

Medical School

DULUTH CAMPUS

Update Medical School

Duluth Cancer Moonshot Summit

Earlier this summer, over eighty people gathered at the University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth campus to accept the charge from Vice President, Joe Biden to make advances in cancer research. More than 260 sites around the United States convened for this one-day event.

In his video address to participants, Biden challenged listeners to, "Imagine a day, perhaps when my grandchildren have children of their own, when the threat of cancer is a distant memory, when their children can be vaccinated for cancer as routinely as for measles or mumps." The ultimate goal for Biden's Moonshot Summit was to encourage researchers to accelerate their work in



cancer research to make a decade's worth of progress in five years.

The Duluth event began with video remarks from Senator Al Franken and Representative Rick Nolan. After the keynote from the Vice President, participants were given the opportunity to visit with non-profits supporting cancer research including Charlene's Light, Circle of Hope, and the Whiteside Institute for Clinical Research. Biotech companies assisting in cancer research also provided demonstrations. Lynne Bemis, chair of the biomedical sciences department, feels fortunate to partner with Biotech companies, "this partnership allows us to push our research into different areas."



Photo credit: Duluth News Tribune

Neil Henderson, Ph.D. to lead MDT

Neil Henderson, Ph.D. joined the University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth campus as the Medical Discovery Team Health Equality and Rural Health Access (MDT) leader on September 1, 2016. While leading the MDT, Dr. Henderson will also be a professor in the Department of Biobehavioral Health and Populations Sciences.

A member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Dr. Henderson has a background in medical anthropology. In his previous position at the University of Oklahoma, he led the American Indian Diabetes Prevention Center funded by the National Institutes of Health. Regarding his decision to come to the University, Dr. Henderson says, "The UMN has an enormous amount of depth in its research capacity, both in terms of equipment and expertise. I believe some real progress can be made here very rapidly."



Class of 2020 begins their medical school adventure



Photo credit: Derek Montgomery Photography

In an emotional event marking the beginning of their medical career, 60 first year medical students received their white coats on Saturday, August, 20, 2016. The annual ceremony signifies the responsibilities and obligations of the physicians and the importance of embracing compassion and character along with knowledge of science and medicine.

The event included speakers, a Native Drum Ceremony and capped off with the students receiving their white coats and stethoscopes. Students recited the Oath for Medical Students, a form of the Hippocratic Oath dedicating themselves to the practice of medicine and the humanistic care of patients. Families of the students, local-area physicians and alumni attended the event.

To support future White Coat Ceremonies please give [here](#).

Students present at Minnesota Rural Health Conference

Sixty-one University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth campus first-year students participated at the Minnesota Rural Health Conference. The conference topic this year was “Cultivating Resilient Communities” and gave students a chance to present and discuss their research.

Students are given the opportunity to observe and converse with community leaders and physicians in rural areas during medical school. Ray Christensen, M.D., Associate Dean for rural health, believes going out into the communities reminds the students of why they’re in medical school. This opportunity gives students a chance to see the difficulties a rural community faces and how those difficulties impact the role of the physician in treating the community members.

Student research covered many topics including staff wellness programs, depression among children and adults, and hospitals catering to cultural needs.

To support student research please consider a gift to the [University of Minnesota Medical School Duluth Student Research Fund](#).

Faculty/Student Highlights

- **Kaley Herman** will be published in *International Perspectives in Psychology: Research, Practice, Consultation* as a co-author for “Traumatic Stress Symptoms, Forgiveness, and Meaning in Life in Four Traumatized Regions of the World”.
- **Emily Onello** presented “The Path to Pathology: How Climate Change Adversely Affects Human Health” in June at the Twin Ports Climate Coalition’s ongoing series called Climate Conversations
- **Jim Boulger** presented “Teaching Research Methodology” at the Rural Medical Education Conference in Minneapolis.
- **Matthew Slattery** and **Sarah Lacher** co-authored “A Polymorphic Antioxidant Response Element Links NRF2/sMAF Binding to Enhanced MAPT Expression and Reduced Risk of Parkinsonian Disorders” in the April issue of *Cell Reports*.
- **Robin Michaels** was elected for a two year term as Member at Large of the AAMC Central Group on Student Affairs at the 2016 CGSA meeting held in St. Louis, MO in June.
- **Mary Owen** presented on “CAIMH: 40 years of Community Driven Programming” at the Rural Medical Education Conference in Minneapolis.
- **Mustafa al’Absi** received the 2016 NIDA International Award of Excellence.
- **Alan Johns** was published in the May/June issue of *Minnesota Medicine* with a piece titled “What is a Good Doctor”.
- **Sara Zimmer** was awarded the American Heart Scientist Development Grant
- **Anna Wirta** was awarded 4 grants including one from the Regenerative Medicine Minnesota program.
- **Ken Wallace** recently presented an invited lecture at the meeting of the United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation, titled “Exposure-related Mitochondrial Disease”

To support faculty and student efforts please consider a gift to the [University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth campus](#).



Minnesota's Great Get-Together!

The University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth campus made its third appearance at this year's Minnesota State Fair. Regional campus Dean, Paula Termuhlen, greeted hundreds of visitors to the booth. Visitors from across the country stopped by to spin the prize wheel and learn more about the Duluth campus of the Medical School.

Scholarship Profile

Madison Weg

Avera Marshall Regional Medical Center Scholarship

Anticipated Graduation Date: May 2019

Hometown: Worthington, MN

Undergraduate school: University of Minnesota
Twin Cities

Major: Genetics, Cell Biology and Development

Q: What are your interests outside of the classroom?

A: Outside of class and studying I really enjoy playing intramural sports, so far I have only played volleyball but also plan on joining our class's softball team. I am also involved in volunteering in the community. I volunteer at the HOPE clinic as well as the Solvay House in Duluth. They are both great ways to get to know and be more a part of the community as well as a great way to get my mind off of school for an hour or two.

Q: What was your first job and how did it help shape you into the person you are today?

A: My first job was as a lifeguard in the outdoor pool in Worthington. It was one of my first exposures to being trained in CPR, first aid, etc. and being responsible for other people's safety. It also taught me how to work effectively on a team and as a leader of that team. I also learned methods to educate and instruct through teaching swimming lessons and water aerobics classes. I think all of these skills have shaped me into who I am today and will help me become a better physician in the future.



Q: What does it mean to you to receive this scholarship?

A: I was incredibly honored to be chosen as the recipient of this scholarship, and to see that others believed in my potential as a medical student. Because of that, I am even more driven to work as hard as I can in my classes. It also allows me to worry a little bit less about my debt, which in turn helps me to be able to devote more time and mind power to performing well in school.