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GIVE BACK  Introduce, employ, and be a mentor to our graduating students.

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uthealthalumni.org
Hello,

As I mark my one-year anniversary as interim dean of McGovern Medical School, I reflect on what a year it has been—and an extraordinary year as we faced COVID-19 head on.

Never in my 36 years at the medical school have I seen such incredible challenges—paired with the spirit of determination and resilience to innovate, serve, and collaborate. In the face of trauma and illness, our residents and faculty never wavered in their continuous provision of care to others during the pandemic. When other institutions shuttered their doors, we responded. Our clinical practice plan quickly recovered from any downturn, providing needed resources for education and research. The McGovern Medical School family shone, and I am so proud of everyone for continuing the mission despite the unknown and the stresses that we all faced.

This past year, we were able to fill a number of leadership positions with stellar candidates—Dr. Anthony Estrera is our chair of the Department of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery—taking the reins from founding chair, the one and only Dr. Hazim Safi. And in September, we will welcome our new chair of the Ruiz Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Science, Dr. Timothy McCulley, from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Our search for the next chair of the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine is ongoing as is the search for the permanent dean of McGovern Medical School.

Our commencement ceremony was a day for shared celebration at Minute Maid Park with a special speaker, former Houston Texan JJ Watt. Our students, faculty, and staff are back on campus, following CDC guidelines, and we look forward to welcoming our Class of 2025. This was a very competitive admissions cycle across the nation for medical schools, and we are thrilled to have such a smart, dedicated, and engaged group joining us.

I am pleased to report that following the close of the 87th Texas Legislature Regular Session, McGovern Medical School is poised to receive an additional $42 million for the biennium for the new UTHealth Dunn Behavioral Sciences Center, which when fully opened and added to the UTHealth Harris County Psychiatric Center, it will be the largest academic mental health complex in the nation at 538 beds. UTHealth also is expecting an increase of approximately $12 million in Health Related Institution Formula Funding and the Legislature made the new pilot UTHealth Mission Specific Formula a permanent formula. We send great appreciation to our leadership, our elected officials, and all of our backers who continue to support our missions of education, patient care, and research during a time when a medical school’s value cannot be overemphasized.

Greetings from THE BREEZEWAY

Richard Andrassy, MD
Executive Dean ad interim
Jack H. Mayfield, MD, Distinguished University Chair in Surgery
Denton A. Cooley, MD, Chair in Surgery
H. Wayne Hightower Distinguished Professor in the Medical Sciences
Professor and Chair, Department of Surgery
McGovern Medical School at UTHealth
Henry Strobel Retreat Goes Virtual

A staple of the McGovern Medical School experience, the 44th Annual Henry Strobel Retreat moved to an online format for the first time in its history due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Normally held at Camp Allen in Navasota, Texas, second-year students welcomed the incoming Class of 2024 via videoconference.

For more information about giving opportunities for the Henry Strobel Freshman Retreat Fund, visit go.uth.edu/retreat21

COVID-19 Center of Excellence Founded

Bringing together expertise and access to the best clinical care, research trials, discovery science, and public health knowledge, UTHealth established the COVID-19 Center of Excellence. The center includes the first post-COVID-19 clinic in Houston at UT Physicians, the clinical practice of McGovern Medical School, which is dedicated to helping adults and children who are still suffering the aftermath of one of the deadliest viruses in global history.

UTHealth researchers and physicians, from left, Luis Ostrosky, MD, and Bela Patel, MD ’93, are leading clinical trials on COVID-19. (Photo by UTHealth)

Dean’s Search Begins

The search began for a permanent dean of McGovern Medical School. The search committee is being co-chaired by Michael Blackburn, PhD, executive vice president and chief academic officer of UTHealth, and Eric Boerwinkle, PhD, dean of UTHealth School of Public Health. The committee is composed of faculty from across UTHealth as well as members of the UTHealth Development Board.
UTHealth Vaccine Hub Established

UTHealth was named a COVID-19 Vaccine Hub by the Texas Department of State Health Services. The vaccination site is run efficiently with the help of medical personnel and staff from UT Physicians along with student nurse volunteers from Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth. After three months of vaccinating the community, the UTHealth Vaccine Hub was elated to administer their 100,000th dose on Friday, April 9.

“Getting the vaccine felt good. It’s not what I expected. Being vaccinated is important because of my age,” said Beverly Hensley, 71, the recipient of the milestone dose.

UTHealth launches Many Faces. One Mission. campaign

UTHealth publicly launched its first comprehensive campaign Many Faces. One Mission. on Thursday, April 8. The campaign, representing the largest philanthropic effort in UTHealth’s history, aims to raise $500 million to address pressing health challenges and secure the institution’s future as a top health science center. Since the campaign’s quiet phase began in 2015, UTHealth’s closest friends have given more than $400 million in gifts and pledges. To learn how Many Faces. One Mission. will help UTHealth tackle pervasive health challenges, visit the campaign website at.

Institute for Spirituality and Health honors McGovern Medical School

The Institute for Spirituality and Health honored McGovern Medical School with the Rabbi Samuel E. Karff Caring Heart Award for Healthcare as part of a weeklong ceremony in late February.

The Institute for Spirituality and Health, a charitable organization in the Texas Medical Center, has been enhancing well-being by exploring the relationship between spirituality and health for 65 years. Karff, who died Aug. 15, 2020, was professor emeritus of UTHealth, having served as associate director and visiting professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine. He founded the Health and Human Spirit program, the precursor to the McGovern Center for Humanities and Ethics, and co-created the Sacred Vocation Program.

McGovern Medical School takes part in joint Commencement

On Sunday, May 2, UTHealth congratulated more than 400 students as they set off to begin their professional postgraduation journeys. The first of two 2021 UTHealth commencement ceremonies was held at Minute Maid Park for McGovern Medical School, UTHealth School of Biomedical Informatics, and MD Anderson Cancer Center UTHealth Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

The ceremony included remarks from former HoustonTexans player JJ Watt; Janiece Longoria, vice chair of The University of Texas Board of Regents; UTHealth President Giuseppe N. Colasurdo, MD, Alkek-Williams Distinguished Chair; and Walter R. Lowe, MD, chair and professor of the Department of Orthopedic Surgery at McGovern Medical School, chief of Orthopedic Surgery at Memorial Hermann – Texas Medical Center and Harris Health Lyndon B. Johnson Hospital, medical director of the Memorial Hermann Ironman Sports Medicine Institute, and head team physician for the Houston Texans.
Dynamic and rapidly growing, Houston is one of the nation's most diverse cities—which creates unique educational opportunities for students at McGovern Medical School at UTHealth. From their first day of medical school, our students are immersed in a rich learning environment that helps them build the skills to improve health and well-being in our communities. However, while working toward a future of providing compassionate care, many students rely on loans to fund their education. Scholarships can erase barriers that students face, ensuring that everyone—regardless of economic status—can achieve their dreams. An evaluation performed by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, the accrediting body for medical schools in the United States and Canada, determined that McGovern Medical School falls behind other medical schools in scholarship funding, offering approximately $2,000 in scholarship funds per student—less than a third of what other leading medical schools in Texas offer.

To increase the number of scholarships at McGovern Medical School, Executive Dean ad interim Richard J. Andrassy, MD, established the Scholarship Working Group, which is primarily composed of alumni. Through their generosity and advocacy, the group will help provide the resources needed to compete for the brightest minds, which will in turn boost the school's prestige and recognition, while ensuring that our families, friends, and neighbors receive exceptional care for years to come.

“The alumni who participate in this working group serve as a personal bridge between our school and our community, and they will help us provide more scholarships for our students than ever,” says Andrassy. “In doing so, they will help launch the careers of these medical experts who follow in their footsteps.”

While united in one mission, members of the Scholarship Working Group all volunteer with the
As the saying goes, we stand on the shoulders of giants. For me, that ‘giant’ was my mother, who through her selfless, tireless effort, made me the person I am today. Giving on my mother’s behalf is my way of helping others achieve their lifelong dreams.”

- Farah Shah, MD
President and CEO of Houston Dermatology Associates

The Scholarship Working Group allows Farah K. Shah, MD ‘89, to recognize the role others played in her education. “As the saying goes, we stand on the shoulders of giants,” says Shah, who also serves on the McGovern Medical School Alumni Association Board of Trustees and the school’s Women in Medicine Leadership Council. “For me, that ‘giant’ was my mother, who through her selfless, tireless effort, made me the person I am today. Giving on my mother’s behalf is my way of helping others achieve their lifelong dreams.”

“I am confident that, with the help of our alumni, we can provide more scholarships to our students as they train to care for our communities long into the future,” says LaTanya J. Love, MD, who provides support for the Scholarship Working Group and helped prepare the school for the Liaison Committee on Medical Education review. “It is an honor to work with this group of generous alumni toward that purpose.”

The future of medicine—the care we will provide as physicians and receive as patients—depends on the students of today. I am grateful for the donors who helped launch my career, and it is an honor to pay it forward by supporting the next generation of medical professionals.”

- Roger Khetan, MD
Internal Medicine Physician
at Baylor Scott & White Health

For more information about giving opportunities, visit uth.edu/giving

For more information about the Scholarship Working Group, email Brynn Conapitski at Brynn.Conapitski@uth.tmc.edu.

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Professor and Chair, Department of Surgery
McGovern Medical School at UTHealth

Margaret McNeese, MD
Vice Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs
Isabel S. and Ransom C. Lummis Family Professorship in Pediatrics
Professor, Department of Pediatrics
McGovern Medical School at UTHealth

LaTanya Love, MD
Executive Vice President for Student Affairs and Diversity, UTHealth
Dean of Education ad interim
Associate Professor, Department of Pediatrics
McGovern Medical School at UTHealth
McGovern Medical School has named John Cangelosi, MD ’05, and Dan Atkins, MD ’75, as its 2020 Distinguished Alumnus Award recipients.

The Distinguished Alumnus Award honors alumni of McGovern Medical School who have made significant contributions in the areas of medical science and education or the prevention and treatment of disease, as well as those who demonstrate a continued interest in the medical school and its students. The Distinguished Alumnus Award has been presented by the Alumni Association since 1987.

Cangelosi is the founder of Sagis, a physician-led, subspecialty pathology laboratory specializing in dermatopathology. He is the immediate past president of the Houston Society of Clinical Pathologists, a member of the board for A Children's House for the Soul, and an ambassador to Texas Children's Hospital.

“This is a huge honor for me,” Cangelosi said. “I remember vividly passing the wall of plaques commemorating past recipients while in medical school and wondering what each awardee had accomplished to win the award. It is surreal to know that I will have a plaque placed among such accomplished alumni.”
Cangelosi recalled taking an immense amount of pride in being a student and graduate of McGovern Medical School from the day he received his acceptance letter. “The training I received in the Texas Medical Center was second to none, and the network of amazing faculty and colleagues continues to enrich me both personally and professionally.”

Following the completion of his degree, Cangelosi completed an anatomic and clinical pathology residency and a dermatopathology fellowship at The University of Texas Medical School at Houston. He is currently the co-director of the Gastrointestinal Eosinophilic Diseases Program at Children’s Hospital Colorado and an associate professor of pediatrics-allergy/immunology at the University of Colorado School of Medicine.

“This recognition reminds me of all the incredible teachers who taught me not just the science, but the practice of medicine,” he said. “Since I wasn’t sure I would even make it through medical school, this recognition from the institution where it all started means a great deal to me.”

For Atkins, McGovern Medical School introduced him to medicine and surrounded him with an incredible group of thoughtful, dedicated teachers. He said that the medical school gave him the knowledge, confidence, and framework needed to pursue further training.

“Totally immerse yourself in the experience, take advantage of the learning opportunities and enjoy the ride,” Atkins said in giving advice to current medical students. “Don’t underestimate what you can do with the opportunities you will be given.”

After graduating, Atkins completed his pediatric residency, followed by an ambulatory pediatrics fellowship at Hermann Hospital. He also completed a fellowship in allergy and clinical immunology at Buffalo General Hospital and Children’s Hospital of Buffalo, and a medical staff fellowship in the Laboratory of Clinical Investigation, part of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, in Bethesda, Maryland. He spent most of his career as the director of Ambulatory Pediatrics at National Jewish Health in Denver until leaving in 2014 to start a new Allergy and Immunology Section in the Department of Pediatrics at Children’s Hospital Colorado.

Throughout his career, Atkins has won other prestigious awards, including the 2001 Clinician of the Year and the 2004-05 Outstanding Teacher of the Year from National Jewish Health, and the 2019 Career Teaching Scholar Award from the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. He has been consistently named among the “Best Doctors in America” and “Denver’s Top Doctors.”

“I’d like to thank Drs. Rodney Howell, Larry Pickering, and Margaret McNeese, for inspiring me to become a pediatrician, a decision that has led to daily rewards,” Atkins said.
“I am what a doctor looks like, and I want the next generation of physicians to know that if I can do it, they can too,” said Nneka Madu, 25.

Madu is one of the students in the Class of 2021 at McGovern Medical School at UTHealth who learned where they will train as residents through the National Resident Matching Program. Madu and a friend she met in medical school created a vlog called “The Chocolate Docs” to encourage minorities to pursue careers in science, technology, education, and math.

Traditionally, students gather in Webber Plaza to open the envelopes containing their fate, but this year, students did their own celebrations separately, some receiving their match results via email. While the process may have looked different, the achievement remains a meaningful symbol of hard work, determination, and hope for the future in the midst of one of the greatest challenges to the medical profession—the COVID-19 pandemic.

Of the 234 graduating seniors from McGovern Medical School who participated in the National Resident Matching Program, 128 (55%) will stay in Texas for their first year of postgraduate training and 67 (29%) matched to McGovern Medical School programs. In primary care fields, where there is an acute need of physicians, 155 members (66%) matched.

From tips on how you walk into the room for interviews to practical study advice, two McGovern Medical School students who call themselves “The Chocolate Docs” on social media have made an impact on their nearly 10,000 followers and subscribers. Behind the cool name are Madu and Jessica Green, who became close friends in their first year of medical school. They launched a vlog to help encourage underrepresented minorities to navigate the process of applying for medical school or considering a career in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics.

Jessica Green, MD ’21
Green, 26, knew her goal in life was to find a career that would allow her to help others and she felt drawn to medicine during high school in Fort Worth. However, The University of Texas at Austin graduate shared that she struggled to find mentors who looked like her.

“Growing up, I didn’t know any Black doctors. There was never someone I could point to who looked like me who was a physician,” she said. She will be the first physician in her family. Fueled by her passion to address the racial and ethnic disparities in pregnancy-related deaths, Green will continue her training through a residency in obstetrics, gynecology, and reproductive sciences at the University of Southern California.
Nneka Madu, MD ’21

Madu, 25, a first-generation Nigerian American, was born and raised in Houston. Though she was always interested in pursuing a career in health care, it was during her undergraduate years at The University of Texas at San Antonio where she was a medical scribe for an emergency medicine department when she decided a career as a physician was her true calling.

She matched with her top choice and will be staying in Houston to finish her residency in anesthesiology at McGovern Medical School. “I am so excited to start this next chapter,” Madu said.

Richard Smilie, MD ’21

At age 55, most people are looking forward to only a few more years in the workforce before they retire. But that’s not the case for Richard Smilie—he says he’s just getting started.

Smilie, the oldest graduate in the Class of 2021, and one of the oldest in McGovern Medical School’s history, is ready to venture into a new career.

For the last 32 years, Smilie worked as a veterinarian. Now, he is shifting gears from working with animals to humans at UTMB Health as an anesthesiology resident.

“I am very excited, UTMB Health was my top choice,” he said.

Attending medical school was the next step in Smilie’s career. “For the last 32 years I have been licensed to work on any species in the world except one, humans. Now I get to add humans to my repertoire,” he said.
First-year McGovern Medical School students volunteered at the Houston Food Bank for the fourth annual Day of Service on April 16. Over 90 students throughout four shifts took a break from their studies to give back to the community.

“The Day of Service was one of my favorite things we have done as a class! It was right after our renal exam, and it was a great way to de-stress and volunteer in the Houston community at the same time,” said Jacob Mattia, MSI class president. “We all had a blast, and it was the first real time our class was really able to get together in person, so it was also a fantastic opportunity to finally meet our peers and get to know each other. The Houston Food Bank told us that across all four shifts we were able to package and sort over 17,000 pounds of food, providing over 40,000 meals to Houstonians!”

The Office of Admissions and Student Affairs Wellness and Resilience Program organized the service day along with a food drive in collaboration with the Class of 2024 Service Committee. McGovern Wellness is an initiative that utilizes a holistic approach to promote health and well-being throughout medical school and beyond. Students are offered sessions that focus on academic assistance, mental health, financial wellness, personal nutrition, structural competency, service, fitness, and more. The annual service day is an act of gratitude to Houston for providing an enriching environment to live, learn, and grow.
**WOMEN IN MEDICINE**

In February, Women in Medicine, the McGovern Medical School alumnae group, hosted Through the Decades, a virtual event where alumnae 10, 20, and 30 years out from medical school shared advice and career perspectives to fellow alumnae and students. Women in Medicine has hosted four virtual events throughout the past year. To see highlights from the Through the Decades event, open up the QR code on your phone.

**DOCTORS’ DAY**

In March, three class presidents, Jacob Mattia, MSI; John Biebighauser, MSII; and Ali Noorkbash, MSIII, wished our alumni a Happy Doctors’ Day with a special video message. To view the video, open up the QR code on your phone.

**INCOMING STUDENT AND ALUMNI RECEPTION**

In early June, the Office of Alumni Relations converted our annual in-person Incoming Student and Alumni Reception to a virtual setting. Alumni hosted incoming medical students in breakout rooms and were able to learn more about them in a casual environment.

**DINNERS WITH A DOC**

The Office of Alumni Relations transitioned our in-person Dinners with a Doc to a virtual setting over the past year. Alumni met with students over the dinner hour on a monthly basis. Students were able to ask alumni questions and learn more about what to expect after medical school.

**CONGRATULATING THE CLASS OF 2021**

To show support for the Class of 2021, alumni shared notes of encouragement, pieces of advice, or a virtual pat on the back. The notes were sent to the graduating class on the day of the commencement ceremony, May 2. The Office of Alumni Relations also mailed a special gift welcoming them into the alumni family. To view the warm messages, open up the QR code on your phone.
An interview with
Eric Crowell, MD ’13, MPH, Resident ’17

What is your fondest memory of your time at McGovern Medical School?
Spending time and creating inside jokes with those who have become lifelong friends.

What are your hopes for today’s McGovern Medical School students?
To finish school with a good medical foundation they’ll be able to apply to their future patients through whatever specialty they choose.

What inspires you?
The gratitude a patient has when I am able to figure out and treat their complicated disease.

Who is your mentor?
Jen Thorne, MD, PhD, my fellowship director, has continued to be a mentor for me after my fellowship. Additionally, Gene Kim, MD, my residency director, has continued to mentor since training.

What’s a day on the job like?
My typical day consists of seeing patients in our eye clinic or performing cataract surgery.

What skill is most vital to your job?
Communication hands down. Communicating well with patients, technicians, other physicians, and administration is the most important skill I use every day.

What do you enjoy doing on your day off?
Reading a good book or running/hiking around Austin.

What’s the one thing you can’t live without?
My phone.
VOLUNTEER

Our alumni are a great asset to the McGovern Medical School community. We have numerous opportunities that will allow you to share your knowledge, create meaningful relationships, and grow your network. Find the right opportunity for you at med.uth.edu/alumni.

SEND IN YOUR CLASS NOTES!

Let us know what is happening with you and find out what your classmates have accomplished. Please visit go.uth.edu/ClassNotes to submit your personal and professional accomplishments for our “Class Notes” section of med.uth.edu/alumni.

UPDATE YOUR INFO

Have a new phone number? Changed your email address? Want to receive the electronic version of The Breezeway? If so, please take a moment to update your contact information by opening up the QR code on your phone and filling out the short form.

uth.edu/giving/alumni-resources/alumni-form.htm

2021 GRADUATING CLASS SPECIALTY CHOICES*

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<th>Specialty</th>
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*Students who are already matched to a PGY-2 position are counted with that specialty and not with the specialty represented by their PGY-1 position.