed by Bruce Klein, MD (PG '89), professor of pediatrics, medicine, and medical microbiology and immunology. Leveraging findings established via this initial WPP funding, the project successfully competed for a five-year, \$16 million Center for Excellence in Translational Research grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which has been renewed. Led by David Andes, MD, PhD (PG '96), professor of medicine, the NIH center has identified hundreds of antibiotic drug candidates, some of which are under active development.

WPP's research grants include innovative community-academic partnerships such as the Oneida Stroke Prevention Program. Robert Dempsey, MD, FASC, chair, SMPH Department of Neurological Surgery, and a team of researchers, clinicians, and medical students partner with the Oneida Nation to reduce stroke risk factors among Tribal members. Participants receive a health assessment and work with health coaches to reduce their stroke risk factors. The Tribe's Elder Council shares knowledge of holistic health care.

Mile Bluff Medical Center, where Sebranek practices, was a testing ground for another WPP grant designed to prevent blindness in rural patients at risk of diabetic retinopathy. Using a system designed by Yao Liu, MD, assistant professor of ophthalmology and visual sciences, patients have retinal photos

taken in Mauston and sent electronically to Madison, where specialists identify patients for follow-up care. Liu and her team have leveraged findings from this study to obtain a \$4.4 million National Eye Institute grant to expand the research.

And the WPP funds a wide range of cancer research, such as a grant to Shigeki Miyamoto, PhD, professor of oncology, who is studying a pathway used by T cells that fight against cancer and viral infections.

Transformation

Public health has become deeply woven into the fabric of the SMPH. But before WPP funding became available, the following programs did not exist: the Master of Public Health (MPH) Program; Population Health Service Fellowship; Preventive Medicine Residency; Medical Scientist (MD/PhD) Training Program; and Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine. WARM has graduated 301 physicians as of May 2024.

In 2003, as school leaders began planning for an integrated school of medicine and public health, Patrick Remington, MD '81, MPH, was charged with establishing the MPH Program. Demand was strong from health and public policy professionals. And the WPP was the catalyst for the program, says Remington, who became the first associate dean for public health.

"We are now known around the country as a medical school that really does walk the public health talk," he says.

Today, the Population Health Service Fellowship is 20 years old, the MPH Program is 19 years old, and the Preventive Medicine Residency is 10 years old. Alumni of these programs are working in key leadership roles around the state and beyond.

"The Wisconsin Partnership Program is novel," Kind says. "The idea that we have a program like this at the SMPH truly is a tremendous asset. And it allows us to engage in ways that few institutions can do – in true alignment with the Wisconsin Idea. The service component of the SMPH is real, it is actualized, and it moves forward in no small part because of the Wisconsin Partnership Program."

New WMAA President Continued from 21

and you can see the difference. This is super rewarding.”

The multidisciplinary team that influences this transformation – including physicians, nurses, dietitians, teachers, recreation therapists, and other health care professionals – creates a buoyant atmosphere for the kids. For instance, they encourage “spirit” activities, such as talent shows and dress-up days. Skills-based therapies and therapeutic activities are woven in with diagnostic evaluation and medication management, using evidence-based practices.

As part of this team, Scallon includes medical students from the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) and residents from the SMPH and MCW. She also teaches on the UW–Madison campus in the SMPH Department of Psychiatry.

“I believe training others is an important part of being a doctor, so when I got to Rogers, I set up rotations for medical students and psychiatry residents,” says Scallon, recalling how she felt well-supported by the SMPH faculty, staff, and alumni when she was a medical student, and she aims to foster a collegial environment to inspire future physicians.

“I was fearful going into medical school because I had heard how

demanding it was, and I thought that might mean it was going to be unfriendly. Instead, it was very positive and supportive,” she notes.

“The UW School of Medicine and Public Health has been transformative in my life. Through my role in the WMAA, I want to make sure students know they are joining a warm, supportive community where we teach and inspire each other,” shares Scallon. “As alumni, we also can help guide students toward careers that are a good fit for them.”

Another source of her support during medical school came from her family, including her dad, who worked as an aircraft mechanic in the Air National Guard at Truax Field, and her mom, who was a secretary in the UW College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

“My mom worked across the street from the Medical Sciences Center, where I trained in my first two years of medical school. Every day, she packed me a lunch and dropped it off in a secret hiding place in the hallway,” says Scallon. “My parents didn’t have the opportunity to attend college, but they were incredibly supportive of my education.”

Scallon has five siblings – three in Madison, one in Spain, and one in the

Twin Cities in Minnesota – whom she considers her best friends.

“I love spending time with them and with my husband; Genevieve; and Oliver and his girlfriend, who is doing a medical residency,” she says.

Thinking of the era when her kids were young, Scallon recalls feeling stretched as a working mom, but – like her bicycle accident – that had a silver lining.

“Although I had many late nights preparing for teaching the next day, I did my best not to miss activities that my kids were involved in. We had a lot of fun together, and we still do,” she says. “My kids say their lives have been enhanced by my career. They both have mission-driven professions, and they realize you can balance life and a meaningful career.”

Reflecting on her volunteer roles with the WMAA, including serving on the *Quarterly* Editorial Board and Healer’s Journey Committee, Scallon exclaims, “I love this medical school, and it is a great privilege to be the new president of the WMAA. We want students, residents, and young faculty members to know that we support them and want them to succeed. Being a Badger doctor means you always belong here.”

Tyne Scholarship Continued from page 33

near-infrared pen for marking breast tissue before reconstructive surgery.”

These experiences, Patel says, allowed him to leverage his passion for engineering with a desire to help people with medical challenges. After working in a laboratory setting for 18 months at Madison-based Exact Sciences, Patel enrolled at the SMPH in fall 2022.

As a medical student, Patel has worked with Assistant Professor Jose Ayuso, PhD, and other faculty members in the Department of Dermatology who have been applying microfluidic technology to develop an in vitro model for the granuloma formation exhibited in patients with sarcoidosis,

a rare inflammatory condition. He also has assisted Vincent Ma, MD – an assistant professor who specializes in hematology, medical oncology, and palliative care in the Department of Medicine – by conducting a melanoma literature review, among other tasks.

Patel is on track to earn his medical degree in 2026 and hopes to practice medicine in Wisconsin.

“I have had the chance to flourish since moving to Wisconsin as a young teenager. The state and University of Wisconsin–Madison have given me so many opportunities, and thanks to the generosity of Dr. and Mrs. Tyne, I look forward to giving back by caring for people close to home.”



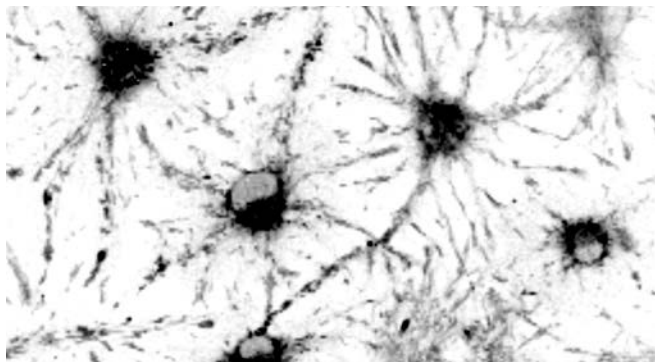
SIRTAJ GREWAL/MEDIA SOLUTIONS

Janmesh Patel (left) and Lee Tyne, MD '67

New Tool Improves Understanding of Stem Cell Aging in the Brain

Researchers can use light naturally emitted by stem cells (autofluorescence) to better study the states of those cells in the nervous system, thanks to a tool they developed at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. The tool enhances the understanding of how those cells in the brain can be activated to divide and make more of themselves, enhancing cognitive function.

Darcie Moore, PhD, senior author of the study and an associate professor of neuroscience at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH), worked with Melissa Skala, PhD, professor of biomedical



engineering at UW–Madison and an investigator at the Morgridge Institute for Research. Moore and Skala are members of the UW–Madison Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine Center. They published their findings in *Cell Stem Cell*.

“Studying the quiescent stem cell state is important because the exit from quiescence is the rate-limiting step in making newborn neurons in the brain,” says Moore. “Aging and neurological disease limit this exit, thus limiting cell regeneration and repair.”

The team combined autofluorescence with the sequencing of genetic material in single cells to study the behavior of neural stem cells. When cells shift from quiescent to activated states, the presence and abundance of certain proteins change, altering how light is absorbed and emitted from the cell. By combining autofluorescence and sequencing, researchers identified the autofluorescence “signature” that could predict a target cell state. This tool likely has many future uses. For instance, it can be used to study neural stem cells using their light signature, without the need to destroy the cell to identify it.

Study Supports Recommendation to Begin Mammogram Screening at 40

Breast cancer screening every two years beginning at age 40 has the potential to reduce the number of deaths from the disease while minimizing the harms of screening, according to a large study co-led by Amy Trentham-Dietz, PhD '97, the lead author. She is a professor in the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health's Department of Population Health Sciences and the associate director of population sciences and community engagement at the UW Carbone Cancer Center.

Study results helped inform the April 2024 updated recommendation of

the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) on breast cancer screening.

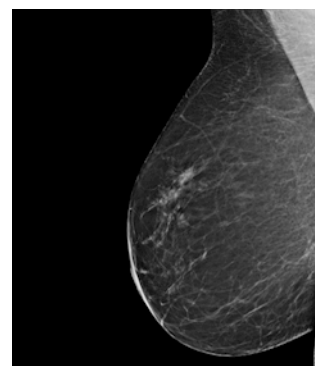
The USPSTF had previously recommended that women in their 40s decide when to start screening based on their health history and preferences. But, Trentham-Dietz notes, mammography has improved and has shown higher cancer-detection rates and lower risks of false positives. At the same time, breast cancer incidence has increased in younger women, while racial disparities in death rates continue.

Trentham-Dietz and Jeanne Mandelblatt, MD, PhD, MPH, a professor of oncology at Georgetown University, led teams of

decision-analysis researchers from the Cancer Intervention and Surveillance Modeling Network. Using simulation models, they evaluated 36 screening strategies with data from a wide range of sources. Their teams analyzed multiple variables, including starting and stopping ages of screenings, breast density, and types of screening methods. The strategies were then ranked by benefits and risks to generate a comprehensive assessment of screening.

The study was published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

At UW–Madison, the study co-authors included Ronald Gangnon, PhD '98, professor,



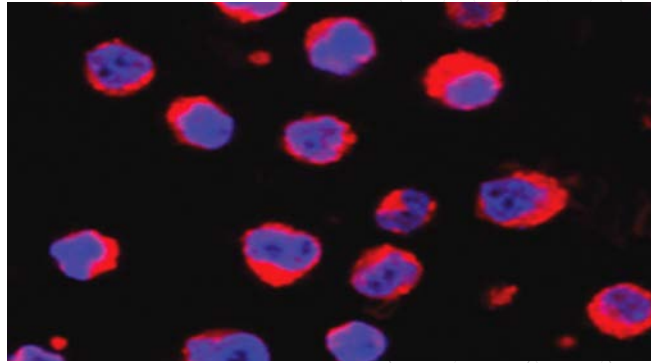
SMPH Departments of Population Health Sciences and Biostatistics and Medical Informatics; John Hampton, statistician, Carbone Cancer Center; and Oguzhan Alagoz, PhD, and Yifan Lu, UW College of Engineering.

Study Suggests a Way to Overcome Forms of Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma

A research team at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) has identified a novel mechanism behind resistance to current drugs for certain forms of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, and they have successfully tested – in a mouse model – a possible treatment for overcoming relapse.

Lixin Rui, PhD, associate professor, Department of Medicine, led the team that published findings in *Blood*.

Patients with B-cell malignancies, including mantle cell and diffuse large B-cell lymphoma, often respond well to treatments that include Bruton tyrosine



kinase (BTK) inhibitors. These medications block B-cells' signaling pathway, short-circuiting the resulting overproduction of B-cells.

However, most patients treated this way relapse within two years. The team sought to understand why and how relapse happens

when patients are treated with ibrutinib, the most widely prescribed drug in its class. Analyses implicated one gene related to ibrutinib resistance. The gene produces a protein called early growth response 1 (EGRI).

Among EGRI's functions is the regulation of cell

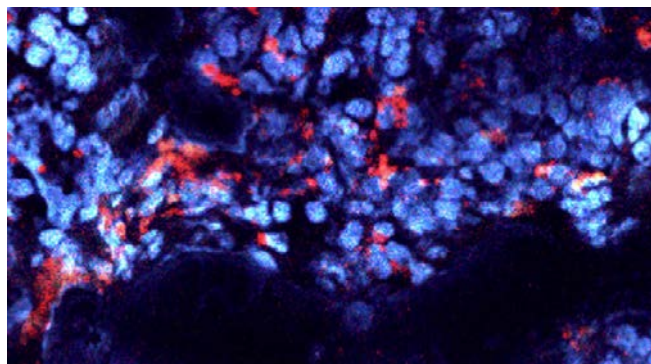
proliferation. In the study, ibrutinib-resistant B-cells displayed more active EGRI genes compared to non-resistant cells. That activity became more pronounced following ibrutinib treatment, as EGRI promoted changes that increase cells' energy.

Next, Rui's team tested new treatments to counteract EGRI overactivity. An experimental combination of the diabetes drug metformin and a newer drug called IM156 (both lower cell metabolism) slowed the growth of ibrutinib-resistant lymphoma cells with drug-resistant B-cell lymphomas. Rui hopes the experimental treatment will progress to clinical trials.

Nano-Drugs Delivered by Bacteria Could Aid Treatment for Pancreatic Cancer

Pancreatic cancer has one of the lowest five-year survival rates among common cancers. An important driver of this dismal prognosis is the dense matrix of collagen and other tissues that surround many pancreatic tumors. This "fortress" helps counteract treatment attempts with various immunotherapies.

University of Wisconsin–Madison researchers recently published a study that used a common bacterium to penetrate the barrier and deliver therapeutic nano-drugs. Quanyin Hu, PhD, assistant professor, UW School of Pharmacy, led the study, with Sean Ronneklied-Kelly, MD (PG '15), assistant professor, Department



of Surgery, UW School of Medicine and Public Health, and surgical oncologist, UW Health, as a collaborator. They published the study in *Med.*

Patient tumor samples revealed that a specific type of collagen is a barrier to immunotherapy-based treatments. Hu's lab applied a strain of the *Escherichia coli*

bacterium to penetrate the collagen barrier and deliver immunotherapeutic "nano-drugs." This strain of *E. coli* has a record of safe use in humans and a known affinity for low-oxygen environments such as tumors.

The research team then engineered "protein cages" containing two drugs – an

immune checkpoint inhibitor and a drug that breaks down collagen – and attached them to the *E. coli*.

When the team tested this delivery system in mouse models of pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma, the most common form, they found that mice treated with the drug-laden bacteria showed delayed tumor growth and significantly longer survival compared with mice that received other treatments. Also, the tumors had the greatest infiltration of cancer-fighting immune cells.

While this approach shows promise for treating malignancies with tough collagen barriers, the team is working to improve and simplify it in animal models.

Global Neurosurgery Relies on Investments in People and Education in Areas of Need

Over the past 30 years, through my work in Africa, Central and South America, Asia, and other resource-limited countries, I have gained insights about the importance of supporting training and health care infrastructure in a way that will enhance patient care far beyond that which an individual or team can do on their own. Indeed, working with people and groups that prioritize investments in training and infrastructure in the areas of need can help improve care for patients throughout the world.



As physicians, our work focuses on the desire to enhance the lives of those we treat. From that comes the drive to conduct research aimed at finding and delivering better treatments, and to develop the next generation of health care providers to make sure equitable care is available around the globe. While I can impact thousands of patients through my work, the people we train may impact countless people worldwide, including those that are not even born yet.

According to a 2015 report by the Lancet Commission on Global Surgery, essential surgical care for trauma, cancer, stroke, pain, and pediatric congenital lesions is absent for 5.5 billion people worldwide. I strongly believe the future of neurosurgery must include a commitment to global health in a manner

that reflects our compassionate roles as doctors and educators.

To date, several approaches to global health have yielded varied results. For example, some attempts have been based on a “mission” perspective, in which practitioners from high-income countries attempt to do the work for others. This may provide a sense of personal satisfaction to the altruistic providers, but unfortunately, service alone has minimal lasting impact and is easily disrupted by the wars and famines which may affect these areas of need.

Similarly, attempts to educate health care providers from the area of need at facilities in high-income countries generally are not effective because neurosurgical training involves equipment, infrastructure, and supplies that are not available when the trainees return to their home communities.

Organizations such as the Foundation for International Education in Neurological Surgery (FIENS) train people in the country of need, establishing self-sustaining educational programs of and for the local people. This requires developing and sustaining relationships with the government, the military, and the population so they will embrace the programs rather than regard them as something imposed on them by outside agencies. To succeed, one must listen to and understand the needs of the involved parties rather than outside groups. After truly hearing the views of the local community, the physicians, and the government, practitioners can partner with them to establish sustainable programs based on the local needs.

The recent First Global Neurosurgery Conference in Peshawar, Pakistan, brought together experienced, compassionate thought leaders to consider this issue. The group shared

its definition of global neurosurgery as “the clinical and public health practice of neurosurgery with the primary purpose of ensuring timely, safe, and affordable neurosurgical care to all who need it.” The group highlighted the importance of developing and supporting global neurosurgery champions in each country. In turn, these champions can lead the development of local clinicians and staff. The Peshawar statement emphasizes the importance of multidisciplinary collaborations and inclusive discussions in advancing a common goal of achieving self-sustaining neurosurgical care for the people and populations in need. These strategic partnerships will provide inspiration and energy for a future in which global neurosurgery draws strength based on its diversity and unity.

FIENS now helps support self-sustaining educational programs in more than 24 regions of great need, serving millions of people. This is possible only through the partnership of the doctors and residents of high- and low-income countries, each contributing their ideas, resources, talents, and energy toward the common good of a system that serves patients who otherwise would not have access to care.

We live in a period of great need, but also of great possibility. As William



Butler Yeats said, “Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”

ROBERT J. DEMPSEY, MD

Chair and Manucher J. Javid Professor of Neurological Surgery, Department of Neurological Surgery, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health



I Know YOU



... Or do I?

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

HINT ABOUT PHOTO ABOVE:

She is known as a free spirit with a great sense of humor.

ABOUT LAST ISSUE'S PHOTO:

Elizabeth "Beth" Neary, MD '91 (PG '97), won the prize drawing and will receive a gift from the Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association!



In the last issue of *Quarterly*, 11 people identified Paul Sondel, MD, PhD '75 (PG '80), the Reed and Carolee Walker Professor in Pediatric Oncology, Department of Pediatrics,

University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH). A member of the UW Carbone Cancer Center, Sondel also has appointments in human oncology and medical genetics; he served for 26 years as head of the Division of Pediatric Hematology, Oncology, and Bone Marrow Transplant in the Department of Pediatrics; he is now the division's research director.

Sondel earned his undergraduate and doctoral degrees at UW-Madison, followed by a medical degree at Harvard Medical School; a postdoctoral fellowship in tumor immunology at Harvard's Farber Cancer Center; and a pediatrics residency at UW Children's Hospital (now American Family Children's Hospital). There and at the SMPH, Sondel continues to build upon his four-decade career leading cancer immunology research and immunotherapy trials to connect basic science findings to novel clinical approaches. Known as an incredibly compassionate physician, colleague, and mentor, he has trained more

than 70 graduate and postdoctoral learners. Further, Sondel serves on multiple national committees.

The early-1970s photo was taken around the time Sondel, as an undergraduate, began working in the laboratory of Fritz Bach, MD, a pioneer in bone marrow transplant and immunotherapy, who later became Sondel's PhD mentor.

Daniela Lax, MD '81, identified the photo of "the young, brilliant Dr. Paul Sondel," and Marianne Wallace, PhD '95, referred to Sondel as the "best clinician, scientist, leader, and true friend you will ever meet!"

Millard Susman, PhD, SMPH professor emeritus of genetics and a founding member of the UW-Madison Biology Core Curriculum (Biocore), shared, "Paul was a student in Biocore when it was still considered an experimental program. ... He stood out as one of the star students in the class."

Susman continues, "We are so lucky to have him as a member of our medical school faculty for more than four decades."

**PLEASE SHARE
YOUR NEWS!**

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

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YOU CAN HELP DECIDE!

The Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association (WMAA) Awards Committee invites you to nominate yourself or other candidates for 2025 WMAA Awards. Categories are:

- Early-Career Achievement Award
- Emeriti Faculty Award – Basic Science
- Emeriti Faculty Award – Clinical Science
- Honorary Life Membership Award
- Medical Alumni Citation – Distinguished Alumni Award
- Resident/Fellow Citation – Distinguished Resident Award
- Medical Alumni Service Award
- Ralph Hawley Distinguished Community Service Award

Nominations are due on **September 30, 2024**, and must include:

- a nomination form completed online
- a letter of nomination that includes a brief statement of the nominee's accomplishments
- the nominee's current curriculum vitae

Awards will be made at the WMAA Awards Banquet in May 2025. For information, please contact the WMAA at wmaa@med.wisc.edu or via phone at (608) 263-4915.

Please use the QR code or visit wmaa.med.wisc.edu/awards to find a simple nomination form and descriptions of each award.

