

48 Duluth Medical Students Graduate

48 students who started their medical education on the Duluth Campus graduated from the University of Minnesota Medical School on May 1 at Northrup Auditorium on the Minneapolis campus. They were among a total of 209 medical school graduates. The new physicians now move on to residency programs across the country.

45 percent of the Medical School--Duluth campus students who graduated this spring matched to Family Medicine residency programs -- a rate that is six times the national average of graduates selecting family medicine and is good news for this campus as the national shortage in family medicine physicians increase -- particularly in rural areas. Another 25% of our graduates selected other primary care specialties such as Internal Medicine, and the remainder selected other specialties.

Gary Davis, Ph.D., Senior Associate Dean of the Medical School-Duluth, presented hoods to the Duluth graduates. Lillian A. Repesh, Ph.D., associate dean for admissions and student affairs in Duluth, was a greeter at the presentation ceremony. Other Duluth faculty and staff who were dignitaries on stage included: Raymond D. Christensen, M.D., assistant dean for rural health, Richard G. Hoffman, Ph.D., associate dean for curriculum and education, George Trachte, Ph.D. associate dean for research.

Jordan Cohen, president emeritus of the Association of American Medical Colleges delivered the keynote address.

[Webstory and photo](#)

30% Increase in Summer Internship Participants

Participation in the summer internship program has increased by 30 percent. A total of 91 students from both campuses have committed to the program compared to 64 last year. Almost all of the Duluth campus first-year students are participating -- a total of 49. 95 rotations are scheduled with some students doing two.

The Summer Internship in Medicine (SIM) program is coordinated by Raymond G. Christensen, M.D., Assistant Dean for Rural Health in Duluth, assisted by Lori Isaacson. They are supported by leaders of the Minnesota Hospital Association and the four regional Area Health Education Centers: Brendan Ashby, NE; Kathy Huntley, SW; Laurissa Stigen, Central; and Joan Porraz, NW. St. Mary's Duluth Clinic and St. Luke's Hospital also provides internship opportunities as well as hospitals and clinics elsewhere in the state. A few students are scheduled in out-of-state locations: Alamosa, Colorado; Centralia, Washington; Kodiak and Dutch Harbor, Alaska; and Newberry, Michigan.

George Trachte Named Director of Integrated Biosciences Ph.D. Program

George Trachte, Ph.D., the Duluth campus associate dean for research, has been elected director of graduate studies for the [Integrated Biosciences Ph.D. program](#). Approximately 60 faculty members from both campuses of the Medical School, the UMD departments of biology and chemistry and Duluth EPA lab scientists and NRRI scientists are members of the program's governing committee.

The unique, cutting edge IBS graduate program is one of only three others in the entire nation and will offer a dynamic new integrative approach to the field of biology. The University of Minnesota Board of Regents, at its meeting in December, [approved an all-University Integrated Biosciences Ph.D.](#) program that represents more than six years of planning and the collaboration of 60 scientists and faculty members, primarily at UMD.

The team will be developing a student orientation week; a course that investigates issues such as immunology (host defense) across the biologic spectrum; at least one new 8000 level course per year; applications for training grants; and recruiting additional Twin Cities faculty members.

New on Campus: Ken Dornfeld, M.D. and Maude Dornfeld

Dr. Ken Dornfeld has joined our faculty as an assistant professor of biochemistry and molecular biology (20% appointment) while he continues his work as a staff radiation oncologist at SMDC (80% appointment).

Dr. Dornfeld's research involves examining the relationship between metabolism and cancer treatment. Some by-products of metabolism are very similar to changes created by radiation therapy; cancer cells contain more of these by-products than normal cells. By altering metabolism he seeks to magnify this difference and make chemotherapy and radiation therapy more effective.

He received his BA in chemistry from the University of Chicago. His PhD in biochemistry and his MD are from the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities. Ken completed his residency in Radiation Oncology at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

Maude works part-time (50%) as a Coordinator with the Whiteside Institute for Clinical Research, with a primary focus on data analysis. Her research efforts support the mission of the Whiteside Institute, namely to promote, implement and advance clinical research activities with emphasis in the areas of cancer, lung and heart diseases. She has a BA in Sociology from Macalester College and a MA in sociology (with an emphasis in Research Methodology and Criminology) from the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities.

Dr. Dornfeld's research lab has been supported financially by the Duluth Medical Research Institute. In addition, Maude Dornfeld has established the Lou & Clifford Moe Memorial Cancer Research Fund with a gift of seed money to support Ken's research. Lou and Clifford Moe were Maude's aunt and uncle who became very close to her after her father died when she was young. The Moes have since passed away and Maude used part of that inheritance to help Ken set up his research program here in Duluth.

Originally from the Twin Cities, the Dornfelds most recently moved from Iowa City where Ken had been an assistant professor at the University of Iowa, Radiation Oncology, with

a joint research and clinical appointment. Maude worked as a marketing research director and also as an adjunct instructor of sociology at the local community college. They have 3 daughters.

Outstanding BMB Undergraduate Students

The Duluth Biochemical and Molecular Biology department has presented its "Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award" to students showing exceptional promise in the field of BMB. It was a three-way tie with Leah Wehmas, Emily Madole, and Jordon Thompson. Their award includes a certificate, check, letter and engraved name on the award plaque. Of the graduating seniors this year, two will be attending the U of MN Medical School – Duluth campus and one will be attending the College of Pharmacy--Duluth. Others have been accepted into graduate or professional schools of their choice. 60 people participated in the annual department picnic honoring these undergraduate student researchers.

AHC Student Receives Fellowship

Dan Westholm, a third year AHC Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biophysics PhD student was awarded a Torske Klubben Fellowship through the University of Minnesota Graduate School. This fellowship award supports outstanding graduate students currently enrolled in any field in the University of Minnesota Graduate School. Applicants must have outstanding academic achievement, excellent leadership potential, and an interest in or connection with Norway. The stipend is \$13,000 for the academic year, plus full tuition and is sponsored by the Torske Klubben of Minneapolis.

Westholm is on track to complete his PhD in four years next summer. He works in the lab of Grant Anderson, Ph.D., assistant professor of Pharmacy Practice and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Published

Dr. Anika Hartz, Research Associate in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, co-authored "Seizure-induced upregulation of P-glycoprotein at the blood-brain barrier through glutamate and COX-2 signaling" (Bauer B., Hartz A.M.S., Pekcec A., Toellner K., Miller D.S. and Potschka H.) in the June 2008 issue of *Molecular Pharmacology* 73(5). This paper has received a lot of attention. The article was chosen by *Molecular Pharmacology* for a perspective article (Randy D. Blakely, Editor: Robey R.W., Lazarowski A. and Bates S.E., P-glycoprotein – A clinical target in drug-refractory epilepsy? 73(5):1343-1345). Press releases were also submitted regarding the article, one from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on April 14 and one from the University of Minnesota Academic Health Center on April 21. Additionally, two radio stations, Voice of America and WCCO, and one reporter from the magazine, *Drug Discovery News*, called for interviews about the paper.

Josh Pyatskowitz, Graduate Student, and Dr. Joseph Prohaska, Professor, from the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology recently published "Multiple mechanisms account for lower plasma iron in young copper deficient rats" in the journal *Biometals* (vol. 21, 343-352).

Matt Andrews, Ph.D. Delivers UMD Commencement Address

The featured commencement address for the UMD 2008 graduate commencement ceremonies on Thursday, May 15, was delivered by well-known hibernation researcher, Matthew Andrews, Ph.D. Dr. Andrews is Professor and Head of the Department of Biology and adjunct professor for the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the University of Minnesota Medical School—Duluth Campus. He was also the founding director of graduate studies of the Integrated Biosciences (IBS) graduate program, a position now held by George Trachte, Ph.D. See story above.