

DOCTOR

GATOR

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE ALUMNI NEWS

UF
UNIVERSITY of
FLORIDA

WINTER 2021



PHOTO BY LOUIS BREMS

College of Medicine welcomes some of its largest classes to date

By EMILY MAVRAKIS

From students hoping to spend careers in operating rooms to those training to perform leading-edge laboratory research, the UF College of Medicine's newest classes are not only some of the largest to enter the classroom but also some of the most diverse.

A total of **163 medical students** in the class of 2025 began their training this summer, hailing from **56 undergraduate institutions** and **22 countries**. **More than a third of the students are disadvantaged** — having grown up with insufficient access to social, economic and educational opportunities — or identify with a group that is underrepresented in medicine, and **13.5% are first-generation college students**.

The college's graduate program also introduced its largest class this year, with **281 master's students** and **70 PhD candidates**.

About **a third of the PhD candidates come from a background that is underrepresented in medicine**, **women make up about 3/4 of the class** and three students are McKnight Doctoral Fellowship awardees. About **18% are international PhD candidates** who come from countries including Bangladesh, China, France, India, Nigeria and Saudi Arabia. "We are honored these students chose UF to do their graduate studies, and we are excited to play a role in their training and development as biomedical scientists," said Thomas Rowe, PhD, associate dean for graduate education.

The School of Physician Assistant Studies accepted **60 students into the class of 2023** out of more than 2,300 applications. Five veterans are part of the class, and **13% of students come from backgrounds underrepresented in medicine**.

continued on page 6

MD class of 2025:

163
MEDICAL
STUDENTS
from

56
UNDERGRADUATE
INSTITUTIONS
and

22
COUNTRIES



Medical students pose with their new stethoscopes on their first day of orientation in July.

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit 94
Gainesville, FL

P.O. Box 100253, Gainesville, FL 32610-0253
UF UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
College of Medicine

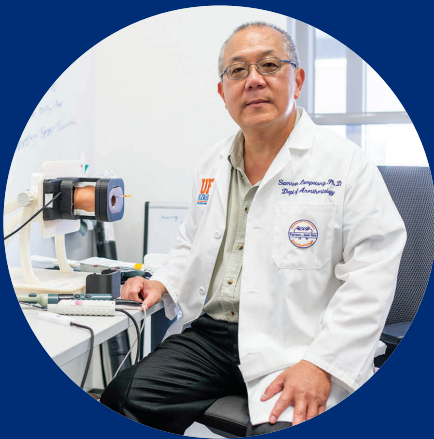
IN THIS ISSUE:
LEON L. HALEY JR., MD:
REMEMBERING A VISIONARY LEADER | 4
TAKING TIME TO HEAL | 6
LOVE AND MEDICINE | 8
FORCE OF NATURE | 11

NEWS CLIPS

PHOTOS BY JESSE S. JONES

▶ COLLEGE OF MEDICINE LAUNCHES NEW CLINICAL DEPARTMENT

The College of Medicine launched a new clinical department this summer. The department of physical medicine and rehabilitation works to improve the functional abilities and quality of life for people with physical impairments or disabilities. It's home to 12 faculty members, four advanced practice providers and five staff members. Four second-year residents and four first-year residents are in the department's four-year training program, and the department plans to continue expanding, eventually adding more specialty physicians and providing more depth within each specialty. ■



Samsun Lampotang, PhD

▶ UF ANESTHESIOLOGY PROFESSOR EARNS PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

Samsun Lampotang, PhD, the Joachim S. Gravenstein Professor of Anesthesiology and director of UF's Center for Safety, Simulation & Advanced Learning Technologies, has received the 2022 J.S. Gravenstein Award from the Society for Technology in Anesthesia for his contributions to the advancement of anesthesia technology. The award — and the professorship held by Lampotang — is named for the founder of UF's department of anesthesiology, who was a driving force in advancing anesthesia technology, patient simulation and anesthesia patient safety. Lampotang was part of the team that conceived the patented UF technology behind the Human Patient Simulator, and he led a team in designing a low-cost, open-source ventilator during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic. ■

“

People may live longer but not be in good health. We're not really interested in extending life span; we're more interested in extending healthspan.”

— **Robert Mankowski, PhD**, an assistant professor in the department of aging and geriatric research, discussing the need to focus on health as people age with AARP, June 2.



FACULTY SOUND BITES

“

It's incredibly important for women to remember that when it comes to any 'shame' associated with an early loss, generally speaking, most times, there is nothing they could have done differently to prevent that loss. Women may go through the five stages of grief in any order and process their loss in different ways.”

— **Kay Roussos-Ross, MD '02**, medical director of the UF Health Women's Center – Medical Plaza and an associate professor in the department of obstetrics and gynecology and the department of psychiatry, discussing pregnancy loss with Self magazine, Feb. 3.



► **INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN PEDIATRIC LUNG TRANSPLANT EXPERT JOINS UF HEALTH, COLLEGE FACULTY**

An internationally recognized physician who performed more than 100 lung transplants has joined the UF Health Shands Children's Hospital to lead the pediatric pulmonary division and resume its pediatric transplant program. Marc G. Schechter, MD, came to UF Health from Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, where he founded its lung transplant program. In addition to serving as director of the Pediatric Lung Transplant Program, Schechter is a professor and the division chief of pediatric pulmonology in the College of Medicine's department of pediatrics. Earlier this year, the pediatric pulmonology program earned its highest-ever ranking — No. 21 in the nation — from U.S. News & World Report's Best Children's Hospital Rankings. ■



Marc G. Schechter, MD



Olgert Bardhi and Daniel Valladares

► **COLLEGE OF MEDICINE STUDENTS VOLUNTEER IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS DURING COVID-19**

Third-year medical student Daniel Valladares and fourth-year medical student Olgert Bardhi from the UF chapter of the COVID-19 Student Service Corps spearheaded a new program that enables medical and physician assistant students to assist front-line health care workers in the UF Health Shands Hospital emergency department and other freestanding UF Health emergency departments in Gainesville during the pandemic. More than 120 students already signed up to volunteer with the program. Following a brief orientation, first- through fourth-year student volunteers take vitals, assist with EKGs, transport patients to imaging services and assist nurses and paramedics with patient care. ■

“

The idea is that if you could boost the immune system, rejuvenate it somehow, that you might be able to slow down the process – perhaps reverse it, but certainly prevent it.”

— **Malu Tansey, PhD**, a professor of neuroscience and neurology at the McKnight Brain Institute, discussing her lab's research into the role the immune system plays in Alzheimer's disease on NPR's All Things Considered, Aug. 9.



“

The patients we are seeing now are actually much younger than what we used to see in the initial (COVID-19) wave in January and February. The patients are much sicker.”

— **Hiren Mehta, MD**, an associate professor of medicine and medical director of the UF Health Shands medical intensive care unit, describing the hospital's response to COVID-19 on ABC News, Aug. 11.



Listen up

Check out UF Health's podcast series, UF Health MedEd Cast, to gain insight on trending health care topics. Earn CME credits while hearing about clinical issues and the latest research advancements from UF Health physicians.

Two ways to tune in:

- Visit UFHealth.org/MedMatters/podcast to listen.
- Download the podcast to your computer, tablet or smartphone and listen using a built-in audio player or third-party application such as Apple Podcasts, Stitcher or iHeartRadio. Simply search for UF Health MedEd Cast in these applications to subscribe.



PHOTO COURTESY OF UF HEALTH JACKSONVILLE COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

R E M E M B E R I N G

➤ A VISIONARY LEADER ➤

UF Health Jacksonville
and its surrounding
community fondly reflect
on the legacy of the late
Leon L. Haley Jr., MD

By EMILY MAVRAKIS

Kimberly Jones remembers how Leon L. Haley Jr., MD, MHSA, CPE, FACEP, took pies to the face in the name of good causes, riled up Gator fans with the Mr. Two Bits cheer and read children's books for a community reading program while working in Jacksonville.

"There's really no shortage of examples of who he was at his core — a fun-loving dad as well as a great leader," said Jones, MBA, UF Health Jacksonville chief development officer and assistant vice president of development. "He was the kind of person who didn't take himself too seriously."

Haley, 56, CEO of UF Health Jacksonville and dean of the UF College of Medicine – Jacksonville, passed away unexpectedly July 24 in South Florida. The Jacksonville community regarded him as a strong, inspirational leader and a beloved son, father, friend and colleague.

In addition to his roles as CEO and dean, Haley was a professor of emergency medicine and vice president for health affairs at UF. He assumed his UF roles in January 2017 and became CEO of UF Health Jacksonville in January 2018.

"Dr. Haley was a bridge builder," said David R. Nelson, MD, senior vice president for health affairs at UF and president of UF Health. "He connected us to one another and connected communities to each other to share principles of common human decency and inclusion."

The Leon L. Haley Jr., MD, Memorial Fund was recently established to build upon Haley's goals — including his dream of creating a full UF College of Medicine campus in Jacksonville — and to fulfill his vision of making UF Health Jacksonville the region's most valuable health care asset. To date, it's raised more than \$150,000. Donations can be made at uff.ufl.edu/giving-opportunities.

Sunil Joshi, MD '98, a Jacksonville allergist and immunologist, said he was grateful to have worked alongside Haley while serving as a member of the UF College of Medicine alumni board and as president of the Duval County Medical Society Foundation.

"He would say that if you view medicine as a job, you might as well be a banker," Joshi said. "It was something he enjoyed — getting to know the community and serving them. Hearing him say that impacted the way I practice medicine."

Haley became a trusted voice for science in the region during the COVID-19 pandemic — sharing insights with Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry as he developed policies to keep the community safe. Haley was one of the first people vaccinated against the virus in the state and spent his last day at work in the hospital vaccinating others. After his passing, hundreds of UF Health Jacksonville employees and community members received vaccines at events held in his honor.

"When you were doing business with him, Dr. Haley was very direct and focused on the goals, but at the same time he was easy to talk to," Curry said. "The idea that he only came into the community three years ago and became such a force in the city and the region really speaks to his impact."

continued from page 1

During medical student orientation this summer, several sessions took place where current students shared their experience trying to balance the rigor of medical school with other challenges like living far from family for the first time, being in a committed relationship and setting aside time to unwind.

For many, dealing with such factors can be a huge strain on well-being and mental health, said Beverly Dede, PhD, the College of Medicine’s medical student counselor.

“Medical students were likely at the top of their class in their undergraduate programs, so they’re used to performing well academically,” she said. “If they struggle with the rigorous material in med school, they’re not used to being the ones asking for help.”

But she said increased conversations about mental health and wellness are helping to deflate the negative stigma of asking for help with problems like depression, anxiety and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder — all common reasons students attend her 50-minute, short-term counseling sessions.

Second-year medical student Nazaree Edwards first started visiting Dede in the Office of Student Counseling and Development after completing his first year of medical school in 2019.

He had recently broken up with his longtime girlfriend, struggled to be away from family and coped with challenges in unhealthy ways. His pain began to reflect itself in his grades, with failed exam scores.

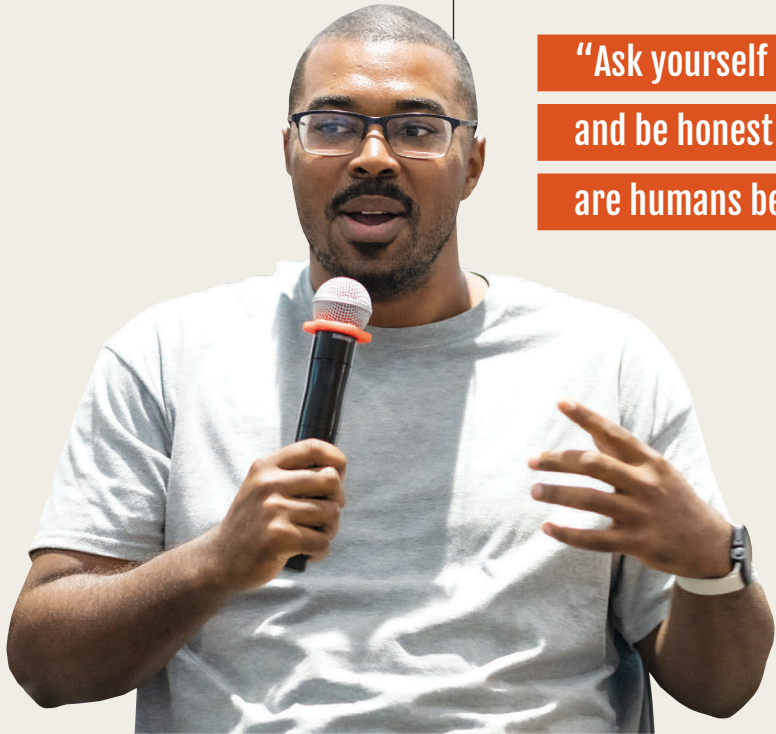
“You have a general understanding of what you can do and what you’re capable of, and I could see that I was just missing something, that I was a little off,” he said.

After a meeting with the Academic Status Committee, Edwards determined his best course of action was to take a

TAKING TIME TO HEAL

Counseling, options to take time off available for medical students

By EMILY MAVRAKIS



year off from medical school.

“I was very nervous and hesitant to take time off,” he said. “But I was assured that my spot would be here waiting for me when I was ready to come back.”

In late July, Edwards shared his story with the class of 2025 to demonstrate the impact of open dialogue and transparency in asking for help when you need it.

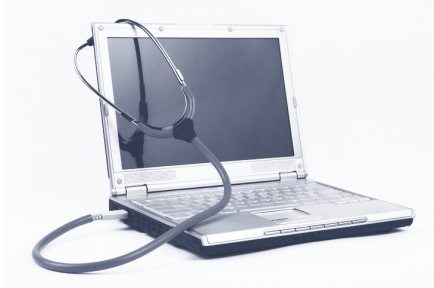
He said he now copes with difficult emotions by talking with a close friend about his thoughts or journaling about them. He also likes to stay connected to nature by taking walks outside or getting lost in a good book.

“It’s important to check in with yourself,” Edwards said. “Ask yourself how you’re doing and be honest with yourself. We are humans before we are students. We need to make sure we’re in the best position to be here.”

“Ask yourself how you’re doing and be honest with yourself. We are humans before we are students.”

— NAZAREE EDWARDS

PHOTO BY LOUIS BREMS



MedMatters

Sharing our latest research advancements and clinical achievements, physician to physician.

UFHealth.org/MedMatters

UF Health neurosurgeon awarded \$38 million grant to lead national stroke prevention trial

The National Institutes of Health has awarded a \$38 million, five-year grant to Brian Hoh, MD, MBA, UF’s chair of neurosurgery, to test two new prospective treatments for symptomatic intracranial arterial stenosis, a leading cause of ischemic stroke worldwide. The double-blinded, randomized clinical trial across 115 U.S. sites will include 1,683 participants, who each will be placed into one of three different medical treatment paths for comparison. Patient enrollment is planned to begin in January. Each participant will be followed for one year.

Faculty developing AI tool to reduce the rise of opioid overdoses

Faculty from the UF College of Pharmacy and UF College of Medicine are developing a new artificial intelligence tool to help identify patients at high risk for opioid use disorder and overdose. The tool will use data from patients’ electronic medical records to guide clinicians in safely and effectively prescribing opioid medications. The project is supported by a five-year, \$3.2 million grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse and aims to reduce the unprecedented rise in opioid overdose and opioid use disorder across the country. College of Medicine faculty Jiang Bian, PhD; Chris Harle, PhD; Yonghui Wu, PhD; and Stephanie Staras, MSPH, PhD, are involved in the effort.

Genetic mutation could play role in improving leukemia treatment, UF Health researchers find

Findings recently published in the journal Clinical Cancer Research are a potential breakthrough in personalized medicine for acute myeloid leukemia, or AML, patients. Olga Guryanova, MD, PhD, an assistant professor in the UF College of Medicine’s department of pharmacology and therapeutics and a UF Health Cancer Center member, and Jonathan Licht, MD, director of the UF Health Cancer Center, co-authored the study focusing on a gene called DNMT3A. Working in cell and preclinical models, a UF Health-led research team has made an important discovery: Those who carry a genetic mutation in the gene might benefit from anti-cancer drugs that interfere with the way AML cells replicate.

PASSING ON A PASSION FOR LISTENING

1982 PA alumnus establishes fund to help provide stethoscopes for the next generation of PAs

By MATTHEW HESTERS



Gary Gossman, PA '82

In the 1970s, Gainesville native Gary Gossman, PA '82, had just graduated from Santa Fe College when he went to work for the UF College of Medicine division of cardiovascular medicine — an experience that quickly set him on a path toward becoming a PA.

“In 1980, the profession was new, but it seemed like a good fit for me,” Gossman said. “UF’s program was in its infancy but was already considered a solid educational experience. The application process was competitive, and I was delighted and relieved when accepted. The next two years were a blur.”

Nearly 40 years after graduating from the UF School of PA Studies, Gossman is reflecting on his UF experiences and finding ways to help future Gators who share his passion for patient care with the establishment of the Gary S. Gossman PA School Fund, which provides stethoscopes to first-year PA students.

“The stethoscope fund was established to give back to a caring group of bright people who will soon wake up every day — as I did — knowing their sole job is to help others,” Gossman said. “They will become a vital part of health care. The stethoscope is iconic, and I want them to receive it from a guy who began just as they are now and has had a remarkably gratifying and successful career.”

While at UF, Gossman discovered more than a love



PA students pose with their new stethoscopes on during their orientation in June.

for medicine. After falling for fellow PA student Jeanne Geldbaugh, he married her soon after graduation. The two spent the next several years working in primary care and internal medicine, and beyond the clinical setting, they volunteered with local governments, community organizations, and state and national professional academies to improve public health outcomes.

The couple co-founded Gulfside Hospice in Pasco County and the Main Street Program in Hardee County. Gossman chaired the Hardee County Health Care Task Force for many years, and in the early 1990s he and his wife established two rural clinics in south central Florida — some of the first PA-owned medical practices in the state.

After returning to Gainesville in 2010, Gossman spent several years working at UF Health in hematology and internal medicine. Upon his retirement in 2019, he turned his attention to establishing the stethoscope fund.

He recently received a handwritten note thanking him for his generosity from someone sitting in the same position he was in when embarking on PA school in 1980. Liana Jawad, one of 60 first-year students who received a stethoscope during the School of PA Studies orientation in June, wrote to Gossman that she had been looking forward to this moment for years.

“Receiving this stethoscope truly signifies the beginning of my journey as a PA,” Jawad wrote. “I hope to use this to not only listen to the heart of my patients but also to touch their life in a meaningful way.”

INTERESTED IN GIVING THE GIFT OF LISTENING TO THE NEXT GENERATION OF GATOR PAS OR MDS?

Visit uff.ufl.edu/med to make a donation to the School of Physician Assistant Studies Stethoscope Fund or the College of Medicine Alumni Affairs Stethoscope Fund.

Private gift supports premier neuroimaging facility at UF Health

By KAREN DOOLEY

A \$5 million gift from the Harry T. Mangurian Jr. Foundation has set the stage for the UF College of Medicine to build a comprehensive brain imaging facility at the Norman Fixel Institute for Neurological Diseases at UF Health to explore the brain as never before.

The new laboratory space will enhance vital clinical research in both dementia with Lewy bodies and Parkinson’s disease dementia. Founded in 1999 by Harry and Dorothy “Dottie” Mangurian, the Fort Lauderdale-based foundation targets its support to education, medical research and environmental causes. It has been a strong ally of the UF department of neurology in efforts to expand research into Lewy body dementia and improve care for persons with the disease and their families.

“Mr. and Mrs. Mangurian were a dynamic couple, and he was a great individual to work for,” said Stephen Mehallis, president of the Harry T. Mangurian Jr. Foundation. “This foundation is a wonderful legacy

for them because they were terrific people.”

Dorothy was diagnosed with dementia with Lewy bodies in 2001 and lived for many years with the disease, and Harry was her caretaker before he died in 2008 from cancer. Dorothy died in 2014.

“Dottie was the impetus for the foundation’s involvement in the areas of neurology and neuroscience,” Mehallis said.

The foundation’s original gift of \$1 million to the department of neurology in 2014 established the Dorothy Mangurian Clinical-Research Headquarters for Lewy Body Dementia and led to the recruitment of Melissa Armstrong, MD, MSc, a national leader in Lewy body clinical care and research.

Under Armstrong’s leadership and with help from the Harry T. Mangurian Jr. Foundation and other private organizations, the clinical program has grown significantly.

“Our ultimate goal is to continue to improve care for people living with Lewy body dementia and to advance research into the causes and complications of the disease,” said Armstrong, director of the Mangurian Clinical-Research Headquarters for Lewy Body Dementia.

The Harry T. Mangurian Jr. Foundation leadership is pleased with the relationship they’ve established with the physicians and scientists at UF Health. For that reason, they agreed to support the new brain imaging facility planned for the Fixel Institute, under the direction of Michael Okun, MD ’96, executive director of the Fixel Institute and chair of the department of neurology at the UF College of Medicine.



PHOTO BY LOUIS BREMS



Under the direction of Dean Colleen Koch, MD, MS, MBA, the UF College of Medicine launched a **STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS** in March, paving the way to become one of the nation’s preeminent Colleges of Medicine. With feedback and discussion from people across the College of Medicine community shaping the discussion, Koch called the approach grassroots strategic planning. Above, Koch speaks with residents and faculty members during one of three Orange and Brew events held in late July in the hospitals, where she and UF Health Shands CEO Ed Jimenez served as baristas for the day.



Stephen Mehallis, president of the Harry T. Mangurian Jr. Foundation, and Gordon Latz, vice president of the foundation.



PHOTO BY JAMIE SMITH COUTURE STUDIOS

Love *and* MEDICINE

By EMILY MAVRAKIS

Tim Flynn, MD, and Marian Limacher, MD, reignited a relationship that led them to Gainesville and left a lasting impression on generations of learners

Defying the expectations of loved ones, Tim Flynn, MD, and Marian Limacher, MD, wanted to pave their own paths when deciding to attend medical school in the 1970s — the first in their families to do so.

“I knew I wanted to be a doctor in the 10th grade; it was important for me to do something where I could help people,” said Flynn, a UF College of Medicine emeritus professor who served as senior associate dean for clinical affairs for the college and chief medical officer for UF Health Shands from 2010 to 2018.

Growing up in an Irish Catholic household, his mother wanted him to become a priest.

Limacher, an emerita professor and former senior associate dean for faculty affairs and professional development at the College of Medicine, shared similar thoughts. Many suggested she become a nurse.

“I thought, ‘I think I’ll be a doctor instead,’” she said. “That was what I wanted to do.”

After committing decades to improving the lives of patients in Gainesville, the couple decided shortly after they both retired that they would support the next generation of physicians training at the UF College of Medicine. They recently established the Timothy C. Flynn, MD, and Marian C. Limacher, MD, Medical Scholarship Endowment fund to support those who will be the first in their families to attend medical school.

“Our families couldn’t cover the whole cost, which is certainly a lot less than tuition is today,” said Flynn, who joined the U.S. Navy and received a health professions scholarship to cover the cost

of his medical education. “One thing that’s stuck with me over the years of teaching is hearing about how big of a financial burden attending medical school can be for some students.”

Flynn graduated from Baylor College of Medicine in Houston in 1974, while Limacher graduated from St. Louis University School of Medicine in 1977. Shortly thereafter, she began her residency training at Baylor, where her chief resident — Flynn’s former roommate — introduced the two on a blind date. They went out for a while before things fizzled.

“He just stopped calling,” Limacher said.

Having parted ways, Flynn and Limacher continued their residency training in Houston in hospital systems — but serendipitously, their jobs brought them together a couple of years later. Limacher was working the overnight shift at her hospital and received a call regarding the transfer of a patient. Flynn was on the other line to discuss the case with her.

“It was a little awkward,” Limacher said. “But we definitely had a longer chat than those calls usually last. And all transfer calls are recorded, so somewhere in the VA archives, there’s a recording of that conversation.”

Flynn and Limacher started dating again and got married a year later, in 1980. In 1983, they welcomed their daughter to the world. In 1984, their son completed their family.

That same year, Flynn received a call from a former colleague, Edward M. Copeland, MD, then a professor and chair of the department of surgery at the UF College of Medicine, to offer them both jobs with UF Health. They said yes.

In their more than 30 years in Gainesville, the couple held several

important leadership positions while raising two children.

Before his retirement in 2018, Flynn served as chief of surgery at the Malcom Randall Veterans Affairs Medical Center and was involved with the VA nationally, was chief medical officer at UF Health Shands and served as the College of Medicine’s senior associate dean for clinical affairs. He also served as program director for the surgery residency and as associate dean for graduate medical education.

Limacher, who retired in 2019, was chief of noninvasive cardiology and chief of cardiology at the VA and professor of medicine in the division of cardiovascular medicine. She was named senior associate dean for faculty affairs and professional development at the College of Medicine in 2010.

“It meant a lot to me to be a leader in the first formal office to support college faculty,” she said. “Nothing like that had existed before.”

Limacher was also a principal investigator for the Women’s Health Initiative, a long-standing clinical study that continues today.

Both Flynn and Limacher are recipients of the College of Medicine’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

Flynn said he couldn’t have thought of a better career than the one he had.

“I’m happiest thinking about all the young men and women I trained as surgeons,” he said. “Sometimes, they’ll tell me, ‘I have a voice in my head that sounds like you that tells me what to do in this situation.’”

They both said establishing a \$1 million scholarship endowment was an important way to give back to the profession, the same way they received support while in school.

“We hope the recipients pass it on when they are in a position to help others and continue that cycle of giving back to those who need it,” Flynn said.

ALUMNI WEEKEND 2021:

Legacy family celebrates reunion milestones, international volunteer efforts

John Lovejoy Jr., MD '66, and John Lovejoy III, MD '01, volunteered together in Haiti

By EMILY MAVRAKIS

Although this year's Alumni Weekend festivities went virtual, graduates of the UF College of Medicine showed up in full force to recognize the efforts of their alma mater. Celebrating classes hosted Zoom happy hours in May and reconnected for virtual lectures in October.

John Lovejoy Jr., MD '66, and his son John Lovejoy III, MD '01, were among the families celebrating milestone reunions this year. Both Drs. Lovejoy decided to pursue careers in orthopaedic surgery, following in their fathers' footsteps, by happenstance.

Lovejoy Jr. said he actively tried to resist pursuing the same specialty as his father while he was in medical school in Gainesville 55 years ago.

During his 40-year career as an orthopaedic surgeon in Jacksonville, Lovejoy Jr. performed knee and hip surgeries for countless people — including well-known figures like President Gerald Ford.

His son graduated from the UF College of Medicine 35 years later, in 2001. Lovejoy III, who also grew up in Jacksonville, had another career before deciding to attend medical school.

"I wanted to do something meaningful

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LOVEJOY FAMILY



John Lovejoy Jr., MD '66, (right) and his son, John Lovejoy III, MD '01, on a trip to Haiti in the mid-2000s.

that made a difference in people's lives," he said. "I always admired and was impressed with my father's work, the fact that he was able to improve his patients' quality of life."

His heart wasn't set on a particular specialty until his third-year rotations started. At that point, he was immediately

engrossed by the tactility of surgery.

"I like working with my hands — one of my hobbies is working on classic cars — and being in the operating room allows me to address problems directly by using my hands," Lovejoy III said. "I had really good mentors during my rotations, which can make all the difference."

Lovejoy Jr. retired before his son finished his residency, so they never had a chance to work professionally together until volunteer work took them to the Caribbean.

Following a devastating earthquake in Haiti in 2010, the Lovejoys began taking trips to the island nation to assist medical teams with equipment and ongoing professional training.

Returning at least once annually until the COVID-19 pandemic, the Lovejoys and other volunteers with The CRUDEM Foundation provided aid to Sacred Heart Hospital in the northern city of Milot. Their efforts have included staff recruitment and training and funding a new operating suite. The Lovejoys were also recognized in a documentary, "Angels of Milot."

Today, Lovejoy III works at Nemours Children Hospital in Orlando. His father, now 82, tends to his Jacksonville farm, living in the house he grew up in.

He said he plans to return to Haiti as soon as it's safe and as long as he's healthy.

"I've always felt that in Haiti we were able to make a real difference and change peoples' lives," Lovejoy Jr. said. "I love the people there, and they've always been appreciative of our help."

Students create new award in honor of beloved mentor

W. Patrick Duff, MD, was associate dean for student affairs at the College of Medicine from 2002 to 2020

By EMILY MAVRAKIS

After guiding thousands of UF medical students on their journeys to becoming physicians — from white coat ceremonies to Match Day and graduation, W. Patrick Duff, MD, has a new accolade named in his honor.

Duff most recently served as associate dean for student affairs from 2002 to 2020, and in more than three decades as a College of Medicine faculty member, he also served as residency program director and director of fellowship research in maternal and fetal medicine, in addition to treating patients. He continues to serve as a professor in the department of obstetrics and gynecology, supervises residents in UF Health's high-risk OB-GYN clinic and treats patients at UF Health Springhill.

Duff has received many awards since joining UF in 1989, but he did not expect to ever see one named in his honor. The W. Patrick Duff Medical Student Advocate Award, established by the class of 2021 and unveiled during the senior banquet in May, will be presented annually to a faculty member who exemplifies advocacy

PHOTO BY W. CHARLES POULTON



W. Patrick Duff, MD, is presented with the medical student advocate award, named on his behalf during the class of 2021 senior banquet in May.

for students while they train to enter the medical field.

"I was certainly surprised when I received the award," Duff said. "At UF, I strive to be an advocate for students, not just to help them with academics but also to teach them how to be good

professionals and humanists. I've always tried to treat my patients and my students like family."

Emily Edwards, MD '21, was one of the class members involved in creating the new award. She said after hearing about Duff's retirement from the associate dean

for student affairs role, the class wanted to find a way to recognize the dedication he showed the UF community for decades.

"I thought it was important for us to showcase the way he always went above and beyond to help his friends, colleagues and students," she said.

Edwards said Duff took the time to get to know each member of the medical school classes, always remembering their names and writing individual letters to everyone for their residency applications, in addition to handling his busy schedule as a practicing physician.

"I always joked that he never actually had any time to sleep because he was so busy," Edwards said.

She said presenting Duff with his namesake award was an honor and was one of the few occasions that left her role model speechless.

"That was one of my goals," Edwards said. "I hope he knows all the hard work he's put into the university over the past three decades will be reflected in what happens here for years to come."



PHOTO BY JESSE S. JONES

FORCE OF NATURE

Retired pediatrician Maude Lofton, MD '79, joins the ranks of UF College of Medicine Wall of Fame inductees

By STYLIANA RESVANIS

As a child, Maude Lofton could often be found seeking solace among nature, catching butterflies and observing ants outside her Jacksonville home. Her love of science was only rivaled by her love of learning, which led her down a path to becoming a teacher.

"Most of the people who were instrumental in my life at the time were schoolteachers," says Lofton, MD '79. "I would always ask for chemistry sets for Christmas and birthdays, I was in the 4-H Club and I just loved exploring. It was a great escape."

But a series of serendipitous encounters illuminated a different route: medicine.

After dedicating her career to caring for children as a pediatrician at academic health centers across the nation, Lofton is the latest UF College of Medicine graduate to be inducted into the Wall of Fame, an honor created in 1988 to recognize outstanding alumni who have made contributions to medicine, government, education and the community.

"You do what you do going through life, and you're not doing it for recognition — you're just keeping your head down doing the things you think are right, the things that need to be done," Lofton says. "Then to have someone notice ... It's humbling. I'm grateful for this tremendous honor."

Upon completing high school at age 16, Lofton landed at Spelman College in Atlanta to study biology during the height of the civil rights movement, immersing herself in peaceful marches and the words of renowned activists such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Stokely Carmichael. She then went on to work as a medical technologist for nearly a decade.

When she visited UF in the 1970s for information about pursuing a PhD, faculty like James Deyrup and Willie Sanders encouraged her to apply to the MD program — an option she had never thought possible due to her nontraditional path. Medical school brought with it stimulating subject matter and long-lasting bonds with classmates. Though Lofton had contemplated becoming a psychiatrist, her last rotation pushed her toward her true passion.

"One night I was sitting in the nursery with a baby, and my instinct told me, 'If I'm going to practice medicine for the rest of my life, I'm going to do what I enjoy,'" says Lofton, who went on to become chief resident during her time at University Hospital, which later became UF Health Jacksonville. "I realized in that moment that I got my greatest fulfillment from pediatrics."

Lofton blazed a path in her 23-year career as a pediatrician who brought a firm but gentle voice to patients and families at each academic health center she practiced at, from the UF College of Medicine and Howard University to the University of Alabama at Birmingham and the University of Louisville.

In Jacksonville, she served on the Mayor's Commission for Children and Youth and the Governor's Commission on Children and Youth for the state of Florida; wrote a weekly column for a local newspaper; and received commendations for her child and family advocacy from the city, area churches, the NAACP and more. In Birmingham, she completed advanced training in child development and established a primary care practice on-site for the siblings of pediatric patients enrolled in a long-term drug study.

Though she retired from practicing medicine in 2002, Lofton remains active in medical societies, serves on the boards of various organizations that focus on youth and the arts, and provides philanthropic support for numerous initiatives, including the UF College of Medicine's Willie J. Sanders Scholarship, named in honor of one of her medical school mentors.

The Colorado resident still spends her free time in the fresh air, playing tennis, skiing, golfing, gardening and taking long walks with her Doberman, Rusty. When she's not enjoying the outdoors, she's staying connected with her two children and three grandchildren.

"If there's one thing I hope they learn from me," she says, "it's that it's important to enjoy life, to be kind and to do the best you can do at whatever you do."

THEIR FUTURE
YOUR LEGACY

#WhosNextUF

In 2017, UF College of Medicine alumni launched the Legacy Challenge scholarship campaign to help the next generation of Gators pursue their passions in medicine. With generous support from graduates and friends, the campaign needs only five more donors to reach its goal of 100 participants.

There are three ways to join the Legacy Challenge:

1. Make a gift of \$5,000 annually for four years to support the education of UF medical students.
2. Make a bequest.
3. Endow your own named scholarship.

As medical school expenses in this country continue to rise at a rapid pace, your support will leave a lasting legacy for future generations. Your gift to scholarships helps the best medical and PA students obtain the world-class education they need and deserve.



I've always been immensely grateful to the donors who have eased this weight and allowed me to pursue my dreams. The financial impact is helpful — no matter how large or small — but the impact of having someone believe in me is something I won't forget."

— **Daniela Ramirez,**
class of 2022
Hugh and Mabel Wilford
Scholarship recipient



Visit
drgator.ufl.edu/scholarships
to learn more.

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT RANKS UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA FIFTH AMONG TOP PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN 2022 BEST COLLEGES RANKINGS

The announcement cements UF's meteoric rise in rankings over the past five years and publicly recognizes the university's excellence and value

After five consecutive years on the rise, the University of Florida's performance has positioned it among the nation's top 5 ranked public universities, according to the 2022 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings released in September, marking an extraordinary milestone in the university's history.

UF has advanced a record nine spots on the public university list since 2017. On the U.S. News National Universities list, which includes public and private institutions, UF ranked No. 28, a rise of 22 spots during the same period.

The College of Medicine also made strides in U.S. News & World Report's graduate school rankings released in March, remaining Florida's top-ranked medical school and standing steady in research and primary care among the nation's elite institutions. The college ranked No. 15 nationally for research among public institutions and No. 36 among all medical schools. Additionally, UF College of Medicine primary care ranked No. 33 nationally for public institutions and No. 51 overall.

"We continually strive for excellence in patient care delivery, research and education," said Colleen G. Koch, MD, MS, MBA, dean of the College of Medicine. "We are grateful for the talented students who entrust the UF College of Medicine to provide them with a preeminent education, as well as our committed faculty educators, researchers and care providers."

UF's success positions the university to continue recruiting and retaining the best students, faculty and staff while advancing meaningful research; building partnerships with other educational institutions, as well as corporations and foundations; and increasing support through philanthropic partnerships.

"I want to express my gratitude and acknowledge all of the people in the UF community who contribute every day to a culture of hard work, passion, invention and discovery that will far outlast this ranking season and any other accolades," UF President Kent Fuchs said.



Dean
Colleen G. Koch,
MD, MS, MBA
COMDean-Koch@ufl.edu

President, Medical
Alumni Association
Shireen Madani Sims, MD '01

Editor
Karen M. Dooley, MAMC
352-265-9406
dooleyk@ufl.edu

Assistant Editor
Styliana Resvanis

Contributing Writers
Matthew Hesters
Emily Mavrakis

Design
Mary Cecelia

Photography
Louis Brems
Jesse S. Jones

Please send address changes
and other correspondence to:

Karen M. Dooley
UF College of Medicine
Director of Communications
3300 SW Williston Road
Gainesville, FL 32608
P.O. Box 100253
Gainesville, FL 32610
dooleyk@ufl.edu

SOCIAL MEDIA

 [@UFDrGator](https://www.facebook.com/UFDrGator)
 [@UFMedicine](https://twitter.com/UFMedicine)
 bit.ly/UFMedicine
 [@UFMedicine](https://www.instagram.com/UFMedicine)

ON THE WEB

Med.ufl.edu
News.DrGator.ufl.edu
Alumni.med.ufl.edu
FloridaPhysician.med.ufl.edu

Doctor Gator is produced by UF Health Communications for MD, PhD, PA and MS graduates, as well as current and former housestaff, faculty and friends of the UF College of Medicine.

12 | DOCTOR GATOR