Onward to the Future

Annual Report 2022
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LETTER FROM THE DEAN

Onward to Our Future

“THE BEST WAY TO PREDICT YOUR FUTURE IS TO CREATE IT.”
— Abraham Lincoln

In June, the WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine experienced a profound change when Founding Dean John Tomkowiak stepped down from his role. In his nearly seven years at the helm, he led one of the most ambitious undertakings Washington State University has ever pursued by successfully launching the College of Medicine.

The list of accomplishments during his tenure—receiving full accreditation, establishing a full cohort of 320 medical students, developing the first residency programs, creating Range Community Clinic, launching new departments and offices, and more—is far longer than we can list here, though we have highlighted many on page 40. We celebrate his important role in the history of the College of Medicine and its indelible impact on our communities.

We move into our future with a strong foundation and an unwavering resolve. Every day, our mission guides us to solve problems in challenging health care environments across the state of Washington and to create the future we have envisioned for medical education and health care access.

I am honored to have been named interim dean and to lead the college into this next phase of service and impact. I joined the College of Medicine in summer 2021 as the vice dean for Graduate Medical Education/Continuing Medical Education and Partnerships to be part of a group of mission-driven innovators who are committed to leading the future of medical education and health care. In my 25-year career in medicine and academia, I have never seen a culture so collectively driven toward a shared mission and vision for its community.

In the pages ahead, you’ll see evidence of how much we have to celebrate and the exciting future we are creating.

Our Office of Diversity, Health Justice, and Belonging began implementing the first phase of its Strategic Diversity Action Plan and developed new programs and opportunities for continued growth of this important work in all corners of the college.

Our Departments of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology and Speech and Hearing Sciences continued their legacies of serving the community with their unique expertise, including providing weekly nutrition and exercise services to more than 45 clients at the Health and Fitness Clinic and serving more than 120 speech and hearing clients through clinical sessions for individual and group therapy at the University Hearing and Speech Clinic.

Our research enterprise showcased their outsized expertise and impact on health care topics including substance abuse and addiction, sleep, diabetes, and community health, and began implementing exciting plans for the new Department of Community and Behavioral Health.

Range Community Clinic provided more than 6,000 vaccinations across eastern Washington, offered its first ophthalmology services, and began providing regular care to a rural community that had lost all primary care and pharmacy providers for its citizens.

The future holds an endless number of opportunities for the college, and we are grateful for all that has come before. The College of Medicine was built by the vision of great leaders, the dedication and hard work of faculty and staff, the unyielding support of community partners, and the immense trust of our students and their families. We honor that legacy by striving to make an impact each day.

Cheers to you who are creating a better future of health care for all members of our communities.

Sincerely,

James M. Record, MD, JD, FACP
Interim Dean

Our Graduate Medical Education program wrapped up its first year of training internal medicine residents in Everett, began recruiting for the new family medicine residency program in Pullman, and worked feverishly to develop more residency programs across the state.
Care Beyond the Clinic

On July 1, 2021, the inaugural class of internal medicine residents began taking new patients at Providence Regional Medical Center Everett.

The 16 new residents would soon discover, however, how much training happens beyond the clinic.

Built upon the same mission and values as the College of Medicine, the Internal Medicine Residency Program emphasizes training in challenging health care environments.

“We are very much a mission-driven residency,” said Matthew Hansen, MD, program director for the WSU Internal Medicine Residency Program-Everett. “We want to help communities left behind.”

Much of this training is centered at the continuity clinic, launched alongside the residency program to support the residents’ outpatient training. A critical component of outpatient internal residency medical training, continuity clinics provide residents with opportunities to develop rich relationships with both attending physicians and patients. Here, our first WSU residents serve as primary care physicians for a panel of patients and further their population health management training.

“When we opened the doors in July 2021, we had a patient panel of zero,” said Jodi Ferguson, manager of clinical operations. “I am humbled and amazed not only by how much our clinic panel has grown, but our residents, support staff, and faculty as well. Our proverbial ‘Field of Dreams’ is a reality.”

The clinic, created in partnership with primary training facility Providence Regional Medical Center Everett, is housed within the hospital yet serves as a pivotal connection to communities beyond the clinic. Since they started taking
patients, the clinic has served as a safety net for the Everett community, taking vulnerable populations such as uninsured and complex patients that haven’t successfully found a primary care provider.

To better support disadvantaged populations, the clinic provides wraparound care—a strategy that leverages additional, sometimes non-medical, providers to address social determinants of health. Wraparound services have shown to lower barriers to treatment and improve patient outcomes, an essential part of the residency program’s mission.

Viewed as a safe space and resource for patients most in need, many referrals come from the hospital’s ER, where uninsured and other vulnerable individuals disproportionately turn for health care services. The clinic also sees patient referrals from MercyWatch, a local nonprofit providing street medicine and outreach to people experiencing homelessness.

“It’s in the DNA of our program and our structures, being tethered to the community,” said Ahmed Salahudeen, MD, assistant program director for inpatient medicine.

Residents and WSU faculty do not just receive patients in the clinic, they meet them where they are.

Outreach is a core component of the residency program’s curriculum, and residents have dedicated training time to provide care in non-traditional sites built into their schedules. Compared to most internal medicine residencies that focus only on patients within the hospital, the partnership with MercyWatch connects providers with outreach street medicine throughout Snohomish County to provide an important service and unique educational experience.

“The practice of medicine tends to be in the silo of the clinic, not out of the comforts of those health care systems,” said Salahudeen.

But the WSU Internal Medicine Residency Program leadership team believes that providers need to be rooted in the community where they can serve as primary care advocates for the underserved.

“Community outreach is often overlooked in internal medicine training,” said Jonathan Salud, MD, assistant program director for outpatient medicine. “When we put it in the curriculum, we did it with bated breath to see if residents would be passionate about it.”

The residents have not only had a positive response to the outreach curricular component—they have embraced it and driven it to new levels.

We are very much a mission-driven residency. We want to help communities left behind.

MATTHEW HANSEN, MD
Program Director for the WSU Internal Medicine Residency Program-Everett
In January 2022, when the COVID-19 pandemic forced many support centers and cold weather shelters to close, MercyWatch was not able to provide their customary lunch services to those in need. They reached out to the residency program to help. The residents immediately took action during their personal time off to lend a hand, providing 200 bagged meals to give to the community over the course of a single day.

The outreach experience also led resident Wagma Nizami, MD, to initiate a clothing drive in coordination with her fellow residents, faculty and staff in fall 2021.

Additional outreach training experiences have been added to the residency program’s curriculum over the past year. In partnership with the MercyWatch mobile medical unit, second year residents now visit a Lynnwood hygiene center to deliver care to individuals visiting the center to shower, do laundry, or get a hot meal. The residency program has also developed a new partnership with Lynnwood’s A Hand Up Project, through which residents visit a respite center located in a Motel 6 to deliver medical care to those struggling with addiction or experiencing homelessness.

“We are able to approach vulnerable individuals in a way that purely offers help,” said Hansen. “You can more easily build trust when you are able to establish a relationship on the patient’s terms and then bring them into the more structured medical setting to offer further complex care and treatment. A significant number of our resident primary care patient panel has been established this way.”

Those at the clinic are more than ready to answer the call to serve.

“I am excited about the residency’s growth this year and the impact that will have on those populations as well,” said Ferguson. “I am amazed and inspired by the sustained, overwhelming drive from our residents and clinic team to go beyond our clinic walls to make a real difference in people’s lives.”

Beyond street medicine, the Internal Medicine Residency Program’s outreach efforts now include a partnership with the new Everett VA outpatient center, the Tulalip Health Clinic, and Ilwaco Ocean Beach Hospital—the program’s first rural training site. These training sites will give residents invaluable experience with vulnerable populations and an understanding of the unique barriers and challenges facing them.
Hansen hopes to see the community-based model have a particular impact at the Tulalip Health Clinic training site. Residents rotating there will have a longitudinal outpatient experience in which they see patients over a two- to three-year period and act as a primary care physician.

With curriculum developed in collaboration with Tulalip Health Clinic’s Medical Officer John Okemah, MD, and Medical Director Elizabeth Topsky, MD, Hansen hopes that the residents can not only improve their own cultural competency but take that knowledge and understanding back to the larger residency class to ensure all program residents can benefit from that experience.

They also hope to create a pipeline for the Tulalip Health Clinic to recruit physicians.

“We created an application process with leaders of the Tulalip community to ensure we are recruiting residents who are really interested in gaining this experience, but who also want to pursue a career as a provider to the community,” said Hansen. “The Tulalip community could really benefit from additional primary care physicians.”

To help them reach this goal, the Internal Medicine Residency Program team has incorporated a holistic admissions process similar to the college’s Undergraduate Medical Program. Leila Harrison, PhD, senior associate dean for admissions and student affairs, helped them translate the admissions method to Graduate Medical Education.

“Leila Harrison has helped us develop a holistic admissions method to create a diverse, mission-aligned class,” said Hansen. “We’re optimistic this method will enable us to recruit residents who are aligned with our mission and who are interested in serving underserved populations.”

For Hansen, this is what it means to provide community-based medical education.

“It’s a community effort,” he said. “It’s born of community need and it wouldn’t be possible without the collaborative effort of all our community partners. We are indebted and grateful for all their support.”

Salahudeen and Salud reiterated the significance of outreach and advocacy to the program’s future as they continue to recruit and train residents.

“We want to continue to empower people to engage in systematic change rather than patching things up as they provide care. We’re training our physicians to be community advocates,” said Salahudeen.

Salud sees a world of possibility and change in the residency program’s future.

“Residents, faculty, and staff out in the community, staring the social determinates of health in the face and making an impact,” said Salud. “It’s lightning in the bottle.”
Program Spotlights

Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology

PhD Project Exploring New Lines of Research at College and National Levels

Welcoming its first doctoral students to train in the fields of nutrition and exercise physiology research. Three years later, faculty continue to mentor graduate students whose work has the potential to shape real-world guidance and research at the college and national levels.

Among the inaugural class was Thomas Gooding, who was initially drawn to the new program because he felt he could play an important role in building it and now leads an enterprising, integrative new study in exercise physiology.

“I felt I could take charge of my research and studies in a newer program,” said Gooding. “I wanted to really shape my future and take advantage of the experts not only in my field of exercise physiology but nutrition as well.”

It did not take long for Gooding’s aspirations to become reality.

Early in his first semester he began having conversations with Associate Professor Hans Haverkamp, PhD, about the physiological and biological mechanisms of training maladaptation, otherwise known as overtraining syndrome.

Overtraining occurs when an individual’s training load exceeds their recovery and has been gaining national attention as endurance athletes open up about mental health. When overtraining syndrome occurs, the body won’t grow stronger but instead begins to break down, resulting in reduced performance along with a range of other symptoms including fatigue, poor sleep health, respiratory symptoms, and altered mental health and moods.

“Much of the research on this topic has been done with highly trained athletes who were already burnt out or overtrained,” said Gooding. “We began wondering what we could find out if we looked at overtraining in a research lab using a designed training protocol to induce this overtrained state and then let them recover.”

Excited by the potential in this new line of research in which both had no previous background, Haverkamp became Gooding’s faculty mentor and began designing the new research project and training protocol.

“We’re approaching overtraining in a different way than all the other research on the topic,” said Haverkamp. “We’re studying recreationally active individuals rather than high-level athletes in the hope that we can get a purer view and understanding of the biological progression to overtraining.”

Gooding and Haverkamp, serving as principal investigator, spent two years planning the protocol and piloting the idea in the lab. In a milestone for both Gooding and the PhD

THOMAS GOODING, MEd, ATC, CSCS
Nutrition and Exercise Physiology
Doctoral Candidate
program, Gooding’s work became the first student-led research project in the department to gain Internal Review Board approval in May 2021. Data collection began shortly after in June 2021.

In addition to Gooding’s unique protocol and research subjects, he is also exploring the biological mechanisms of overtraining by incorporating proteomics, or the large-scale analysis of proteins, into their study.

“Proteomics hasn’t been done in recreational athletes, only high-level athletes,” said Gooding, who is analyzing proteomes in subjects before and after their training program. “No one’s really been doing this yet, so we’re sort of spearheading this from an exercise standpoint.”

Gooding’s research is also gaining national support. The American College of Sports Medicine Foundation awarded Gooding with the 2022 Doctoral Student Research grant to fund his dissertation.

Haverkamp is similarly excited about how the project has grown and how it could potentially lay the groundwork for his studies as well as for new NEP graduate students.

“This project has the potential to make novel, important contributions to this research field and to impact in how we think about the progression to, and recovery from, overtraining,” said Haverkamp. “Further, Tom’s project has the potential to fuel decades of future work by many incoming PhD students.”
PROGRAM SPOTLIGHTS

Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences

PROGRAM OF EXCELLENCE IN AUTISM AND NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS TO PROVIDE TRAINING TO SHS STUDENTS AND CARE TO COMMUNITIES

Faculty within the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences have been conducting research on autism since 2015, but now they are hoping to venture beyond the lab and into the clinic. To this end, Speech and Hearing Sciences research faculty, Assistant Professors Georgina Lynch, PhD, and Lauren Thompson, PhD, are spearheading the development of a Program of Excellence in Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders that will merge research, clinical education, and community care.

The program will offer accessible resources to communities across the state all within one place, provided by an interprofessional team with expertise in comprehensive evaluation and treatment of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and neurodevelopmental disorders, assuring the very best care and support for children and their families.

The journey to diagnosis can be extensive for families of children with ASD. Within eastern Washington, families are often told there is a six-to-12-month waitlist to be seen by providers with expertise in autism. This waitlist results in delayed access to developmental, behavioral, and medical interventions.

“The College of Medicine recognized that families of autism spectrum disorder were going out of state to find services such as diagnosis and evaluation,” said Lynch, who has been integral to the development of the program over the past several years. “The idea is that we can bring a multidisciplinary team together in eastern Washington and build a treatment pipeline.”

In keeping with the college’s mission, the program will be particularly valuable to underserved and rural communities that lack access to the network of support needed to care for individuals with ASD and other neurological disorders.
Tentatively set to launch in 2023, the program will capitalize on existing work happening in the department and across the college on ASD and other neurodevelopmental disorders involving childhood apraxia of speech, hearing impairment, and phonological disorders. To expand reach and complement ongoing research, the college is forging relationships with community partners and clinical providers actively working with the population, such as pediatricians, to build out the team.

“We’ll be able to help with the initial diagnosis, but we won’t just stop there,” said Lynch. “We will be able to tailor individual health care toward a child’s needs and bolster medical treatment plans if needed.”

The program will also play a critical role in training future students to be speech-language pathologists. A delay in or lack of spoken language is one of the most frequently noted features in children later diagnosed with ASD, and the development of language is a strong predictor of long-term prognosis.

“SLPs are often on the ‘front line’ of working with children with ASD,” explains Thompson. The Program of Excellence would provide additional evidence-based, hands-on clinical education for future SLPs offered by more extensive, interprofessional teams with expertise with ASD than ever before.

“This specialty training for future SLPs will not only advance the training of Speech and Hearing Sciences students but also build the capacity of future health care providers across the state of Washington to support direct services to children with ASD and neurodevelopmental disorders,” said Thompson.

MD students would also have the opportunity to train in the program alongside SHS students.

“Our students are recruited for this area because of their experiences working under our clinical and research training,” said Lynch. “Now we hope to amplify that training.”

Launching the new Master’s in Health Care and Leadership Program

To further increase and develop health care leaders in communities across the state, the College of Medicine is launching a new Master’s in Health Care and Leadership (MHAL) Program in January 2023. A collaboration between the College of Medicine and Carson College of Business, the program is designed for individuals seeking to advance in their health care careers. Composed of stackable certificates, the degree program provides training in key leadership skills and business competencies necessary to thrive in the rapidly evolving field of health care.

Students can opt to complete the three certificates in any order: the Foundations in Leadership Certificate, the Essentials in Healthcare Certificate, and the Business of Healthcare Certificate. The MHAL degree and stackable certificates position students to become effective health care leaders and enable them to advance their careers through the development of administrative, ethical, and professional skills for middle and upper management health care leadership positions. Further, the coursework prepares students to handle complex new developments in technology, economics, ethics, finance, policy and management.

Taught by WSU faculty who are active leaders in the health care sector, students benefit from learning from individuals who run complex health systems, lead academic institutions, and drive research activities within health care systems. Completing the three certificates and a capstone project qualifies students to receive the MHAL degree.

Offered through the WSU Global Campus, the program combines asynchronous online learning platforms with weekly synchronous, interactive sessions to ensure team and emotional intelligence building opportunities while maximizing accessibility for busy practicing health care professionals. The MHAL program will enroll a smaller cohort for the January 2023 term before opening admissions for a full cohort the following fall.
ACADEMICS

Departments and Centers
Department of Community and Behavioral Health
Department of Medical Education and Clinical Sciences
Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology
Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences
Department of Translational Medicine and Physiology
Sleep and Performance Research Center
Virtual Clinical Center

Degrees and Certificates Offered
Doctor of Medicine (MD)
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Nutrition and Exercise Physiology
Master of Science (MS) Coordinated Program in Dietetics, Nutrition and Exercise Physiology
Master of Science (MS) in Nutrition and Exercise Physiology
Master of Science (MS) in Speech and Hearing Sciences
Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Speech and Hearing Sciences
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Nutrition and Exercise Physiology
Graduate Certificate in Leadership
Certificate in Medical Ethics

475 Enrolled Students

7 Degrees Offered
ADMISSIONS

Medicine

STUDENT BODY

92.7% Washington Residents or Significant Ties to the State

55.7% Female

24.7% Rural Background

35.7% First-Generation College Graduate

54.7% Low Socioeconomic Status

11.3% Underrepresented in Medicine (URiM)^ (Black/African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Hispanic)

7.7% Military

26 Mean Age
Age range 20-41

53.7% Non-traditional
Age 25 and over at enrollment

289 Total Medical Students

28 Counties Represented

Nutrition and Exercise Physiology

INCOMING 2022

16 Bachelor’s Degree Students
31% underrepresented minority (URM)
38% first-generation students

14 Master’s Degree Students
28% underrepresented minority (URM)
21% first-generation college graduate

Speech and Hearing Sciences

INCOMING 2022

21 Bachelor’s Degree Students
Incoming class 24% larger than last year’s

24 Master’s Degree Students
24 students admitted from the top 70 applicants

6 Post-Baccalaureate Students
Creating Systemic Change

As the state’s land-grant university, Washington State University’s mission is rooted in accessibility and service to diverse communities across the state. By training physicians to deliver health care in Washington’s underserved communities, the WSU College of Medicine embodies the university’s mission—and has the power to improve countless lives.

As we strive to help Washingtonians live longer, better, we are building a diverse, equitable college community reflective of those we serve across the state, cultivating an inclusive culture, and strengthening our internal infrastructure to support diversity, health justice, and belonging efforts.

Developing a New Framework

To reach the deepest level of change and to fulfill our mission and vision, these priorities must live and breathe in the work of every department, unit, employee, and student until it becomes part of our DNA. To that aim, the college has launched several initiatives over the past year to ensure structural and lasting change.

The College of Medicine created the new Office of Diversity, Health Justice, and Belonging in early 2021. The office’s thoughtfully curated name reflects our commitment to a new framework founded in health justice and belonging, principles that connote community collaboration and ownership for the achievement and delivery of health equity and justice.

To advance these principles into action, the office developed and began implementing the Strategic Diversity Action Plan, which serves not only as the college’s north star but as its accountability. The plan outlines the strategies, metrics, and milestones in which we can sustain efforts that structurally create belonging and health justice equity models.

Now within its second year following the plan, the office is tracking results, progress and growth opportunities to better inform new initiatives. These results will be presented in a forum before the Health Justice and Belonging Conference in February 2023. In the coming months, departments across the college will develop their respective plans connected to the Strategic Diversity Action Plan.

Working in parallel with the Strategic Diversity Action Plan is the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Access Policy, adopted in March 2022. Developed by members from across the college and the Equity Committee under the leadership of Naomi Chaytor, PhD, equity committee chair, the policy includes a variety of strategies to achieve outcomes among all students, staff, and faculty. It also serves to better capture the expansion of diversity and inclusion across the entire College of Medicine beyond the scope of the MD program.

The college has also undertaken the ambitious challenge to provide facilitated unconscious bias training to faculty and staff and launch a new Search Toolkit. These resources are intended to increase awareness among our employees and leadership of how biases can perpetuate disparities and the challenges facing marginalized groups as well as ensure equity, efficiency, and mindfulness in the search process for new faculty and staff candidates.
Engaging in Challenging Dialogue

To achieve sustainable impact and keep these values at the forefront of all we do, the college provides different avenues through which individuals can come together to engage in meaningful dialogue.

A major highlight is the annual Health Justice and Belonging Conference held each February. At the 2022 conference, more than 200 participants heard from keynote speaker John A. Powell, director of the Othering and Belonging Institute and Professor of Law, African American, and Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, as well as other distinguished presenters including Philip Alberti, PhD, director of the AAMC Center for Health Justice, WSU faculty, and community leaders.

Grounded in evidence-based and culturally-relevant care, the conference provides an opportunity for participants not only to hear from the leading voices in the health justice and belonging space but to ask tough questions and engage in dialogue about solving problems in challenging health care environments. The fourth annual conference will be held in February 2023.

The college also launched its first Intergroup Dialogue (IGD) Fellows program in spring 2022 to more effectively find common ground on controversial and difficult topics such as racism and sexism. A total of 13 staff and faculty members engaged in a day-long exploration of dialogue and have continued to participate in the program, which will wrap up in fall 2022. While each participant has developed important skills and knowledge individually, the long-term goal is to have IGD fellows gain confidence in engaging with others in the college about subjects that directly impact learning experiences.

Creating Pathways to Success

Foundational to fulfilling the college’s mission is educating and sustaining new health care providers who can better address issues of equity and access to health care in rural and urban underserved communities. The college’s pathway programs play an essential role in increasing opportunities in the health care professions for those who demonstrate an interest in a health care career but lack opportunities and support to reach these goals.

Currently, the college has five pathway programs that facilitate educational opportunities, mentorship, and resources to support high school learners interested in a career in medicine: Columbia Basin Pathway; Students in Medicine; Honors College Pathway Program; INMED—Reimagine IndianS into MedicinE (RISE) Summer Academy; and Wy’East Pathway Program. Over the past year, students from diverse backgrounds and demographics, including those underrepresented in medicine such as American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) learners, have gained invaluable experience and community connections to better prepare them to be health care leaders of the future.

Being Part of a Solution

The College of Medicine can be part of the solution to reducing health inequalities moving forward. Through our new framework, we have reaffirmed our commitment to creating systemic changes that address structural discrimination and strive for diversity, health justice, and belonging. We look forward to creating a community where everyone feels a sense of belonging and living healthy, better lives.
Community-Informed Research for Better Health

Developing and building a new College of Medicine department during a pandemic is no small feat. Fortunately, the faculty and staff that comprise the Department of Community and Behavioral Health are experts at navigating academic and research challenges while understanding the greater human condition.

The department’s long-term plan is to create and build a team of scholars focused on investigating community and behavioral factors that affect human health, and the last few years have only emphasized the increased necessity for research and education in this arena. To that aim, the Department of Community and Behavioral Health has worked to consolidate its research base and welcome new, mission-driven faculty who are leading experts in their fields over the past year. Further, they have continued to conduct community-informed research to improve health outcomes and well-being for individuals and communities.

One area of research which has seen significant progress this past year is contingency management, an intervention to treat substance use disorder via modulating the reinforcing efficacy of abused drugs. Much of this research occurs within PRISM (Promoting Research Initiatives in Substance Use and Mental Health) Collaborative, which addresses disparities in substance use disorder and mental health treatment and outcomes. Rooted in community partnerships, PRISM develops, tests, implements, and disseminates interventions to improve the lives of those living with substance use disorders and mental illness. Equitable access to care and outcomes are key to the collaborative’s transformational community-driven research.

“We are in the midst of a drug poisoning epidemic, with over 100,000 Americans dying from illicit drug poisoning last year,” said Michael McDonell, PhD, professor and director of PRISM. “Many of these deaths involve methamphetamine. Contingency management is the most powerful way to reduce methamphetamine use.”
He added that faculty in the department are leading the way nationally in disseminating contingency management to communities throughout the country to make sure people can access this life-saving treatment.

Much of the research around contingency management comes from groups who have historically been left out of substance use disorder research. One recent study conducted in collaboration with American Indian and Alaska Native communities is the largest study ever to show that contingency management works for alcohol problems.

Building upon the results from past studies, PRISM is turning to new projects to determine whether modifications to contingency management are effective for people who are both heavy drinkers and living with serious mental illnesses. In keeping with their focus to consider social determinants of health, they are also investigating factors that predict positive outcomes and the role of economics.

In addition to PRISM, the Analytics and PsychoPharmacology Laboratory (APPL), led by professor and assistant dean for research Sterling McPherson, PhD, is making national and international contributions to the development of substance use disorder treatments, primarily through Phase I/II clinical trials. Its focus integrates contingency management and experimental medications and technologies to promote better, remote-capable care and improved adherence.

APPL is currently investigating experimental pharmacotherapies for the treatment of alcohol use and smoking combined with contingency management to promote adherence and reductions in use. Further, APPL works to bridge gaps by translating technology-enhanced treatments for rural patients. To this effort, the APPL team concurrently investigates potential interventions such as remote contingency management for alcohol use disorder and pill cap technology.

“We hope that an adaptable, Bluetooth-enabled pill bottle cap could promote adherence to medications for opioid use disorders,” said McPherson. “It could impact remote care and improve outcomes.”

While research continues, communities and partners are eager to try the approach. Researchers involved with contingency management have been providing training sessions to those interested in the intervention including tribes and states.

Katherine Hirchak, PhD, assistant professor and descendant of the Eastern Shoshone Tribe, has been integral to ongoing contingency management studies and training. Her recent work conducting clinical trials and mixed-methods research in diverse settings aims to harness technology to better engage young native adults in treatment and substance-free activities utilizing contingency management and behavioral economics.

“Contingency management’s positive approach can help people build confidence, feel connected, and have a sense of self-efficacy,” said Hirchak. “It acknowledges their journey and their recovery in a strengths-based way.”
Spanning the Translational Research Spectrum

The Department of Translational Medicine & Physiology (DTMP) has focused on the mission embedded in its new name over the past year. In 2021, shortly after the department name was adopted, we added Human Sleep & Cognition laboratory faculty Hans Van Dongen, PhD, Kimberly Honn, PhD, Devon Hansen, PhD, and Brieann Satterfield, PhD; Occupational Sleep Medicine (OSM) faculty Amanda Lamp, PhD, and Michael Rempe, PhD; and Matt Layton, PhD, a physician researcher involved in many translational studies. The research interests of the department now span the translational research spectrum from cell cultures and model systems to human studies, as illustrated below.

In addition to strengthening the department’s translational research portfolio, the additional faculty increased the size of DTMP by 50% with the addition of seven new principal investigators and 15 new research staff. DTMP now has a total of 68 faculty and staff, of which 90% are partially or fully grant-funded.
DTMP’s largest interest area is the neurobiology of sleep and its relationship to cognition, learning, metabolism, and human performance. Many areas with connection to sleep such as autism, stress, neurodegenerative diseases, and health disparities are also being investigated. Additional active research includes neuroimmunology and aging, cancer progression and circadian effects on cancer treatment, and male reproductive physiology.

In the past year, our faculty have been awarded 15 new extramural grants from agencies including the National Institutes of Health, Health and Human Services, and the Department of Defense to support the work in these various areas. Many of these projects involve collaborations between faculty in DTMP and other departments, WSU colleges, and universities.

Department faculty are committed to educating students and providing opportunities for research and scholarly activity in their labs. The number of students taking advantage of research experiences in the department is consistently high. Our student trainees include graduate students and postdoctoral fellows as well as medical students, undergraduate and postbaccalaureate students and even high school students. Our faculty members also teach a wide variety of courses in multiple programs, with 13 faculty members teaching components of the MD program.

DTMP is also heavily invested in student outreach and mentorship work, much of which is now housed within the department. Outreach and mentorship efforts are designed to inspire youth in underserved Washington communities to develop an interest in, and the necessary skills for, a career in the health sciences. The flagship Stevens County Mentorship Program has finished its third year, delivering outreach activities to seventh grade students, an intensive mentorship program to eighth graders, and a yearlong ninth grade CTE course entitled Foundations of Health Sciences and Careers, designed by faculty and staff. This program, along with several other student-led outreach programs, involves dozens of medical students and other WSU Health Science students.

To optimize the success of these initiatives, departmental faculty are engaged in a strategic planning process to establish goals and to guide investments that will allow us to not only make important advances in basic and translational medical sciences but participate in the education and service mission of the WSU College of Medicine.
OUTREACH

Mentorship Program Helps Rural Youth Impact Community Health

Washington State University has a strong history of interprofessional collaboration and community engagement, one that was exemplified by the youth-led Stevens County Mentorship Program Capstone event hosted by the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine in Springdale, Wash.

The May 31 event showcased the capstone projects completed by 72 ninth grade students enrolled in the mentorship program. WSU Health Sciences faculty and staff joined mentors from Providence Sacred Heart and Stevens County youth and community members from Springdale, Wellpinit, and Chewelah to celebrate the students’ hard work and immense learning, as well as their commitment to improving community health outcomes.

The interprofessional Stevens County Mentorship Program exposes youth in rural communities and underserved areas to career opportunities in the health sciences. Exploration programming connects them with faculty and students from the colleges of Medicine, Nursing, and Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. Beginning in the seventh grade and continuing through the 10th grade, the curriculum develops the skills and community connections helpful for these possible career paths.

“We are exposing youth to what it means and what it takes to be a healthcare professional, and we are doing that with an approach that emphasizes concepts of sociology, civics, history, philosophy, diversity, and justice,” said former curriculum designer Robert Jones, MD.

The ninth grade Foundations of Health Sciences and Careers CTE course curriculum not only exposes students to career paths in the health sciences but fosters community mentorship and student leadership skills.

Community health care professionals provide mentorship to Stevens County students throughout the program, increasing exposure to the full spectrum of healthcare careers while also developing students’ personal attributes.

“Mentorship serves to foster self and social awareness through an emphasis on leadership, interpersonal skills, resilience, teamwork and collaboration, and school performance,” said Kristin Courtney, PhD, former assistant professor and curriculum designer.

Students drew from these community connections for the capstone projects, where they presented concepts that could benefit their local community. With topics such as health care for individuals experiencing homelessness, community blood drives, and vaping, students demonstrated their synthesis knowledge gains throughout the program and focused learning around social determinants of health in their own communities.

“The capstone project encouraged students to think critically about health care, research, and how they can contribute to problem solving in the future as health career professional,” said Jessica Gerdes, outreach and mentorship manager.

The capstone projects have generated a buzz in several communities where the recommendations were acted upon. In Chewelah, capstone projects...
Mentors serve as catalysts to maintain the momentum and excitement while providing a community connection, as students engage in preparing for a health science career.

KRISTIN COURTNEY, PhD
Assistant Professor and Curriculum Designer
MATCH DAY

WSU College of Medicine Celebrates Match Day for Class of 2022

March 19th was Match Day for the Class of 2022.

Fourth-year medical students across the state and beyond opened their virtual envelopes holding news they had been working toward for years: their residency program match.

To view highlights of the 2022 Match Day celebration, click here: medicine.wsu.edu/match-day-2022

“I was fortunate to help take care of patients in all four corners of the state.”

BRIAN KIM, MD
Class of 2022

Class of 2022 Residency Match

MAP OF RESIDENCY PROGRAM MATCHES FOR THE CLASS OF 2022
Data & Demographics
#WSUMED22 AT A GLANCE

96.4%
Match Rate

42.5%
Matched in Washington

50%
Matched into Primary Care Specialties

55.5%
Matched in the Pacific Northwest (WA and OR)

76%
Matched in the Western Region

SPECIALTIES MATCHED INTO:
Anesthesiology
Diagnostic Radiology
Emergency Medicine
Family Medicine
General Surgery
Internal Medicine
Medicine/ Emergency Medicine
Obstetrics and Gynecology
Orthopaedic Surgery
Pediatrics
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
Plastic Surgery
Psychiatry
Radiation Oncology
WSU Internal Medicine Residency Program Welcomes Second Class of Residents

Leading up to Match Day, the WSU Internal Medicine Residency Program-Everett saw a 19% increase in the number of applications over last year in the 2021 main residency match. This was driven by a 59% increase in applicants graduating from U.S. Osteopathic medical schools and 34% increase in applicants graduating from U.S. Allopathic schools.

On Match Day, the Internal Medicine Residency Program welcomed 16 new individuals across the country to its residency program. 15 of the 16 new residents are from the Pacific Northwest or attended medical school in the Pacific Northwest, and six of the residents are graduates of Washington medical schools. Among those were three MD students from the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine.

The residents were selected from more than 2,300 applicants—83 of which were from a Washington medical school.

“The data shows a significant increase in interest in our program,” said David Aufdencamp, associate designated institutional official for the Graduate Medical Education program. “We’re not just attracting WSU students. We are attracting medical students from the surrounding medical colleges to stay in the region and train in the region.”

The newest residency class represents the experiences, qualities, and attributes sought after using the holistic approach to resident selection. With the significant ties to the Everett and surrounding areas, these residents will likely serve patients in the community for years to come. The newest residents began taking new patients at the continuity clinic at Providence Regional Medical Center on July 1, 2022.
Groundbreaking Autism Screening Tool Takes Next Steps toward FDA Approval at WSU College of Medicine

By Christina Verheul

With autism now identified in one in 44 children in the U.S. according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the need for accessible and accurate diagnostic tools and early intervention has never been greater. For Georgina Lynch, PhD, assistant professor, that need is the driving force behind her development of a state-of-the-art technology that could revolutionize autism screening.

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurological and developmental disorder that impacts an individual’s ability to communicate, learn, behave, and interact with others. Her solution is a handheld technology that can quickly, noninvasively, and objectively screen ASD in children as young as two years old.

Since 2020, Lynch has conducted rigorous preliminary studies and tests of the technology funded by a $50,000 phase one grant by the Washington Research Foundation. Early results showed the technology produced reliable, objective screening data that was sensitive enough to detect ASD across all areas of the spectrum.

As a result of this early success, the Washington Research Foundation awarded an additional $95,000 grant in June to support phase two of development. This will support continued partnerships with Seattle Children’s Research Institute and Spokane-based Northwest Autism Center, as well as the Autism and Developmental Medicine Institute at Geisinger Health in Pennsylvania, so Lynch can expand her testing.

If all goes according to plan, Lynch anticipates she will secure enough second phase data this year to apply for FDA pre-market approval in 2023 and take the technology to market in 2024—a rapid timeline that she attributes to the community-based model of the College of Medicine and the close connections it has forged in a short time.

“Everyone wants to be part of the solution and help us advance this work so we can serve the people who it will impact the most. It’s a great example of how research collaboration can meet the needs of our community,” said Lynch.

Our aim is to significantly bolster ASD screening with a tool that is easy for health care professionals to use and ensures results are specific and accurate, giving providers the confidence to take the next steps toward full diagnosis of a child.

GEORGINA LYNCH, PhD
Assistant Professor
WSU NEP Researchers Find Increased Take-Home Methadone during Pandemic Did Not Worsen Outcomes

By Judith Van Dongen

Relaxing limits on take-home doses of methadone—a medication used to treat opioid addiction—does not appear to lead to worse treatment outcomes.

Published in the American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse, the study looked at the impact of a temporary policy change allowing providers to send patients home with additional methadone doses during the COVID-19 pandemic. Previously, federal regulations allowed take-home privileges only for established patients who have proven themselves stable, a measure intended to reduce risk of patients selling the provided methadone.

While the researchers saw the average number of methadone take-home doses nearly double during the pandemic, they found no significant changes in treatment outcomes. There was no rise in the number of patients experiencing emergency department visits, whether overdose-related or for other reasons. There was also no notable increase in the number of patients who tested negative for methadone.

“Our research highlights the need to consider permanently loosening the restrictions on methadone take-home doses, which would help many people who are struggling to access opioid treatment,” said lead study author Ofer Amram, PhD, an assistant professor whose research focuses on decreasing health disparities in vulnerable populations.

The study was based on data from 183 patients treated at a methadone clinic in Spokane County, Washington. Methadone take-home doses from the clinic rose from 11.4 doses per 30 days in the eight months prior to the pandemic policy change to 22.3 doses per 30 days in the eight months following.

Methadone can only be prescribed and dispensed by federally approved opioid treatment programs, and there are only about 1,800 such programs around the country. This makes requiring daily visits to get methadone especially difficult for individuals who live far from a treatment program, Amram said.

In a previously published study of patients attending the same clinic involved in this study—the only publicly funded methadone clinic in Eastern Washington—Amram and his coauthors showed that patients who lived closer to the clinic continued with treatment better than those who lived further away. Yet take-home limitations pose challenges even for those who live close to a treatment clinic but don’t have reliable access to transportation or find that daily visits take too much time away from employment, Amram said.

Amram’s co-authors on the study, “The impact of relaxation of methadone take-home protocols on treatment outcomes in the COVID-19 era,” include Solmaz Amiri, DDes, Victoria Panwala MD, and Robert Lutz, MD, of the college; Paul J. Joudrey, MD, of the Yale School of Medicine and Eugenia Socias, MD, of the University of British Columbia Faculty of Medicine.

The study was supported by a Washington State University faculty seed grant and the university’s Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Program.
Research Helps Tackle Health Barriers for People with Disabilities

By Judith Van Dongen

About one in every four U.S. adults lives with a disability. Adding up to an estimated 61 million Americans, people with disabilities are easily the largest minority in the nation. Yet their minority status isn’t always recognized to the extent it should be, said Jae Kennedy, PhD, a professor who has spent the past 30 years studying how public policy affects those with disabilities.

“In health fields, people with disabilities are still thought of as chronically ill, rather than as a disadvantaged minority population that, on top of their chronic conditions, faces stigmatization, discrimination, and other issues,” Kennedy said.

He said that people with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty; experience mental and physical health complaints such as depression, fatigue, and pain; and face problems accessing health care and maintaining health insurance coverage. Taken together, these and other issues put Americans with disabilities at a disadvantage as they try to live satisfying, productive, and healthy lives.

Through his research, Kennedy has made it his mission to identify the many barriers faced by people with disabilities and bring them to the attention of policymakers who could address them through public policy.

He has previously studied the impact of changes in health policies—such as the introduction of Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage and the Affordable Care Act—on younger people with disabilities. In addition, he has led the Collaborative on Health Reform and Independent Living (CHRIL), a group of disability researchers and advocates studying the impact of health policies on working-age adults with disabilities who live in the community.

“What the independent living movement is about is recognizing that people—regardless of the state their body or brain is in—have the right to live independently, to have families, and to work and learn and recreate like everyone else,” Kennedy said. “And health care should really be devoted to helping with those goals.”

Among other initiatives, CHRIL spearheaded the creation of the National Survey on Health and Disability, a first-of-its kind survey that gathered information about the health insurance and health care experiences of a large group of American adults with disabilities. The survey was first conducted in 2018 and repeated in 2020, which gave the researchers the opportunity to add additional questions to help them evaluate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people with disabilities.

“We’re hypothesizing that the pandemic worsened pre-existing disparities in health and health care for people with disabilities,” Kennedy said.

“Health isn’t just something happening inside your body. It also has to do with your neighborhood, your family, your wealth, and your access to education and employment.”

JAE KENNEDY, PhD
Professor
He and other researchers are comparing the two sets of survey data to look at pandemic-related changes in the use of services such as rehabilitative services, home care services, and emergency department services, as well as changes in insurance coverage and health status.

In a separate effort, Kennedy worked with colleagues at the Independent Living Research Utilization program to conduct a series of surveys among staff and clients of Centers for Independent Living. Staffed mostly by people with disabilities, Centers for Independent Living provide a wide range of independent living services to support individuals with disabilities.

“We’re trying to remedy the impact of the pandemic on the hardest-hit communities, and I would argue that those are rural communities, African American and Native American communities, and people with disabilities who live in nursing homes and other institutional settings,” Kennedy said. “They’re all getting sick and dying at much higher rates, and if we don’t want that to happen in the next pandemic then we’re going to have to change how we address these problems.”

Kennedy’s work has also contributed to the goal of getting more people with disabilities engaged in disability research. With funding from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research and under the umbrella of CHRIL, he has directed a postdoctoral fellowship program to train scholars with disabilities to become independent disability researchers. In addition to salary support and benefits, the program also provides funding for assistive technology, accessible conference travel, and personal assistance navigating the workplace. CHRIL-Fellowship has been in place for five years and is set to hire its third postdoctoral researcher soon.

If there’s one thing Kennedy would like to see come out of his long-time work, it’s the realization that we as a society must do a better job protecting people with disabilities, which will ultimately benefit their health.
Discovery Could Help Finetune Immunity to Fight Infections, Disease

By Judith Van Dongen

Research led by Washington State University scientists supports a novel theory that the innate immune system people are born with can respond differently to specific pathogens. This quality, known as immunological specificity, was previously ascribed only to the adaptive immune system, which develops over time through disease exposure.

Published in the journal Cell Reports, the study suggests that this innate immune specificity is driven by the nervous system and identifies a neuronal protein as a critical link in the process.

Based on an animal model, these findings hold early promise for the treatment of conditions such as sepsis, arthritis, and inflammatory bowel disease, in which the innate immune system attacks the body and causes uncontrolled inflammation. They could also provide the basis for finetuning an experimental treatment that harnesses the nervous system to fight infection.

"Clinical studies have shown that stimulating impaired neural circuits—either electrically or pharmacologically—can cure or alleviate many innate immune diseases," said Jingru Sun, PhD, co-senior author on the study and an associate professor. “Knowing how the innate immune system generates a specific response to a particular pathogen enables us to manipulate neural circuits to adjust the intensity of the immune response as needed.”

This would essentially help restore balance to the immune system, either by dialing back an excessive response that can cause prolonged inflammation, tissue damage and even death; or by boosting an insufficient response to keep an infection from getting worse. Sun said the latter is particularly significant given that the "post-antibiotic era" is fast approaching — a time when existing antibiotics will be useless in the fight against drug-resistant superbugs.

The research was conducted in a tiny worm known as Caenorhabditis elegans (C. elegans) that feeds on bacteria in soil. C. elegans is a commonly used model animal for studying the neural regulation of innate immunity because of its simple nervous system with only 302 well-identified neurons—versus 86 billion neurons in a human brain—and its transparent body that allows scientists to see how different genes are expressed. What’s more, unlike humans, C. elegans lacks an adaptive immune system, making it possible to study the specificity of its innate immune system without interference from adaptive immune responses.

Initial studies by the WSU team had found that the absence of a neuronal receptor protein known as NMUR-1 had varying effects on the survival of C. elegans when exposed to different bacterial pathogens, indicating that NMUR-1 might mediate the specificity of the innate immune response to infection. Further testing with two bacteria that showed opposite effects on survival—i.e., longer and shorter lifespan—confirmed that NMUR-1 drives innate immune specificity and also revealed how the protein drives different responses to different pathogens.

“What we found is that NMUR-1 controls transcription factors, which in turn control the transcription of distinct innate immune genes in response to different pathogens,” said co-senior author Yiyong Liu, PhD, an assistant professor and director of the university’s Genomics Service Center.

First author Phillip Wibisono, a WSU graduate student, said the next steps in this research are to identify which neural circuits NMUR-1 is a part of and then treat those neural circuits to see how that alters the immune response to different pathogens. If successful, that would bring their work closer to potential applications in human treatment.

In addition to Sun, Liu, and Wibisono, co-authors on the paper include Shawndra Wibisono, Chia-Hui Chen, MS, and Durai Sellegounder, PhD, of the college, and Jan Watteyne, PhD, and Isabel Beets, PhD, at KU Leuven in Belgium. The study was supported by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, a component of the National Institutes of Health, with additional funds provided by Research Foundation Flanders and the WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine.
RANGE COMMUNITY CLINIC

Improving Health and Well-Being Across Washington

Over the past year, Range Community Clinic continued its rapid growth by increasing services and expanding its reach to more communities. Through new partnerships and resources, the clinic continues to provide care for the health and well-being of its patients and community members.

FULFILLING THE HEALTH CARE MISSION IN NEW COMMUNITIES

In its effort to bridge health care gaps and improve access to care, the clinic partnered with the city of Fairfield—a small farming community south of Spokane—that lost its only primary care doctor and local pharmacy. Range Community Clinic, in collaboration with the WSU College of Nursing, completed a community health needs assessment and developed a plan of care to support the community. Since the care plan was enacted, the clinic has provided routine primary care visits and vaccine clinics to the community, making stops at the Fairfield assisted living facility and adult family home. Vaccines and preventative care continue to be a critical component of disease prevention and healthy living, particularly for vulnerable communities. Providing more than 3,000 vaccines to the community, Range Community Clinic helped protect against COVID-19, the flu, shingles, and pneumonia when its patients needed it most.

PROVIDING VALUABLE EYE CARE

In collaboration with the Washington Academy of Eye Professionals and Surgeons and the Army Madigan Medical Hospital, Range Community Clinic created a mobile ophthalmology office to serve communities with significant eye care access challenges. The first of its kind in Eastern Washington, the mobile eye clinic provides comprehensive eye exams, prescription updates, and referrals to eye care.
specialists as needed. To date, the clinic has provided ophthalmology services to 105 patients and continues to provide care to the Curlew Clinic in Curlew.

HELPING VACCINATE THE WSU PULLMAN CAMPUS

With the return of in-person learning in the fall 2021 semester, Pullman once again became home to a large number of students. As COVID-19 continued to surge and mutate throughout the year, respiratory illnesses held the potential to strain overburdened health care systems and local testing capacities. To better protect the students and the larger Cougar community, Range Community Clinic partnered with WSU’s Cougar Health to support their annual Flu Shot Fridays.

Though Flu Shot Fridays are held annually, the demand and the importance of flu shots rose exponentially during the pandemic. Range Community Clinic administered more than 3,000 COVID-19, COVID-19 booster, and flu shots to WSU faculty, staff, and students throughout the fall semester.

INCREASING TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT CARE

To better support patient care, Range Community Clinic expanded its information technology infrastructure with the launch of its electronic health record (EHR) system. The EHR system is a significant step on the clinic’s road to improving access to care as it enables quick access to patient records and improves care coordination. Range Community Clinic is also continuing to work with the WSU College of Nursing to explore opportunities for tele-behavioral health. These technological advancements will help the clinic treat patients wherever they are in their health care journey.
117 Stories
109 Mentions

Major Headlines

* Miami Herald: Change allowing take-home methadone for opioid addiction was successful, WA study says
* The Seattle Times: Chasing that elusive ‘runner’s high’? Seattle-area experts talk about their experiences
* Providence Regional Medical Center, WSU team up to treat vulnerable populations in northwest Washington
* WSU study finds Native elders are healthier with community support
* Data from WSU shows local minorities die at younger ages from opioids than white people
We Are

The College of Medicine ran a statewide advertising campaign entitled “We Are” from October 2021 through June 2022.

Created to continue driving brand awareness across the state, the “We Are” campaign highlighted key messages integral to our college identity and mission:

- We are the only medical school in Washington where 100% of medical students are from Washington
- We are dedicated to serving urban underserved and rural communities
- We are training in over 200 hospitals and clinics in every corner of Washington
- We are your future health care providers

We are the Washington State University Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine

Ads appeared on tv, streaming services, websites, social media, newspapers, and magazines across the entire state of Washington. The campaign was a success, resulting in year over year increases in visitors to the website.
Celebrating Sam Selinger and Our Stethoscope Sponsors

For the past four years, retired Spokane cardiovascular surgeon Sam Selinger, MD, has presented incoming Doctor of Medicine students with stethoscopes before they begin their training. Each stethoscope is sponsored by generous donors like Selinger and his wife Rosemary.

Each year, Selinger humbly connects with the incoming class of medical students, providing them with gentle wisdom gained from an extensive 35-year career practicing medicine.

“Carrying a stethoscope marks you as a professional and clinician—having a mastery of special knowledge and knowing how to listen. Whatever you do while carrying a stethoscope reflects on your profession and every other physician,” said Selinger to the Class of 2023 during his first stethoscope presentation.

Selinger also emphasizes the significance of receiving such a gift—and the charge to use it to improve community health.

“Why would someone in the community who has never met you give you a valuable professional instrument?” Selinger questioned. “This community believes you chose medicine so you could use your knowledge and tools, like the stethoscope, to build relationships, to make sense of ailments, and to create plans that improve health. Our expectations are high, and we want each of you to be engaged in improving our personal and community health from the beginning.”

Thank you to community supporters like the Selingers who help form the next generation of Washington doctors, speech language pathologists, and nutrition and exercise physiologists.

To learn more about sponsoring a stethoscope, please visit medicine.wsu.edu/give

If you would like to learn more about giving opportunities at the college, please email give.medicine@wsu.edu
Honoring Gladys E. Cooper Jennings

The Department on Nutrition and Exercise Physiology is honoring groundbreaking WSU alum Gladys Jennings, RD, with a fully endowed student scholarship fund.

Jennings had a rich career in nutrition sciences including a Fulbright Fellowship at the University of London, teaching at Syracuse University and North Carolina Central University, and serving as Chair of the Home Economics Department at Spelman College in Atlanta. She later returned to WSU as an associate professor of foods and nutrition, where she conducted research on improving the dietary habits of Africans and African Americans as well as helped develop WSU’s first Black Studies courses. Her academic, volunteer, and mentorship achievements resulted in numerous professional and service award honors.

Over the past year, the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology Department has been fundraising to fully endow the Gladys E. Cooper Jennings Student Scholarship Fund. Once the scholarship is fully endowed, the fund can support one Nutrition and Exercise Physiology student each year. They plan to present it to Jennings as a birthday gift in celebration of her 97th birthday.

Gladys Jennings was the first woman of color to earn a master’s degree from WSU in 1948, and she served as a nutrition faculty member from 1966 to 1991.

To learn more about the Gladys E. Cooper Jennings Student Scholarship Fund visit medicine.wsu.edu/give
The WSU College of Medicine ended fiscal year 2022 with a positive financial performance. These results were primarily driven by increased state appropriations and the addition of 20 more medical students to the incoming class, which increased the total cohort size from 280 to 300 students in the 2021-22 academic year, as well as operational cost savings from reduced travel and other expenditures due to COVID.

Operating expenses within each functional area remained largely consistent with recent years. The university-wide move to Workday as a finance and HR management system, as well as shifts in cost classifications, resulted in changes in goods and services, equipment and purchased services. Though the college continued increasing faculty and staff to support the full build out of all programs and offices, salaries, wages and benefits remained relatively flat due to employee turnover rates consistent with national job market trends and tight competition to fill open positions. Savings in salaries and wage expenses were outweighed by increased operational costs including professional development, training, and equipment needs, resulting in a net year-over-year spending increase.

The university also continued budget reduction efforts to improve its overall fiscal health, which required the college to trim more than $1 million from its budget for the second year in a row. This reduction will continue into 2023, requiring the college to carefully balance growth with reduced spending.

In fiscal year 2023, state appropriations will rise to $18.8 million to fund the final addition of 20 more medical students at $60,000 each and provide continued support for all existing cohorts. In fall 2022, the college reached its full capacity of 320 medical students—80 in each class—per the plan set out for the college during its founding. In addition, state appropriations include $640,000 toward Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5903, which are the college’s activities to increase access to mental health services for children, as well as nearly $500,000 for much-needed faculty, staff and graduate student salary and wage increases.
For the 2023 fiscal year, WSU implemented a 5% core fund budget reduction (2.5% permanent)
Classified staff received a 3.25% increase effective July 1st
Faculty/Exempt/Graduate Student received a 2.5% increase effective September 1st
Awards and Recognition Ceremony

In June, the college held its annual Awards & Recognition Ceremony to celebrate our faculty and staff’s outstanding accomplishments, career milestones, and contributions to the mission and vision of our college.

Held at Arbor Crest Winery in Spokane, over 120 faculty and staff came together to connect and celebrate—many for the first time in more than two years.

Congratulations to those who were recognized for their exceptional contributions, and to all our faculty and staff who continue to display excellence across the College of Medicine and the communities we serve.

Watch the faculty and staff award winner’s acceptance video
youtube.com/watch?v=0J4OE0uj8gQ

New Employees Onboarded

211

JULY 2021 – JUNE 2022
Awards

**CHANCELLOR’S FACULTY EXCELLENCE AWARDS**

**TEACHING**
David Jenson, PhD
Speech and Hearing Sciences

**DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**
Anna Zamora-Kapoor, PhD
Medical Education and Clinical Sciences

**INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION**
Brenda Bray, MPH
Medical Education and Clinical Sciences; Accreditation, Assessment and Evaluation

**CHANCELLOR’S EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE AWARDS**

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL**
Bethany Fruci
Research

**GROUP/COMMITTEE**
The Admissions Committee-MD Program

**WSU AWARDS**

**SAHLIN EMINENT FACULTY AWARD**
John Roll, PhD
Research

**2021 CRIMSON SPIRIT RECOGNITION**
Jennifer Anderson
CIPHERS
FACULTY AND STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

Promotions and Tenure

PROMOTION TO PROFESSOR
Naomi Chaytor, PhD
Community and Behavioral Health

Sterling McPherson, PhD
Research; Community and Behavioral Health

Karen Simpson, MCSD, CCC-SLP
Speech and Hearing Sciences

Eva Szentirmai, MD, PhD
Translational Medicine and Physiology

TENURE AND PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
Kimberly Honn, PhD
Translational Medicine and Physiology

Jingru Sun, PhD
Translational Medicine and Physiology

PROMOTION
Dana Algeo-Nichols, PhD
Speech and Hearing Sciences

April Davis, MS, RDN, CEP
Nutrition Exercise and Physiology

Julie Larsen, PhD, RDN, ACSM RCEP
Nutrition Exercise and Physiology

Melissa Ratsch
Speech and Hearing Sciences

Lonika Sood, MD
Medical Education and Clinical Sciences

Retirements
Brenda Bray
20 YEARS

Harold “Frank” Andersen
4 YEARS

Samuel Joseph
8 YEARS
CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF FOUNDING DEAN DR. JOHN TOMKOWIAK

In 2015, Washington State University hired Dr. John Tomkowiak, an accomplished dean and professor of psychiatry, to be the Founding Dean of WSU’s new College of Medicine. For nearly seven years, Founding Dean Tomkowiak—more commonly known as “Dr. T”—served as an inspiring pioneer who led the college in its first steps and built a lasting foundation.

When he first accepted the position, Dr. Tomkowiak told the WSU community and stakeholders that he wanted to fulfill the dream of the late president Elson S. Floyd and do something bold, audacious, visionary, and innovative: build a medical school from the ground up that serves the rural and urban underserved Washington communities.

During his tenure as Founding Dean, Dr. Tomkowiak worked ceaselessly to expand medical education in Washington State and see the late president Floyd’s dream become a reality that could impact Washingtonians for generations to come. Under his guidance, the college celebrated thousands of firsts—both large and small—including:

- Receiving full accreditation in record time
- Growing our first-class research enterprise, including receiving more than $100 million in new grants and contracts and launching the Department of Community and Behavioral Health
- Welcoming the Departments of Speech and Hearing Sciences and Nutrition and Exercise Physiology into the college
- Establishing a full cohort of 320 medical students
- Establishing our first residency programs, including successfully recruiting an inaugural cohort of Internal Medicine residents and receiving full accreditation for a Family Medicine Residency Program in Pullman, Washington
- Establishing the faculty practice plan for Range Community Clinic and serving thousands of patients
- Launching the new Office of Diversity, Health Justice, and Belonging and the college’s first Strategic Diversity Action Plan
- Supporting the evolution and exceptional research in the Department of Translational Medicine and Physiology
- Graduating two classes of MD students and seeing successful matches into residency programs, including more than half matching into primary care specialties in local/regional communities
- Launching the new Office of Land Grant Mission and Leadership

As he now moves on, we want to extend our deepest gratitude to Dr. Tomkowiak for sharing his vision and leadership and for his role in shaping the foundation of the College of Medicine. Further, we are grateful to the many faculty, staff, students, community members, clinical partners, stakeholders and more who joined Dr. Tomkowiak in this journey and who contributed to each success.

The legacy that Dr. Tomkowiak began at the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine will live on through our focus on excellence in clinical and educational care and research, as well as our mission, vision, and commitment to serving the underserved. In addition, we remain dedicated to the dream of Elson S. Floyd to be bold, audacious, visionary, and innovative—trailblazers and change makers in the classroom, laboratory, clinics, community, and beyond.