

Newsletter

This newsletter is distributed via email from the UNMC College of Medicine Parents & Family



114 Medical Students Receive Residency Assignments

UNMC College of Medicine Dean Bradley Britigan, MD, called it “one of the largest St. Patrick’s Day celebrations in Omaha.”

On March 17, the UNMC Class of 2023 learned their residency assignments during an event at the Scott Conference Center at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Thirty-eight percent of UNMC students are staying in Nebraska for their training, and 50% matched in primary care, which includes family medicine, internal medicine, internal medicine/geriatrics, internal medicine/pediatrics, pediatrics and obstetrics/gynecology.

[Read more about the event.](#)

[View Match Day photos.](#)





Message from the PFA Co-Presidents

Pat & Cindy Regan

Greetings from the Parents and Family Association Advisory Council!

Spring is here despite what the weather is telling us and, as always, this is a very exciting time of year for parents and students in the College of Medicine. We would like to extend our congratulations to the fourth-year medical students on their residency assignments and their upcoming graduation! Good luck in your next step of your medical training.

This spring, the NU Foundation coordinated the first ever UNMC Giving Day. The campaign was very successful and has helped the PFA partially close the gap between budgeted expenses and current gifts! Thank you to everyone who directed their gifts to the PFA. Your generous contributions will help the PFA support student and family activities such as Family Day and the Spouse & Significant Other's Reception later this year. If you missed Giving Day and would like to help close the gap, you can still [make a contribution to the PFA](#). If you have any questions, you may [contact Laura Hohenstein](#).

Happy spring!

Spring Edition Newsletter
March 2023

This newsletter is produced by the Alumni Relations Office at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

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PFA Parents Share Why They Donate

"We know how challenging it will be for our sons and daughters to navigate their chosen path at UNMC. We donate to the PFA because they provide family members an outlet to speak with others about what we are experiencing, learn more about the curriculum, and give us solutions on how we can better assist our sons and daughters through their years of study."

*Kevin & Tracy Kochenderfer
M1 parents*

"The celebrations and community-building events that are supported by the PFA are extremely important to our daughter and her peers! Therefore, it is important to us as well. We are happy to support these causes at UNMC!"

*Drew & Lacey Luebe
M1 parents*



UNMC's First Giving Day Exceeds Goals

UNMC & Nebraska Medicine

UNMC's Giving Day - *For the Greater Good*, a virtual day of giving and engagement in support of UNMC students and their campus, was held March 30-31. To honor UNMC's founding in 1869, the giving day lasted for 1,869 minutes (about 31 hours) with gifts made online on the Giving Day website. Donations came in from 45 states.



Overall, the event raised \$278,229 among 1,542 gifts to support UNMC's colleges, student organizations and clinical partners and institutions, including Nebraska Medicine. This exceeded the goals for the event of \$100,000 and 1,000 gifts.

UNMC Chancellor Jeffrey P. Gold, MD (pictured) and Nebraska Medicine CEO Jim Linder, MD, expressed gratitude to the alumni, friends and grateful patients who supported the campaign.

"At UNMC and Nebraska Medicine, we are grateful for the response to the inaugural Giving Day. As UNMC continues in its mission to transform lives, we are humbled by the generosity and trust our stakeholders have shown us," Dr. Gold said. "These generous investments will provide support for UNMC students, educators and initiatives as we strive together to create a healthier future for the people of Nebraska and beyond. Thank you all!"

[Read more.](#)

Parents & Family Association

Thank you to the 18 donors who contributed toward the \$3,495 raised for the Parents & Family Association. The funds received on UNMC Giving Day helped to ensure continued support to medical students and their family members through PFA-sponsored events and programming, such as the M1 picnic (pictured), Family Day, the Spouse & Significant Other's Reception, Graduation and Match Day.



Medical Student Completes Rotation in India

Earlier this year, Natasha Hongsermeier-Graves completed a month-long rotation working alongside the surgeons at the Basavatarakam Indo-American Cancer Hospital and Research Institute. The rotation was the result of a 2009 memorandum of understanding establishing a two-way exchange program between UNMC and the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh.

Hongsermeier-Graves said the international rotation was eye-opening.

“[Just] because we do things one way at UNMC or even in the United States, there’s probably other ways to do them. Just learning other ways of performing procedures and taking care of patients, especially in areas that may have fewer resources, and learning to be judicious and efficient in the resources that you use, was valuable. But also, outside of the medical component, there is immense value in the cultural humility and the cultural experiences, learning a new language – just being in a new setting, a new country, a completely new environment. There’s a lot of opportunity for growth in that.” [Read more.](#)



From left, neurosurgery scrub nurse Gailunglu Gangmei, Natasha Hongersmeier-Graves and K. Venkateswara Rao, MBBS, one of Hongsermeier-Graves’ mentor during her rotation.

Student Spotlight: Heidi Viera

Hometown

Vancouver, British Columbia

Program & Year

5th year in the MD/PhD program

Undergraduate Education

Bachelor of Science,
University of British Columbia

Hobbies

Finding new food places & coffee shops, baking and shopping.



Three things people may not know about me:

- I love dogs but don’t have one myself.
- I have American, Canadian and Finnish citizenship.
- I have lived in all three of those countries.

Medical Students Start Rural Outreach Program

Third-year medical student Shea Jeffres has wanted to be a doctor since she was 5 years old. When she got to UNMC, however, Jeffres wasn't as prepared as she thought. She looked around and noticed that the students from urban areas simply knew more about health care than she did. Jeffres is from Burwell, a town of 1,091 people in north-central Nebraska.



"I'm from the middle of nowhere," Jeffres said.

To help other students facing a similar challenge, Jeffres and four other medical students (Lesley Towery of Wauneta, Nebraska; Nicole Beckman of Elgin, Nebraska; Kelsey Green of Neligh, Nebraska; and Lafe Loper of Callaway, Nebraska) started Nebraska Rural Health Outreach.

The program provides information and resources to high school students from rural Nebraska who are interested in a career in health care but don't know exactly how to pursue it. The program has over 60 members representing each of UNMC's colleges.

Each month, the program hosts Zoom meetings with students from as many as 13 rural Nebraska high schools. During the meeting, the high school students hear from a health care professional who also grew up in rural Nebraska.

Another piece of the program is mentorship. High school students can apply for a mentor in an area of health care that interests them, and a UNMC student in that program will sign on to be their mentor. About 10 students have signed up for a mentor so far, Jeffres said.

In addition to teaching about the different possible health care paths, Jeffres said, her group aims to help young people understand the process, too. For instance, some students don't know how much education is involved in a career in health care.

"When you're 17 years old, you don't necessarily know that process. It's been insightful for the kids," she said, "I can't start a curriculum for these high school students, but I am qualified to share my experiences and find other people who had similar experiences. If medicine is something you want to do, you can do it. Rural Nebraska's not going to hold you back."

[Read more.](#)

Sagar Chapagain's Winding Path to Medical School

Sagar Chapagain came to Nebraska because of a UNMC pathway program. His path, however, was a little more winding than some.

Born in Nepal, Chapagain and his family moved to the United States in 2011. He first attended community college in Baltimore, working several jobs to help support his family as he dreamed of becoming a doctor.



"I was still learning the language and navigating the system. I wanted to be a doctor, but I didn't know how to do it."

A friend suggested he apply to what was then UNMC's Summer Medical and Dental Education Program. During that 2014 summer program, Chapagain learned about pathways to medical school. More importantly, he also learned that his dream was attainable.

"If I had not gone through the summer program, I'm not sure if I would have come here," he said. "I wouldn't have known about the program and all the amazing and wonderful people. But ultimately, the decision was an easy one, because I had gone through the program, and I knew the people were nice and I would get incredible training here in Nebraska." [Read more.](#)

2022-2023 College of Medicine Student Calendar

Academic Calendar

Second Semester (M1)	January 2 – May 26, 2023
Second Semester (M2)	January 9 – July 1, 2023
Second Semester (M3)	January 2 – June 23, 2023
Second Semester (M4)	January 2 – April 30, 2023

Special Events

Honors Convocation (M4)	May 4, 2023
Commencement (M4)	May 6, 2023

Upcoming PFA-Sponsored Events

Graduation	May 6, 2023
M1 Picnic	May 26, 2023
Spouse & Significant Other's Reception	August 14, 2023
Family Day & White Coat Ceremony	August 18, 2023

UNMC's Affordability Stands Out Among Top Primary Care Medical Schools



UNMC is the second least-expensive among the top primary care medical schools ranked by U.S. News & World Report, according to an analysis by Becker's ACS Review.

Among the top 12 ranked institutions, Becker's ASC found that UNMC, which ranked seventh in the March 2022 U.S. News list, cost \$35,360 a year to attend, as opposed to \$66,284 a year for Harvard, ranked ninth, or \$59,126 for the University of Pittsburgh, tied for 10th.

Jeffrey P. Gold, MD, chancellor of UNMC, said the analysis underscored UNMC and the University of Nebraska's commitment to the people of the state.

"UNMC is committed to improving the health and transforming the lives of the people of Nebraska," he said. "We offer cutting-edge educational opportunities and technology – one of the reasons we are among this list of premier institutions – and we do it for a tuition cost that compares favorably to our peers. True affordability and quality education is truly high value for Nebraskans."

UNMC's College of Medicine admits approximately 130 students annually. The med center has reported record enrollments for the past 20 years and trains more health professionals across its six colleges, two institutes and graduate studies program than any other institution in Nebraska.

"We're proud to train the future health care workforce for Nebraska and the surrounding regions," said UNMC College of Medicine Dean Bradley Britigan, MD. "Our graduates are well prepared to excel in residency training and professional practice and focused on providing patients the highest quality care possible."

Parents and Family Association

2022-2023 Advisory Council

Co-Presidents

Cindy & Pat Regan - StudentYear 2024

Members

Paula & Scott Hardin - StudentYear 2023

Stephanie Sacco - StudentYear 2023

Melissa & Mike Karloff - StudentYear 2024

Mark Ziegenbein - StudentYear 2024

Elaine Adams - StudentYear 2025

Kim Anderson - StudentYear 2025

Michelle Schefcik - StudentYear 2025

Geraldine Erickson - StudentYear 2026

Penny Ford - StudentYear 2026

Tracy Kochenderfer - StudentYear 2026

Drew & Lacey Luebe - StudentYear 2026

Gabby Mormino - StudentYear 2026

MelissaThompson - StudentYear 2026

Marcy Wood Jolton - StudentYear 2026

Evie York - StudentYear 2026

Resources for Parents & Students

Quick Links

- [UNMC College of Medicine](#)
- [UNMC Division of Student Success](#)
- [UNMC Counseling and Psychological Services](#)
- [UNMC Offices of Inclusion and Equity](#)
- [College of Medicine Parents & Family Association](#)

Contact Us

The Parents & Family Association Advisory Council gets administrative support from the UNMC Alumni Relations Office. For more information contact:

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