



invest | influence | impact

iLEAD

Interprofessional Leadership for Excellence
and Academic Development

2026 Graduates

Rooted and Ready

2026 iLEAD Projects

Jennifer Adams, MD, FAAD, DTM&H

The Road Ahead: A Focused Strategic Map for the UNMC Department of Dermatology

Megan R. Arthur, MD

DermREACH Rural Dermatology Residency Pathway

Andrea B. Cunha, PT, PhD

Building the Bridge: Establishing a Clinician-Researcher Model and Community of Practice in Pediatric Rehabilitation

Rishi Batra, MD, MBA, FACS

Behind the Scope: Colorectal Surgery Curriculum Toolkit for Trainees

Claudia Berrondo, MD, FACS, FAAP

Youngest First: Optimizing Pediatric Surgical Scheduling Workflow

Terri L. Blase, MS, CGC

Redesigning Access: A Scalable Genetic Counseling Model to Reduce Wait Times in Autism Care

M. Jana Broadhurst, MD, PhD, DTM&H

Advancing the Impact of the DPMI Infectious Diseases Diagnostics & Biopreparedness Council

Brittany Brown, MD

Updating Anesthesiology Residency Curriculum to Fit Generation Z Learners.

Allie Burt, MD

Reimagining Psychodynamic Education for the Next Generation of Psychiatrists

Jennifer Burt, PhD

Letting Go to Build Forward: A Leadership Lesson in Sustainability

Krystal Davis, EdD, MSNRN

Development of a Formalized Simulation Education & Training Program for Faculty and Staff

Amanda M. Dolen, RDH, BSDH, MHPTT

The Calibration Connection: Connecting the Dots for Consistent Clinical Education

Jessica Downes, PharmD, BCACP, CDCES

Clarifying Roles: A Data-Driven Framework for Affiliated Clinical Faculty Classification

Salaheddin H I Elrokhsi, MD, MSc

Tracking Normalization of Free T4 Level After Starting Treatment of Graves' Disease

Tara Fahmie, PhD, BCBA-D

Revamping the Evaluation Process in the Severe Behavior Department

Brandi Flagg, MD, MPH, CMD

Ready, Set, Go! Implementing a Dynamic Nursing Home Curriculum Experience on Short Notice

Megan Frazee, PT, DPT, OCS, FAAOMPT

Leading with Evidence: Evaluating Alternative Residency Models

Upoma Guha, BDS, MS

Academic Leadership in Action: Advancing the Preclinical to Clinical Transition for Practice-Ready Dentists

Mary Halbur, PhD, BCBA-D

From Clinic to Community: Expanding Caregiver Training and Systems for Behavior Analyst Supervisors

Alyson Hanish, PhD, MSN, RN

UNMC Nursing PhD Academic Advising Program

Lynda K. Harris, PhD

Expanding the Reach and Impact of the Nebraska Center for Women's Health Research

Ivy N. Haskins, MD, FACS, FASMBS, DABOM

Preventing Gastric Volvulus Emergencies: An Untwisting Approach

Rachel Knight, PhD

Beyond the Clinic Walls: A Consultation Model for Pediatric Feeding Disorders

Shweta Kukrety, MBBS

Streamlining the Path to Lung Transplant Listing: Optimization of the Lung Transplant Evaluation Process

Robin Mary Lally, PhD, MS, RN, BA, AOCN, FAAN

Reinvigorating Interest in and Understanding of the UNMC College of Nursing Promotion and Tenure Processes and Guidelines.

2026 iLEAD Projects

Scott Lundgren, DO, MS

Enhancing Cardiogenic Shock Care at UNMC and Beyond

Pamela May-Weeks, PhD

Path to Increasing Efficiency and Using Digital Assessment in the Neuropsychology Clinic

Kerry Miller, PhD

Building a Systematic Student Onboarding Process at the Munroe-Meyer Institute

Chelsea Navarrette, MD

From Council to Catalyst: Advancing Inclusive Excellence in Internal Medicine Residency

Rebecca Oberly Deegan, PhD

A New KIOS Radio segment: Communicate Science with the Omaha Public

Palsamy Periyasamy, PhD

Advancing Scientific Independence: From Mentorship to a High-Impact Training Model

Chittalsinh Raulji, MBBS

From Foundation to Innovation: Leadership Journey in Developing a Multidisciplinary Bleeding Disorders Program

Rebecca Rimza, MD, FACOG

STAMPP HTN: Systematic Treatment and Management of Postpartum Hypertension—Closing the Care Gap

Priscila Rodrigues Armijo, MD, PhD

Language Barriers as System-Level Drivers of Disparities in Sepsis Outcomes: From Data to Stakeholder-Informed Action

Melissa Soester, PhD, PA-C, CAQ-EM

Leading Change: Transforming Clinical PA Student Engagement Through Innovation

Michelle Strong, PhD, MPH, MFA, CHES

Mentoring with Meaning: A Peer to Peer Initiative for Shared Development

Melissa Teply, MD

What Got You Here Won't Get You There: The Transition from Creating to Sustaining an Academic Palliative Medicine Program

Elizabeth Wellsandt, PT, DPT, PhD

Building the Research Pipeline: Leading a New PhD Pathway in Physical Therapy

Lei Yu, MD

Bridging the Gap: Increasing Early Exposure to Interventional Radiology Among Medical Students

Patricia K. Zemantic, PhD, BCBA-D, LP, LBA

Beyond the Budget: Expanding Clinical Innovation Through National Collaboration

Holly Zimmerman, MS, CGC

Listening, Learning, Leading: Transforming Clinical Rotations Together

Gregory M. Zumach, PharmD, BCPS

Closing the Loop: Taking a Project from Ideation to Execution to Improve Pharmacy Board Outcomes



THE LEGACY CONTINUES: UNMC PRIDE IN 300+ iLEAD GRADUATES

Class of 2000	Ivan Abdouch Virginia Aita Jan Atwood Joel Bessmer Thomas Birk	Diane Brage Hudson Lynne Buchanan Deborah Circo David Crouse Melissa Diers	Timothy Durham Cynthia Ellis Mary Helms Aurelio Matamoros Barbara McCabe	Kyle Meyer Marie Reidelbach Dennis Robinson James Somers	Henry St. Germain Paula Termuhlen Roseann Vorce Gary Yee
Class of 2001	Roxanne Alter Samuel Augustine Jeffrey Baldwin J. Bruce Bavitz	Joyce Black Sheila Ellis Linda Fell Kathryn Fiantt	Katherine Finkelstein Gerald Groggel James Harper Carol Lacroix	Pascale Lane Audrey Nelson Audrey Paulman Jose Romero	Paul Sammut Rose Schinker Randall Toothaker James Turpen
Class of 2002	Leslie Bruch Lissa Clark Ellen Davis-Hall Brian Finley	Howard Gendelman Jeffrey Harrison Barbara Heywood Polly Hulme	Andrew Jameton Joanne Johnson Ulrich Klein Udaya Kompella	Naomi Lacy Richard MacDonald Dennis McNeilly Keith Mueller	Rosaline Olade William Roccaforte Marsha Sullivan Gordon Todd
Class of 2003	Leonard Agneta Mary Froeschle Thomas Grothe	Peter Gwilt Simon Horslen Sreenivas Koka	James Lynch Julie Moreno Karen Nichols	Samuel Pirruccello Toby Schonfeld Richard Walker	
Class of 2005	Ronald Attanasio John Benson Liliana Bronner William Chaney	Mary Cramer Diana Curran-Galejs Dominick Dimaiio Karen Grigsby	Alfred Grovas Kathryn Nickel Edward O'Leary Prasad Padala	U Rao Sanjay Singh Wallace Thoreson Thai Tran	Shinobu Watanabe-Galloway Nizar Wehbi
Class of 2007	Thomas Attard Pamela Bataillon Kerry Bernal	Norman Cook John Davis Shingairai Feresu	Sharon Hammer Ruth Margalit James McClay	Nagamani Narayana Keith Olsen Jean Simonson	Debra Sudan Janice Tompkins Susan Wilhelm
Class of 2009	Ann Berger Mark Christiansen Jose Fernandes Filho Patti Fries	David Hald Pamela Jones Gregory Karst Rebecca Keating-Lefler	Lina Lander Audrey Lazenby Kimberly McFarland Kathy Morris	John Ohnoutka Mary Petersen Ellen Roberts R. Brian Stevens	Alvin Wee Rebecca Wester Matthew White
Class of 2011	Nancy Basham Susan Boust Tara Brakke Matthew DeVries Amber Donnelly	Edward Fehringer Janice Flegle Toby Free Shawn Gibbs	Teresa Hartman Curtis Hartman Teresa Hultquist Jeremy King	Maria Michaelis Connie Miller Kalpana Padala Babu Padanilam	Linda Sather Russell Smith Chad Vokoun Rana Zabad
Class of 2013	Michele R. Aizenberg Jeffrey S. Cooper Christopher C. Erickson Dee M. Ernesti Jenenne A. Geske Maurice Godfrey	Channabasavaiah Gurumurthy Marnie A. Imhoff James F. Jenkins Heidi J. Keeler Brent D. Khan	Chad A. LaGrange Subodh M. Lele Howard Y. Liu Kevin C. Luczynski Oleg N. Militsakh Mohan R. Mysore	Thomas E. Schulte Asia E. Sikora Laurey Steinke Jim P. Stimpson Thomas R. Strawmierz Jayesh C. Thakker	Carol B. Toris Michel R. Wagner Shirley A. Wiggins Ying Yan Su-Min Zhou

Class of 2015	Shannon Boerner	Michelle E. Ellermeier	Daniel W. Johnson	Kaleb Michaud	Kari A. Simonsen
	Shilpa Buch	Kai Fu	Katherine J. Jones	Ashok Mudgapalli	Jennifer Swantek
	Joe Choquette	Catherine Gebhart	Sarah Keim Janssen	Audrey E. Nelson	Geoffrey A. Talmon
	Bethany DeCarolis	Corrine Hanson	Suhasini Kotcherlakota	Amol Patil	Austin Thompson
	Amy Duhachek-Stapelman	Kim Haynes-Henson	Jessica A. Kozel	Nicole M. Rodriguez	Toby Warden
	Greta Duncan Wiebe	Marcia Hess Smith	Matthew Lunning	Eric Rush	Sylvia Ziegenbein
			Cody Sasek		
Class of 2017	Elizabeth Beam	Martin Conda-Sheridan	Nicholas Guenzel	Victoria Kennel	Amy Nordness
	Thomas Brooks	Heather Cook-Mikkelsen	Faye Haggar	Shelby Kutty	Kyle Ringenberg
	Christopher Gillis	Wael M. F. ElRayes	Tanvir Hussain	Robyn Mendenhall	P.J. Schenarts
	Siddappa N. Byrareddy	Alissa V. Fial	Perry Johnson	Kimberly Michael	Lisa L. Schlitzkus
	Martina A. Clarke	Babu Guda	Susan Kelly	DJ Murry	Daniel Surdell
				Arwa Nasir	Melonie S. Welsh
Class of 2020	Alëna Balasanova	Abbey Fingeret	Jolene Johnson	Amelia Nelson Sheese	Brett Waibel
	Kelly Betts	Allison Grennan	Vishal Kothari	James Padussis	Jillian Wallen
	Danish Bhatti	Kim Harp	Thomas Lockhart	Vaishali Phatak	Jordan Warchol
	Kelly Cawcutt	Corey Hopkins	Jasmine Marcelin	Alicia Schiller	Anne Wildermuth
	Tanya Custer	Shaun Horak	Jessica Maxwell	Ka-Chun (Joseph) Siu	Dandan Zheng
	Dalia ElGamal	Andrew Ingemansen	Tzeyu Michaud	Douglas Stoller	Andrea Zimmer
			Shane Tsai		
Class of 2023	Rebecca Aron	Amy Ford	Kevin Kemp	Maheswari (Manju)	Stacy Smallfield
	Craig Baker	Stacey Gilk	Faris Khan	Mukherjee	Ethan Snow
	Shelby Bennett	Helen Grace	Bethany Lowndes	Kari Neemann	Sara Swanson
	Keely Cassidy	Rebekah Gundry	Riley Machal	Melissa O'Dell	Amanda Zangrillo
	Amy Drayton	Carrie Hoarty	Courtney McLean	Laura Ortmann	Kenneth (Ken) Zoucha
	Lauren Edwards	Michelle Johnson	Carrie Meyer	Kaitlyn Pellegrino	
	Bryant England	Miki Katzir	Melissa Muff-Luett	Brad Reames	
Class of 2026	Jennifer Adams	Andrea B. Cunha	Mary Halbur	Kerry Miller	Melissa Teply
	Megan R. Arthur	Krystal Davis	Alyson Hanish	Chelsea Navarrette	Elizabeth Wellsandt
	Rishi Batra	Amanda M. Dolen	Lynda K. Harris	Rebecca Oberley Deegan	Lei Yu
	Claudia Berrondo	Jessica Downes	Ivy N. Haskins	Palsamy Periyasamy	Patricia K. Zemantic
	Terri L. Blase	Salaheddin H. I. Elrokhsi	Rachel Knight	Chittalsinh Raulji	Holly Zimmerman
	M. Jana Broadhurst	Tara Fahmie	Shweta Kukrety	Rebecca Rimsza	Gregory M. Zumach
	Brittany Brown	Brandi Flagg	Robin Mary Lally	Priscila Rodrigues Armijo	
	Allie Burt	Megan Frazee	Scott Lundgren	Melissa Soester	
Jennifer Burt	Upoma Guha	Pamela May-Weeks	Michelle Strong		



Jennifer Adams, MD, FAAD, DTM&H

College of Medicine, Department of Dermatology

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

The leadership lessons from this year will carry forward in my role as Chair of Dermatology and with national opportunities in Dermatology leadership that I have been afforded.

The Road Ahead: A Focused Strategic Map for the UNMC Department of Dermatology

My iLEAD journey coincided with my appointment as permanent chair of the UNMC Department of Dermatology. A priority during my first year in the role was to develop a strategic plan for the next five years of the department. Central to the plan was our departmental mission, melded with my vision and the input of our faculty. I approached this strategic plan differently than our prior iterations and found that “less is more” for streamlining priorities and providing clarity for our team to move forward as one together.

Strengths

1. Harmony
2. Input
3. Learner
4. Achiever
5. Consistency

Why did you join iLEAD?

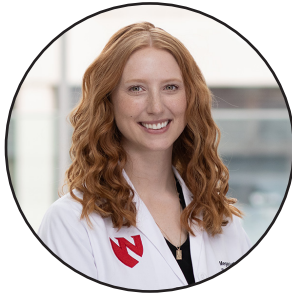
I am a lifetime learner! I am always grateful for the opportunity to improve and better serve those on my team. I applied to iLEAD after hearing wonderful testimonials of the program and was excited to learn more about campus-specific leadership knowledge and beyond.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

I am grateful for the amazing rising leaders I have connected with across campus. Witnessing the support of the iLEAD community assures me of our institutional investment and alignment of priorities. With this support, we will have a big impact!

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

There is no lack of motivated, innovative, passionate faculty on campus. By investing in teaching leadership skills and supporting this curriculum, UNMC not only develops strong internal leaders, but demonstrates they value the faculty. It is a win-win for creating the next chapter on campus.



Megan R. Arthur, MD

College of Medicine, Department of Dermatology

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

In my leadership future, I hope to foster an environment where residents feel supported to learn, grow, and pursue their individual passions within dermatology. I also aim to advance initiatives like a rural dermatology residency track at UNMC, expanding opportunities for trainees while strengthening access to dermatologic care in rural communities. I plan to carry forward my iLEAD experience by continuing to build collaborative relationships, identifying gaps in care delivery, and working to translate innovative ideas into sustainable, systems-level programs that improve patient access.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I believe that anyone in a position to influence or inspire others has a responsibility to continuously grow and strengthen their leadership skills. I joined iLEAD to intentionally develop those skills in a structured way.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

I have been given dedicated time that allowed for deep self-reflection on what I have accomplished so far and what I believe I am capable of contributing in the future. Most importantly, iLEAD has given me the courage to put myself out there and say yes to opportunities, even when they feel uncertain or intimidating, trusting that growth often comes from stepping into those moments.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

I believe that my aspirations can and do align with UNMC initiatives, particularly in advancing access to care and strengthening community-focused training. Developing the foundation for the DermREACH Rural Dermatology Residency Pathway has the potential to support a lasting community partnership that expands rural dermatologic care while enriching resident education through meaningful outreach experiences.



DermREACH Rural Dermatology Residency Pathway

My leadership pathway included networking across the specialty by meeting and learning from individuals who have implemented similar outreach and training programs, helping refine both the structure and feasibility of the initiative. Through this process, I have gained a deeper understanding of how successful programs are built and sustained through collaboration with colleagues, community engagement, and prioritizing rural training exposure.



Strengths

1. Empathy
2. Restorative
3. Learner
4. Developer
5. Relator



Andrea B. Cunha, PT, PhD

Munroe-Meyer Institute, Physical Therapy

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

iLEAD has clarified both my direction and responsibility. Looking ahead, I plan to formalize the clinician-researcher model explored in my individual project, creating a framework to support MMI faculty and potentially serve as a replicable model for other departments or institutions. I also see myself stepping into a mentorship role for early-career clinician-researchers, offering the guidance and community that were invaluable to me this year. For me, leadership means expanding access to opportunities for colleagues, students, and ultimately the children and families we serve.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I joined iLEAD because I recognized that there were areas in my professional life that I didn't yet have the language or tools to address. As a faculty member, I balance multiple roles (researcher, clinician, and educator) and was unsure how to lead effectively across them. I wanted to better understand my leadership style in a way that directly supports the work I care about. iLEAD provided a structured, supportive space to do exactly that.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD challenged me to see my strengths, such as relationship-building, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and bridging the clinical and research worlds, not as secondary to leadership, but as its foundation. Conversations with experts and peers in similar roles were especially formative, validating experiences. I leave with greater confidence, practical tools, and a professional network that will continue to shape my work.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

UNMC's investment in iLEAD will return in multiple ways. Individually, iLEAD not only helped me develop, but also equipped me to help others develop. More broadly, when faculty invest in understanding their strengths and how they connect with others, that growth extends beyond the training and shapes how they lead teams, mentor students, support colleagues, and advocate for their institutions. iLEAD fosters a shared language of leadership across UNMC and builds a network of trust.

Building the Bridge: Establishing a Clinician- Researcher Model and Community of Practice in Pediatric Rehabilitation

This project addressed a gap that many clinician-researchers face: how to contribute meaningfully to science without the infrastructure of a large research lab. Over the past year, I explored frameworks for a clinician-researcher identity, engaged with colleagues navigating similar roles, and began building the foundation for a pediatric rehabilitation community of practice at MMI. Through this process, I discovered that leadership does not require a large platform; it requires authentic relationships. My project highlights how leveraging one's strengths and cultivating collaboration can be a powerful and sustainable leadership strategy for clinician-researchers.

Strengths

1. Learner
2. Achiever
3. Empathy
4. Connectedness
5. Developer



Rishi Batra, MD, MBA, FACS

College of Medicine, Department of Surgery

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

As my faculty career takes shape, education seems to have become a strong focus. As the Division of CRS grows at UNMC, we hope to someday start a CRS fellowship program. I hope to serve as Program Director of our fellowship. Within UNMC, I envision myself more involved in the COM as I gain more experience with student education and the COM. Ultimately, working in the COM Dean's office would be a long-term aspiration.

Why did you join iLEAD?

Surgeons may frequently consider themselves natural leaders, but I recognized that leadership is a gained skill as well. Through the program, I expanded my network of mentors outside of surgery and have met colleagues outside my clinical realm. As a junior faculty member, the iLEAD program has helped me take the next step in my faculty development.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

As part of the iLEAD cohort, I have started to better appreciate the skills of building and leading teams. As we build our various teams for clinical and non-clinical projects, identifying strengths and weaknesses is key for leaders. Inevitably, disputes between team members and colleagues occur. As I reflect on myself, I have learned that I do not always adequately address conflicts. Therefore, I recognize that conflict resolution was a weakness and something I need to better develop, which I have through the program. Leading change is not always inherent and is an acquired skill. Learning to say "no" to people is also a vital skill I have learned to harness. I have also learned the importance and benefit of a coach and plan to continue to seek out coaching.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

The program will continue to develop future leaders at UNMC. As previously mentioned, leadership is a skill that must be learned and developed. The investment in iLEAD is an investment in our university and future patients.

Behind the Scope: Colorectal Surgery Curriculum Toolkit for Trainees

The CRS Curriculum toolkit provides the framework and resources for various levels of learners (medical students, interns, mid-level residents, chief residents, and residents interested in a CRS Fellowship) as they rotate through the high-volume colon and rectal surgery rotation.

It provides students and residents with clear, written expectations and with the resources to be successful in the clinic, on the hospital wards, and in the operating room. The toolkit will include written handouts as well as educational resources (audio and video) to help improve engagement, retention of medical knowledge, and surgical skill for learners at all levels. Ultimately, the toolkit will be used to establish and develop a CRS Fellowship at UNMC.

Strengths

1. Significance
2. Futuristic
3. Focus
4. Harmony
5. Achiever



Claudia Berrondo, MD, FACS, FAAP

College of Medicine, Department of Surgery

Youngest First: Optimizing Pediatric Surgical Scheduling Workflow

This initiative focused on the strategic implementation of an age-priority surgical scheduling framework to enhance perioperative safety, family satisfaction, and workflow efficiency. This experience revealed a critical leadership insight: internalized apprehension often amplifies perceived obstacles beyond their reality. I discovered that rigorous preparation, evidence-based planning, and stakeholder engagement serve as effective catalysts for overcoming the fear of change and fostering team alignment.

Strengths

1. Deliberative
2. Achiever
3. Relator
4. Learner
5. Significance

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I am eager to translate my leadership growth into expanded roles within my division and the medical school. My long-term aspirations include serving as Division Chief, where I can foster a culture of excellence and lead broader institutional initiatives including leadership within the medical school.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I joined iLEAD to transition from a position of clinical expertise to one of strategic leadership. I aimed to identify and refine my inherent strengths, to build a foundation to effectively lead teams and drive institutional change. My objective is to move beyond individual practice to leadership at the divisional, institutional, and national levels.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

The iLEAD experience facilitated my self-reflection, allowing me to identify internalized barriers that once hindered my leadership potential. By leaning into my strengths, I have transitioned from managing tasks to strategically leading people. The relationships I have built with fellow leaders have provided a supportive framework for this growth, empowering me to navigate leadership challenges with newfound confidence and clarity.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

By investing in the iLEAD program, UNMC is fostering a cohort of leaders equipped to navigate the complexities of modern academic medicine. My growth through this program allows me to contribute to a culture of excellence within my division, the institution and national organizations. As I transition into expanded leadership roles, I am prepared to lead strategic initiatives that align with UNMC's mission of innovation, safety and national leadership.



Terri L. Blase, MS, CGC

Munroe-Meyer Institute, Genetic Medicine

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I see my leadership future focused on expanding the reach and impact of genetic counseling services while developing others and strengthening the field as a whole. I am committed to addressing access challenges, including long wait times, by exploring innovative care models and building strategic partnerships. I also aim to mentor and elevate future leaders and play a more active role in shaping healthcare policy. Through these efforts, my goal is to create meaningful, lasting improvements in both patient care and the genetic counseling profession. I will carry iLEAD forward in how I lead every day.



Redesigning Access: A Scalable Genetic Counseling Model to Reduce Wait Times in Autism Care

My iLEAD project addressed prolonged wait times for autism genetics evaluations at the Munroe-Meyer Institute by developing a clinic model that leverages genetic counselors for initial assessments while reserving medical geneticists for more complex cases.

A key leadership lesson was that gaining buy-in and operationalizing it productively depend on effective communication and sustained persistence.



Strengths

1. Adaptability
2. Responsibility
3. Developer
4. Communication
5. Activator

Why did you join iLEAD?

I chose to dedicate a year to studying leadership to be more intentional and effective in how I lead my team and support patient care. In a complex role, I wanted to strengthen key skills like strategic planning, communication, and conflict resolution, and move beyond day-to-day problem solving to a more proactive, impactful approach.

iLEAD offered a structured, immersive opportunity to do that work. The chance to learn alongside leaders from diverse fields was especially valuable, providing new perspectives and meaningful connections.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

The iLEAD experience has been transformative both practically and personally. Over the past year, I've built confidence by gaining concrete tools to navigate difficult conversations, manage conflict, and approach challenges with greater creativity. I've also developed a deeper appreciation for the importance of trust—how it's built, sustained, and leveraged to strengthen teams and outcomes.

Equally impactful have been the relationships formed through iLEAD. Building a network of peers and mentors has provided ongoing support, fresh perspectives, and encouragement. Altogether, these experiences have strengthened my leadership capabilities, enhanced my effectiveness in my current role, and opened the door to future opportunities for growth and impact.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

The iLEAD investment strengthens UNMC by developing leaders who bring practical skills and strategic perspective into their daily work. Just as importantly, it fosters a shared understanding while valuing diverse perspectives. It enables participants to build lasting relationships, trust, and cross-functional networks among a cohort of emerging leaders. Those connections will persist well beyond the program, fostering collaboration, alignment, and a stronger leadership pipeline that continues to benefit the institution over time.



M. Jana Broadhurst, MD, PhD, DTM&H

College of Medicine,

Department of Pathology, Microbiology, and Immunology

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

My long-term leadership goal is to drive meaningful evolution in systems of practice for infectious disease preparedness and response in ways that reduce disparities and strengthen resilience across all communities.

I will carry iLEAD forward by applying its frameworks for intentional leadership, collaboration, and continuous self-reflection. This includes creating environments where teams are aligned around shared purpose, supporting the growth of others, and approaching complex challenges with both strategic clarity and adaptability.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I am at a pivotal stage in my academic career, with expanding leadership responsibilities and increasing opportunities to shape teams and programs. In the context of continually emerging infectious disease threats with broad societal impact, I feel a strong responsibility to become as effective and impactful a leader as possible—for my team, my colleagues, and the patients and communities we serve.

Sustaining programs and building resilient, high-functioning teams amid evolving sociopolitical and funding challenges requires ongoing growth and adaptability as a leader. I recognized that developing these skills would require more than experience alone; it would require dedicated time, mentorship, honest dialogue, and a structured framework for self-assessment and growth.

I joined iLEAD to gain these tools and to engage with a diverse community of peers committed to reflection, shared learning, and leadership development.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

The iLEAD program has provided me with a practical leadership framework and toolkit that allows me to lead with greater intention, adaptability, and effectiveness. It has strengthened my ability to support diverse team members in ways that help them thrive while contributing to shared goals. In particular, iLEAD enhanced my skills in developing long-term strategies and building team structures grounded in a clear vision and aligned value system.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

By enhancing leaders' ability to foster engagement, navigate complexity, and support high-performing teams, iLEAD contributes to a more cohesive and adaptable organization. Ultimately, this investment expands UNMC's leadership capacity and supports sustained progress toward its mission and strategic goals.

Advancing the Impact of the DPMI Infectious Diseases Diagnostics & Biopreparedness Council

My leadership project is to advance the impact of the UNMC Department of Pathology, Microbiology, and Immunology council on Infectious Diseases Diagnostics & Biopreparedness. As the inaugural council chair, I aim to establish effective processes and outputs to meet the mission and vision of the council:

- Coordinate UNMC/NM strategic approaches to infectious diseases diagnostics and preparedness for high-consequence pathogens.
- Coordinate alignment of testing strategies, response to regional and national biopreparedness testing needs, and development of strategic priorities and diagnostic innovations aimed at maintaining the department's position as a leader in the field of microbiology and biopreparedness.

Strengths

1. Achiever
2. Relator
3. Learner
4. Self-Assurance
5. Belief



Brittany Brown, MD

College of Medicine, Department of Anesthesiology

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I am excited to take on the new challenge of APD and use my skills as an emerging leader to provide a strong educational foundation and psychological safety for our residents.

Updating Anesthesiology Residency Curriculum to Fit Generation Z Learners.

As we know, each upcoming generation has unique educational experiences and challenges to overcome. I was recently selected as the Associate Program Director (APD) of Performance and Development for the Department of Anesthesiology. I will use this position to create a more inclusive learning environment and empower our residents to take charge of their own educational trajectory.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I wanted to expand my leadership knowledge base and framework to be a better resource and leader for my colleagues, residents, and medical students. I wanted to learn to communicate more clearly and with intention. I wanted to expand my interdisciplinary network of leaders on campus (with the added bonus of cultivating incredible friendships and confidantes). I've also seen mediocre leadership styles and I wanted the tools to not emulate that throughout my career.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD has really changed my perspective on leadership. I used to think that the crux of being a leader was action. Now, I understand that there is much attention, listening, and service to others that are residing within each leader.

Strengths

1. Relator
2. Adaptability
3. Developer
4. Harmony
5. Responsibility

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

iLead gives committed professionals at UNMC the chance to learn and grow in a safe environment. It invests in the leadership potential that has bought into UNMC's mission and supports the university from within.



Allie Burt, MD

College of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

iLEAD has given me a vocabulary and a confidence I didn't have before to equip me for what I want to build next. The project I had originally envisioned for this year — a statewide perinatal psychiatry access line for providers across Nebraska — ran into barriers that delayed the process of getting started, but is now starting to take shape. In hindsight, maybe the timing is exactly right: I'm approaching it now with a richer leadership toolkit than I would have a year ago. More broadly, I want to grow our perinatal psychiatry program at UNMC so that patients across Nebraska — no matter where they live — have access to expert, compassionate care during one of the most vulnerable periods of their lives.

Why did you join iLEAD?

A supervisor suggested iLEAD, and honestly, my first instinct was hesitation. I am early in my career and even earlier in thinking of myself as a leader — the word felt like it belonged to someone else. The program has an excellent reputation and after talking to other iLEAD graduates, I decided to go for it. What I didn't fully anticipate was how much the program would reframe not just how I think about leadership, but how I recognize it in the work I'm already doing. It turns out the timing was better than I knew.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD gave me something I didn't know I was missing: a framework for understanding what I was already doing, and the language to be intentional about it going forward. I came in thinking of leadership as something more formal, something that required fancy titles to be legitimate. I'm leaving with a much more nuanced sense of it as a practice — something that requires self-awareness, tolerance for discomfort, the willingness to have hard conversations, and the humility to know when to ask for help. The relationships in the program reminded me that these challenges aren't unique to me, and that community is itself a leadership resource.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

My hope is that the work I'm doing—in the classroom and in building access to perinatal psychiatric care—contributes in a meaningful way to UNMC's position at the forefront of both resident education and patient care. I want to look back and know that I helped shape how psychiatry is taught and practiced in Nebraska. iLEAD has given me the tools and the confidence to pursue that — and the self-awareness to recognize opportunity when it arrives, even when it comes in unexpected forms.

Reimagining Psychodynamic Education for the Next Generation of Psychiatrists

When I was tasked with developing a psychodynamic course for our psychiatry residents, I inherited a course that wasn't working — residents found it irrelevant, disengaging, and disconnected from their clinical work. In a state with little psychodynamic expertise, and without formal psychoanalytic training myself, I had to wrestle with significant self-doubt while simultaneously navigating a difficult collaborative dynamic with my predecessor (from an outside institution) whose vision for the course differed substantially from mine. Over time, I sought mentorship, pursued national specialized faculty development, and ultimately restructured the course around discussion, curiosity, and clinical applicability — and to my surprise, it worked. The leadership lesson I'm taking from this: you don't have to be the absolute expert to lead effectively. Sometimes the most important thing a leader can do is create the conditions for others to grow and surprise you.

Strengths

1. Communication
2. Connectedness
3. Woo
4. Developer
5. Empathy



Jennifer Burt, PhD

Munroe-Meyer Institute, Department of Psychology

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I see my leadership future increasingly centered in my role with the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) program as I step into the director role and focus on developing interdisciplinary leaders. iLEAD helped me recognize the importance of slowing down—especially making intentional time to be available, build relationships, and truly connect, which doesn't always come naturally in the pace of my work. Moving forward, I want to lead in a way that is present and accessible, modeling collaboration, teamwork, and shared learning across disciplines. I also see advocacy as a growing part of this role—using my voice and relationships to strengthen systems that support equity, training, and health care for children, families, and the workforce that serves them.

Letting Go to Build Forward: A Leadership Lesson in Sustainability

My leadership project focused on building the long term sustainability of the Munroe-Meyer Institute Psychology postdoctoral fellowship through shared training collaborations, pursuing American Psychological Association accreditation to unlock external funding, and formalizing institutional knowledge to support leadership transition. Together, these efforts address rising training costs, increased funding accountability, and the limits of relying on clinical revenue alone while protecting time for high quality training and research.

The greatest leadership lesson from this work is that sustainability comes from building clear systems, shared ownership, and relationships that allow the mission to outlast any one leader—rather than trying to carry it alone.

Strengths

1. Learner
2. Arranger
3. Strategic
4. Achiever
5. Responsibility

Why did you join iLEAD?

I wanted to dedicate a year to leadership because I was craving space to slow down, reflect, and grow in a more intentional way. My roles have become more complex, and I knew I needed time to think about how I lead, how I support others, and how to show up with more clarity and courage. I joined iLEAD to push myself to be more vulnerable, to invite and give honest feedback, and to build trust by empowering and sponsoring others rather than carrying everything myself. I also wanted to strengthen my connections at UNMC and grow my understanding of policy and advocacy so I can better influence change in my field.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD gave me space to slow down and lead more intentionally, especially through the relationships and shared work with Team Pink. Returning to the question, “What problem are we actually trying to solve?” helped me listen more, clarify needs, and build stronger solutions together. This style of leadership—being present, available, and focused on building and sponsoring others is still hard given the pace and scope of my roles, but iLEAD helped me feel more confident and prepared to keep striving toward it. It reinforced that my strongest leadership is relational: showing up, making time for people, and sharing responsibility for meaningful, sustainable change.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

iLEAD has impacted UNMC because it pushes leadership beyond individual development and really centers team based work on complex, real problems. I've participated in other leadership programs, but iLEAD is unique in how it challenges you to grow personally and alongside a diverse group of leaders while staying grounded in the question, “What problem are we trying to solve?” The University connections built through iLEAD strengthen collaboration to build leadership capacity that actually shows up in day to day work and long term sustainability.



Krystal Davis, EdD, MSNRN

College of Nursing, Lincoln Division

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I see myself advancing into administrative leadership roles that influence nursing education at a broader level. My goal is to shape educational strategy, support faculty development, and advocate for initiatives that strengthen nursing education and prepare future leaders in the profession. I will take iLEAD into the future as this is just a foundation for my leadership. I will continue to reflect and continuously grow in my knowledge and skills in leadership.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I saw a future in leadership positions in my college. I had never taken a formal leadership program before and wanted to grow my leadership skills and have evidence of leadership training.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

Overall, iLEAD has strengthened my network across UNMC. I am a firm believer it isn't always about what you know but who you know.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

iLEAD investment impacts UNMC by developing leaders already within our institution. This creates a sustainability of leaders to have the best of the best.

Development of a Formalized Simulation Education & Training Program for Faculty and Staff

I led the development and implementation of a formalized simulation education and training program for faculty and staff aimed at standardizing instructional consistency, learner outcomes, and faculty/staff confidence in simulation-based education.

Success depended on building shared purpose, fostering psychological safety, and balancing standardization with flexibility. This experience strengthened my ability to lead complex educational change through collaboration, patience, and relationship-centered leadership.

Strengths

1. Relator
2. Belief
3. Responsibility
4. Arranger
5. Achiever



Amanda M. Dolen, RDH, BSDH, MHPTT

College of Dentistry, Department of Dental Hygiene

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I see my leadership future as one of continued growth and working intentionally toward promotion. iLEAD helped me see leadership as connecting people, ideas, and systems to get meaningful work done. Moving forward, I plan to carry those lessons into faculty development, mentoring, coaching, and initiatives that strengthen alignment between classroom instruction and clinical practice.

Why did you join iLEAD?

Leadership study was not something I initially sought out—I was comfortable where I was. But encouragement from several trusted colleagues led me to apply for iLEAD. Over the year, I came to value the opportunity it provided to reflect, grow, and become more intentional in how I lead.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

As a Lincoln-based faculty member, iLEAD helped me feel more connected to colleagues at UNMC Omaha and across other colleges. Even with different credentials and backgrounds, we shared many of the same challenges and rewards. I especially loved working with my Team Yellow cohort and have a strong sense they'll be in my corner long after iLEAD ends, setting the stage for future collaboration.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

iLEAD impacts UNMC by growing its own leaders—leaders who are rooted in the institution's mission, culture, and values. By investing in people from within, UNMC builds a strong leadership pipeline made up of individuals who already understand the organization and are committed to its future. This rooted approach strengthens continuity, connection, and long-term success.

The Calibration Connection: Connecting the Dots for Consistent Clinical Education

As the Senior Dental Hygiene Clinic Coordinator, my iLEAD project focused on strengthening consistency and connection in clinical instruction and evaluation across faculty-led rotations and distance learning sites. A tangible product from my project work is the development of a centralized Microsoft Teams-based resource for faculty materials and clinical evaluations, paired with a short online knowledge check to reinforce engagement and alignment, along with implementing real-time, in-clinic calibration through randomized co-assessment by multiple faculty. This work reinforced a key leadership lesson: meaningful, sustainable alignment happens when leaders connect people, processes, and expectations with clarity and purpose.

Strengths

1. Empathy
2. Belief
3. Developer
4. Connectedness
5. Harmony



Jessica Downes, PharmD, BCACP, CDCES

College of College of Pharmacy,
Department of Pharmacy Practice and Science

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I was able to start a new leadership position in December 2025 (in the middle of iLEAD) as Vice Chair of my department (Pharmacy Practice and Science). The timing has been incredible to be able to apply some of these tools and skills that I've acquired during this year of leadership exploration. My hope is to continue to be intentional in growing as a leader even after iLEAD finishes. It is important to me that I identify my leadership "philosophy" over the next 3 months to help serve as a reminder of my core principles of a leader. I think this will help me as I continue to serve in this role as Vice Chair and perhaps in future leadership roles.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I have been at UNMC in a faculty role for 12 years. I was at the point in my career, after promotion, that I was reflecting on what I had accomplished and what I desired for the next 10 years. Leadership has always been on my radar even from when I was young. I joined iLEAD to help develop some skills that I haven't necessarily formally devoted time for, at least at this level.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

What I didn't realize I would "gain" from iLEAD was all of the instant connections and relationships and networking with colleagues within the organization. I've appreciated hearing from leaders on campus and also learning about existing processes, challenges, and opportunities within the organization. Having the standing time each month to devote to this has been very important because I know that it would be too easy to push this professional development to the side for other things.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

iLEAD shows faculty that the organization cares about developing internal leaders. It is not a small investment of resources and time and this speaks loudly to the culture UNMC is trying to develop. Additionally, through our group projects, we were able to help contribute ideas that could have an impact or influence future decisions for the organization.

Clarifying Roles: A Data-Driven Framework for Affiliated Clinical Faculty Classification

We have many clinical pharmacists from Nebraska Medicine that volunteer their time to teach in our PharmD program based on the College's needs/expertise. While these pharmacists have adjunct faculty status, we have not had a pathway for clinical pharmacists who desire a more active and consistent role (in teaching, service, and/or scholarship) within the College of Pharmacy. My iLEAD project was to develop criteria to help establish a pathway towards "Affiliated Clinical Faculty" status. The goal was to provide a "menu" of options that would allow some flexibility based on an individual's strengths and interests. One lesson that I learned from this experience was the importance of gathering information, to learn what I didn't know, to help inform my recommendations.

Strengths

1. Developer
2. Relator
3. Discipline
4. Learner
5. Responsibility



Salaheddin H I Elrokhsi, MD, MSc

College of Medicine, Department of Pediatric Endocrinology

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I see myself growing as a leader who focuses on system-level improvement, using data, teamwork, and communication to create more consistent and patient-centered health care in Children's Nebraska and University of Nebraska Medical Center. I also see myself mentoring and coaching my team members, to recognize their potentials and encourage their professional growth in clinical experience and teaching.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I saw amazing performance among a couple of leaders in Children's Nebraska who had joined this iLEAD course. I wanted to enhance my leadership skills, gain additional strengths in leadership tasks, and promote my experience as a Division Chief of Pediatric Endocrinology.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

The iLEAD course helped me discover my baseline strengths such as being a developer, activator, having harmony, positivity, and empathy. It also grew other strengths in me, such as accountability, being an includer, an influencer, and strategic. iLEAD also reinforced my confidence in introducing an idea or a topic during any meeting. This course also taught me that everyone has a different talent in their potential that can help them lead. Therefore, it is important to recognize and optimize the strengths of my team members and people who work with me for their individual growth as well as the growth and distinction of my division.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

iLEAD gave me the tools and strategies to work for my division growth and to also work in collaboration with other division leaders for institutional advancement in health care, education, and research in both Children's Nebraska and University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Tracking Normalization of Free T4 Level After Starting Treatment of Graves' Disease

My project is a quality improvement project aims to make more than 70% of our newly diagnosed graves' disease patients achieve normal free T4 level within 3 months from the start of antithyroid treatment. Achieving this goal will not only promote the quality of health care we provide, but it will also help our pediatric endocrinology division to meet part of the criteria to be highly ranked by the annual US News report. One key leadership lesson I learned from this project is that improving patient outcomes depends less on individual effort and more on building reliable communication and coordination systems.

Strengths

1. Developer
2. Activator
3. Harmony
4. Positivity
5. Empathy



Tara Fahmie, PhD, BCBA-D

Munroe-Meyer Institute, Severe Behavior Department

Revamping the Evaluation Process in the Severe Behavior Department

The objective of this project is to improve the evaluation process in a way that maximizes efficiency, ensures service alignment with current needs, and reduces waitlist duration, thereby enhancing the experience and outcomes for families. I have learned that process mapping is an essential component of systems change.

Strengths

1. Learner
2. Achiever
3. Positivity
4. Analytical
5. Responsibility

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I see continued growth through collaboration with other leaders in the NU. I will take the confidence gained with me to reach out to others when needing support or a sounding board.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I joined iLEAD because I was encouraged by other leaders around me. I had unexpectedly entered a leadership position a few months prior to iLEAD, so I was very happy I took the advice of my peers to join!

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

The connections made in iLEAD are unmatched. I very much appreciate the opportunity to work alongside so many inspirational, up-and-coming leaders at the NU. I also picked up several “golden nuggets” of advice throughout the program.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

iLEAD will prepare a new wave of leaders with the right tools to do their best work. That is an invaluable asset to UNMC!



Brandi Flagg, MD, MPH, CMD

College of Medicine, Department of Internal Medicine

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

Passion and Purpose are two of my guiding principles. The iLEAD program taught me that the leadership journey can be bumpy and even lonely at times, but that shouldn't stop you from leading that which you were born to lead.

I hope to use the principles and skillsets learned during iLEAD to become a compassionate, relatable, and effective medical director in the post-acute and long-term care setting. Likewise, my goal is to shine light on the joy and importance of this care setting with learners at all levels given that our population is only getting older. Retirement communities as a setting of healthcare is the way of the future, and UNMC has an opportunity to be at the forefront of this work.

Why did you join iLEAD?

Pursuing a year of leadership development fits with my Clifton strength areas of lifelong learning and responsibility. I strive to become a better version of myself each day. iLEAD provided a vehicle to perform that self-refining work in a safe space with like-minded individuals.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

My iLEAD experience has given me tools to listen to, communicate, and negotiate ideas more effectively. It has strengthened my interprofessional relationships across the UNMC campus.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

Proper leadership training is such an invaluable resource. To remain a premier institution offering extraordinary care, UNMC cannot afford to have accidental leaders. This program is a worthy investment with a large impact in shaping UNMC's future leaders. It also creates a culture that promotes faculty development and continuous process improvement.

Ready, Set, Go! Implementing a Dynamic Nursing Home Curriculum Experience on Short Notice

My iLEAD project was to oversee the certified medical director (CMD) mentored experience training track for our geriatric medicine fellows. When our usual site of care fell through mid-academic year, I stepped up to resurrect this fundamental learning activity for our fellowship program. I pulled from leadership lessons in creativity, improvisation and innovation to quickly develop curricula to teach the fellows about medical directorship in a nursing home setting, proctor patient care experiences in both the post-acute and long-term care setting and aid the fellows in developing a process improvement project that added value to both nursing home staff and peer colleagues. We chose to pursue two hot topics in geriatric care: sleep disorders and behavioral & psychological symptoms of dementia. We performed a medical literature review and updated existing curriculum material on the Geriatric Division website. We also made plans for delivering this information in dynamic formats.

Strengths

1. Relator
2. Learner
3. Responsibility
4. Belief
5. Connectedness



Megan Frazee, PT, DPT, OCS, FAAOMPT

College of Allied Health Professions, Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, Physical Therapy

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I see my leadership future focused not only on formal leadership roles, but also on being an effective and intentional team member. My iLEAD experience enhanced my understanding of diverse leadership styles and equipped me with evidence-based tools for collaboration and conflict management to thoughtfully influence change within UNMC and the physical therapy profession.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I joined iLEAD to intentionally strengthen my leadership skills through a longitudinal experience rather than isolated training opportunities. I wanted dedicated time to deepen my self-awareness, improve my communication, and more effectively lead people and programs through growth and change.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD facilitated meaningful self-reflection on my strengths and growth areas while providing practical tools to use when working with others. The program improved my confidence in communicating across settings, including large group presentations and difficult conversations, and expanded my professional network across campus.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

The iLEAD experience prepares leaders to approach institutional challenges with systems thinking, fiscal awareness, and collaborative problem solving. This investment supports UNMC by strengthening program sustainability, fostering thoughtful innovation, and shaping learning environments where faculty, trainees, and teams can thrive.

Leading with Evidence: Evaluating Alternative Residency Models

For my iLEAD project, I conducted a structured evaluation of alternative models for the UNMC Orthopedic Physical Therapy Residency in response to declining applicant trends. This work included discussions with program directors using nontraditional models, collaboration with Business and Finance to understand financial implications, and review of accreditation and administrative considerations. Rather than advocating for a single solution, my focus was on gathering and synthesizing the data needed for our team to make a well-informed, collectively supported decision. A key leadership lesson was learning to slow the process to build clarity, credibility, and shared ownership before pursuing change.

Strengths

1. Consistency
2. Harmony
3. Analytical
4. Deliberative
5. Discipline



Upoma Guha, BDS, MS

College of Dentistry, Department of Adult Restorative Dentistry

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I envision my leadership future as one grounded in strategic vision, collaborative engagement, and a strong commitment to developing people and systems that drive sustainable excellence. I aspire to serve in senior academic leadership roles where I can contribute to faculty development, institutional growth, and the advancement of educational and clinical programs. My goal is to lead with clarity, adaptability, and purpose—aligning team efforts with broader organizational priorities while fostering a culture of accountability, innovation, and well-being. The iLEAD experience will serve as a foundational element in this trajectory. It has strengthened my understanding of institutional dynamics, leadership frameworks, and the importance of values-driven decision-making.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I view leadership not as an innate trait, but as a discipline that requires intentional development, reflection, and continuous refinement. iLEAD represents my third formal leadership training experience, complementing my prior involvement with the American Dental Education Association Leadership Institute Fellowship and the Emerging Leaders Program. While my previous experiences provided strong national-level perspectives on leadership in dental education, iLEAD offered a unique opportunity to contextualize those principles within the specific framework of UNMC.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD has deepened my leadership identity, strengthened my connection to UNMC, and positioned me to contribute more strategically and collaboratively to the institution's future.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

The iLEAD investment has a meaningful and strategic impact on UNMC by cultivating a strong internal pipeline of capable, forward-thinking leaders. At its core, the program strengthens leadership capacity building by equipping faculty with essential competencies in emotional intelligence, strategic thinking, conflict resolution, and systems-based decision-making. This directly enhances the institution's ability to navigate complex academic and clinical environments with agility and confidence.

The program promotes interprofessional collaboration and cross-functional engagement, as participants work in diverse teams to address institutional challenges. This not only strengthens teamwork but also drives innovation and continuous quality improvement, as leaders are trained to approach problems with evidence-based and solution-oriented mindsets.

iLEAD reinforces a culture of accountability, resilience, and adaptive leadership, empowering individuals to lead through change while maintaining a focus on excellence and well-being. Over time, this investment builds a sustainable leadership ecosystem that enhances institutional effectiveness, supports accreditation and strategic goals, and positions UNMC for long-term success and growth.

Academic Leadership in Action: Advancing the Preclinical to Clinical Transition for Practice- Ready Dentists

My project focused on developing a comprehensive clinical orientation program to support students as they transition from preclinical to clinical education, with the goal of fostering competent, confident clinicians. I identified key barriers in this transition phase and analyzed gaps between preclinical preparation and real-world clinical expectations. I designed strategies to shorten the learning curve for students and better align educational experiences with clinical performance demands. The project emphasizes building a structured, supportive framework through rigorous orientation that promotes clinical readiness and excellence.

I learned that meaningful change requires active participation, stakeholder engagement, and iterative problem-solving.

Strengths

1. Arranger
2. Developer
3. Belief
4. Self-Assurance
5. Significance



Mary Halbur, PhD, BCBA-D

Munroe-Meyer Institute,
Integrated Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I plan to lead with the same principles iLEAD highlighted for me: listening carefully, communicating clearly, building trust, and creating environments where people feel respected and heard. iLEAD taught me to ask better questions and approach leadership in novel ways. I intend to bring that mindset into future program development, team leadership, and institutional collaborations at UNMC.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I wanted to be more intentional about developing my leadership skills and reflecting on areas where I could continue to grow.

In my role, I often work in complex clinical and interdisciplinary environments, and I recognize the importance of communicating clearly and speaking up effectively in stressful or challenging situations. Through iLEAD, I hoped to gain strategies for navigating those moments with more confidence while remaining collaborative and thoughtful. I also wanted to learn more about the systems at UNMC/NU and their leadership. The program provided space to reflect on my leadership style and build skills that help me advocate for teams, families, and the systems we are working to improve. It also provided dedicated time to practice some of these things.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

The workshops and coaching pushed me to reflect more deliberately on how I communicate, especially in moments that require clarity and purpose. I also benefited greatly from the relationships formed with colleagues across UNMC; hearing how others navigate leadership challenges broadened my perspective and reminded me of the value of collective problem-solving and navigation in complex systems.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

My iLEAD experience enhanced my capacity to lead and support initiatives that bridge clinical services, community partnerships, and caregiver support. The skills gained through the program helped me secure funding for Project ImPACT resources as well as cultivate meaningful collaborations with the Education Rights Council and PTI Nebraska. These efforts that ultimately expand supports for families of young children with autism and staff that support them.

As I continue this and related work, the leadership tools and relationships strengthened through iLEAD will translate into more partnerships, more responsive training systems for providers, and better-integrated services across/within UNMC and the broader community. In this way, iLEAD's investment in my growth (time to reflect, learn, and grow) contributes to a stronger, more connected institutional impact.

From Clinic to Community: Expanding Caregiver Training and Systems for Behavior Analyst Supervisors

My iLEAD project focused on expanding caregiver training and community resource supports for behavior analysts supervising services for young children with autism. I secured a ~\$25,000 grant to launch Project ImPACT caregiver coaching resources. Additionally, I have partnered with the Education Rights Council (ERC) and Parent Training and Information (PTI) Nebraska to develop training opportunities connecting clinicians to community supports. Feedback from Clinic BCBA's and care coordination staff informed the design of targeted spring 2026 trainings. This work highlighted an important leadership lesson: effective systems happens when clinical expertise is paired with listening to the needs of both providers, community partners, and administrative leadership.

Strengths

1. Learner
2. Individualization
3. Strategic
4. Achiever
5. Developer



Alyson Hanish, PhD, MSN, RN

College of Nursing, Omaha Division

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

In my leadership future, I will continue to authentically advance the nursing profession through research, education, service, well-being advocacy, and culture-building that encourage the development of future nurse leaders. I will pursue future leadership positions, including Principal Investigator/ Program Director for future large grants, and more formal roles such as PhD Director, Associate Dean for Research, and Dean. In the future, I will take on tenants from iLEAD, including growth mindset, intentional learning and leading, and the continuous pursuit of building leadership capacity.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I wanted to dedicate a year to studying leadership as both a personal and professional investment. The accountability structure of iLEAD was important to advancing my leadership skills and performance. I wanted to participate in iLEAD to improve my conflict resolution, negotiation, and communication skills. I also needed leadership mentorship and coaching resources. I wanted to use iLEAD as a catalyst to cultivate my leadership skills to help nursing thrive in an era of massive vacancies/ shortages, behavioral health and burnout concerns, and general uncertainty. I believed iLEAD would help me increase my agility and confidence as a nursing leader. I generally want to learn better how to thrive (not just survive) as a nursing leader.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

I have benefited from learning a lot about myself through the Skillscope leadership assessment, the leadership efficacy questionnaire, Clifton Strengths, personality inventory, and influence style. My experience in iLEAD has improved my conflict resolution, negotiation, and communication skills. I benefited from relationship-building with peers and leadership across UNMC departments and systems, expanding my sphere of influence. From my experience with my personal leadership project, I have learned how to “manage altitude,” when to focus on high-level strategy, and when to focus on details.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

The iLEAD investment has the potential to boost retention, foster positive workplace culture, and accelerate strategic execution. An investment such as iLEAD is an investment in the future leadership talent pipeline.

UNMC Nursing PhD Academic Advising Program

My leadership project aims to develop a structured Nursing PhD Academic Advising Program at the UNMC College of Nursing. Less than one percent of nurses hold a PhD, and academic nursing research-based doctoral programs are in steady decline. The Nurse PhD pipeline struggles with both recruitment and retention. Structured academic advising programs exist in our UNMC CON undergraduate and graduate programs, but not yet in our PhD program. The ultimate long-term goal is to establish a structured, sustainable Nursing PhD Academic Advising Program at the UNMC College of Nursing to improve enrollment and retention.

Strengths

1. Strategic
2. Learner
3. Achiever
4. Arranger
5. Analytical



Lynda K. Harris, PhD

College of Medicine, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I am committed to advancing the field of women's health, and at this stage of my career, I am being offered more leadership opportunities in this arena. The skills and confidence that I have built during iLEAD will allow me to contribute more effectively in these roles, at a local, national and international level. I look forward to showcasing my expertise and demonstrating an inclusive, collaborative leadership style.

Expanding the Reach and Impact of the Nebraska Center for Women's Health Research

The Nebraska Center for Women's Health Research (NCWHR) was established in 2022 to improve women's health throughout the state by facilitating research collaborations, providing educational seminars, training the next generation of scientists and addressing gender health disparities. As Associate Director, my iLEAD project has involved reviewing, revising and delivering more of the Center's objectives to better serve the wider community. I have learned that making time and space to build relationships and have meaningful conversations with our members is the best way to build trust, enhance engagement and really understand the community's unmet needs and day-to-day challenges.

Strengths

1. Developer
2. Empathy
3. Relator
4. Harmony
5. Positivity

Why did you join iLEAD?

I wanted to make a sustained commitment to my personal development and ensure that I am achieving my full potential. The concept of collaborative learning and being held accountable for my progress really appealed to me. As a relatively new hire, iLEAD also helped me expand my professional network and better understand UNMC's management structure and range of activities.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

I started iLEAD thinking that I needed to overcome my introverted nature to develop a more credible leadership persona. I have since learned that leaders come in many forms and that I already have numerous qualities that enable me to be a successful and authentic leader. The iLEAD group project provided a fantastic opportunity for collaborative working, enabled me to appreciate the strengths of other leaders, and identify my limitations and areas for future growth.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

Faculty in academic medical centers who undertake formal leadership training are statistically more productive, and early leadership development is a key strategy to attract and retain women in leadership positions. UNMC's commitment to iLEAD sends a strong signal that they support all faculty members to excel, and are committed to building effective and diverse leaders from within. In the longer term, this investment should enhance UNMC's academic successes, increase faculty satisfaction, engagement and retention, aid succession planning and create an institution well placed to meet the varied needs of our community.



Ivy N. Haskins, MD, FACS, FASMBS, DABOM

College of Medicine, Department of Surgery

Preventing Gastric Volvulus Emergencies: An Untwisting Approach

We propose that hiatal hernias represent the foregut equivalent of an abdominal aortic aneurysm: once diagnosed, they require structured surveillance and timely intervention when growth or progressive symptoms occur. To evaluate this, we performed a retrospective chart review of patients that underwent urgent or emergent hiatal hernia repair over the past 5 years. The information captured from this chart review has helped guide collaboration across specialties so that more patients with hiatal hernias are established with our multidisciplinary Esophageal Diseases and Gastrointestinal Motility Disorders Clinic. This process has reinforced for me that effective leadership requires meeting colleagues and patients where they are, so that the information we communicate can truly be heard and understood.

Strengths

1. Deliberative
2. Competition
3. Achiever
4. Discipline
5. Consistency

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

Women remain significantly underrepresented in surgical leadership. My goal is to ascend to local and national leadership roles while intentionally elevating the women around me as I rise.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I initially joined iLEAD for the leadership skills I expected to gain, but I quickly realized during the iLEAD retreat that the unintended—and perhaps more important—benefit of the program has been the sense of collegiality I have gained over the past year.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD has shown me that while leadership may look different across individuals and professions, all leadership efforts have the potential to be impactful.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

iLEAD trains the (hopefully) next generation of leaders at UNMC and I think that the transparency and transformation from iLEAD to leadership positions should be a focus of future cohorts.



Rachel Knight, PhD

Munroe-Meyer Institute,
Center for Pediatric Feeding Disorders

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I plan to draw on the leadership skills learned in iLEAD to further grow and expand our interdisciplinary pediatric feeding disorder services, with an emphasis on collaboration, transparent communication, and systems-level improvement. I am committed to advancing innovative lines of research and translating ideas into meaningful, actionable outcomes. I will also continue developing the consultation program that began as a leadership project, drawing on project management, stakeholder engagement, and effective communication to support its sustainability and growth.

Why did you join iLEAD?

As a pediatric psychologist in an academic medical center, I found myself increasingly tasked with leading interdisciplinary teams, advancing research initiatives, and mentoring students—without formal leadership training. I joined iLEAD to intentionally build the skills needed to navigate these evolving roles, with a focus on strengthening and improving access to patient care, effectively managing teams, and providing comprehensive training for future clinicians. Equally important was the opportunity to expand my network at UNMC, fostering meaningful connections that support ongoing collaboration and mentorship.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD has provided a year of meaningful growth through a balance of group and individual projects, along with intentional reflection on my strengths and areas for development. The dedicated time to build new skills and navigate challenges has been pivotal at this stage of my career. Through this experience, I have developed an invaluable network of colleagues and mentors that has already fostered strong, collaborative relationships. I feel better equipped with the tools and perspective needed to lead across settings, whether expanding clinical and training programs or advancing new lines of research.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

UNMC benefits significantly when faculty participate in iLEAD because of the strong network and relationships that are built across disciplines and colleges. From the first day, it was evident that iLEAD intentionally connects individuals who might not otherwise collaborate, creating a foundation of trust and mutual understanding that extends well beyond the program itself. The relationships formed foster ongoing collaboration and mentorship, which I believe will ultimately improve innovation and strengthen the institution's ability to deliver exceptional care and scholarship.

Beyond the Clinic Walls: A Consultation Model for Pediatric Feeding Disorders

Families with children with pediatric feeding disorders often encounter long delays and limited access to specialized care. This project aims to change that. By launching an innovative consultation model, our team extends expert, evidence-based support beyond our walls to provide external providers with real-time strategies and interdisciplinary insight. The initiative aims to improve care delivered in community settings, driving better outcomes for children, decreasing wait times for families, and reducing system strain. Through this project, I have learned about navigating contracts and shaping a clear vision from an initial idea.

Strengths

1. Relator
2. Learner
3. Developer
4. Woo
5. Strategic



Shweta Kukrety, MBBS

College of Medicine, Department of Internal Medicine

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I see my leadership future defined by empowering my multi-disciplinary team, active listening and creating a culture of psychological safety.

Why did you join iLEAD?

To have the tools and skill set necessary to be a successful leader.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD has helped me transition from being a clinician to a strategic leader. The program's emphasis on psychological safety and healthy conflict has directly improved how I facilitate our multidisciplinary selection committees. The relationships built during the course have given me a broader network to lean on.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

The iLEAD investment benefits UNMC by bridging the gap between clinical care and effective leadership. It provides us with a practical framework to lead our teams more strategically.



Streamlining the Path to Lung Transplant Listing: Optimization of the Lung Transplant Evaluation Process

Goal of this project was to reduce time to official OPTN listing from initial multi-disciplinary patient assessment meetings, ensuring critically ill candidates gain access to donor pool more rapidly. To achieve this goal, I introduced a coordinator led proactive outreach six weeks prior to appointments to audit "homework" progress and resolve patient specific barriers. Additionally, OPTN mandated six-minute walk tests and oxygen titration protocols were incorporated into standard follow up visits. Integrating these requirements within routine follow up helped reduced delays in the evaluation and listing process.



Strengths

1. Relator
2. Achiever
3. Discipline
4. Consistency
5. Developer



Robin Mary Lally, PhD, MS, RN, BA, AOCN, FAAN

College of Nursing, Omaha Division

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I will continue to be the Director of the Center for Chronic Illness Self-management & Prevention and P & T Committee Chair for at least a 3rd year, but I feel that though the roles are the same, I have grown in my ability to work with the teams. Next year's P & T Committee will be all associate and full faculty (not just 7 elected faculty) and I will use what I have learned to build trust in this large group, collegiality, collaboration, and set ground rules for meetings since P & T is a charged topic.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I shared this at the presentation in March and was quoted in the UNMCToday! I joined because even though I had prior leadership training and leadership positions over the last nearly 2 decades, those you lead change and the environment changes. I believe I can always learn and improve my leadership skills for the next decade.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

I have learned more about myself and how I am perceived by others. I learned about psychological safety and how to cultivate that and trust. Also, I continue to work on listening and not prematurely offering solutions and skills for being more assertive in appropriate situations.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

My primary leadership is at UNMC—leading research teams, mentoring PhD students and early-career faculty, and having formal leadership positions at the Director of a UNMC Center and the Promotion & Tenure committee for the college.

Reinvigorating Interest in and Understanding of the UNMC College of Nursing Promotion and Tenure Processes and Guidelines.

I assessed faculty perceptions and attitudes about the College of Nursing promotion and tenure process through informal discussions with faculty and Assistant Deans. These data were presented to the Promotion & Tenure Committee and consensus obtained on next steps including a) reconstituting the composition of the P&T Committee and b) rewriting the guidelines for applying for and expectations at each rank. Led the review of P&T guidelines of other UNMC colleges and now have achieved approval of both a and b for implementation this semester. Lesson: going slow and seeking input and multiple revisions and approvals led to greater acceptance by the faculty who seem to trust we are trying to improve this process. The jump from 6 P&T applications this year up from 2 last year indicate we may have made headway.

Strengths

1. Learner
2. Strategic
3. Achiever
4. Communication
5. Woo



Scott Lundgren, DO, MS

College of Medicine, Department of Internal Medicine

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I see myself taking on more and more responsibility within UNMC and also within the national organizations that I am a part of. My hope is to further develop and refine our cardiogenic shock program and become a director of a newly developed, UNMC recognized cardiogenic shock program. In the future, I would like to step into further leadership positions, including section chief of heart failure.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I applied for iLEAD and have spent the past year working on leadership to identify my leadership gaps and work on improving those areas as well as identify current strengths and help reinforce those domains.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD has helped me develop connections and relationships across multiple disciplines within UNMC that has truly shown how many exceptional individuals work at this institution and are pivotal to UNMC's growth and development in the near future.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

I think iLEAD helps those who participate start building or refining the skills necessary to not only become the next generation of leaders at UNMC, but throughout national organizations as well. Participants within this program will help bring new ideas, programs, and collaborations to this institution utilizing some of the tools developed in this program.

Enhancing Cardiogenic Shock Care at UNMC and Beyond

Cardiogenic shock is a highly complex condition and is associated with high mortality rates. Over the last decade, advances have been made to identify and escalate therapies early to optimize outcomes in this critical population. While UNMC has all the pieces available for management of these patients, care can often be fragmented. I have been working on further coordinating all of the necessary teams at UNMC into a more refined cardiogenic shock team and program with enhanced communication, protocol development, and education. One thing these efforts have taught me is the importance of collaboration as these efforts involve numerous teams at many levels who all have a role and stake in this endeavor.

Strengths

1. Learner
2. Achiever
3. Discipline
4. Context
5. Focus



Pamela May-Weeks, PhD

College of Medicine, Department of Neurological Sciences

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

Participating in iLEAD opened my eyes to the countless ways we can contribute to UNMC. Participation increased my confidence, fostered connections with leaders on campus, and created a mindset that difficult problems are to be embraced (and not avoided). I will continue to prioritize relationship-building within my team and beyond, and approach issues fearlessly, as division chief of Neuropsychology.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I never had formal education on leadership, business, or communication. I joined iLEAD to learn from experts and colleagues, in the context of taking on a new leadership role around the start of this program. I wanted to absorb all the tips, experiences, and feedback possible, to best support my team.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

My iLEAD experience cultivated a greater sense of camaraderie with others across departments, reducing feelings of distance with other disciplines and campus leaders. It helped me see that there are more commonalities in our goals / missions than not, fostering a sense of unity and familiarity. All of this increases my appreciation of what we have at UNMC and leads to a feeling of community. Further, my iLEAD assessment and experiences helped me intentionally focus on my personal needs and responsibilities, in the context of my professional work, to create harmony between the two.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

I believe iLEAD is an essential investment for new leaders. This program helps new leaders see beyond their own division or department, in how they can extend their influence and impact to the broader institution. iLEAD helps participants see that the possibilities are endless in how they can work towards positive change.



Path to Increasing Efficiency and Using Digital Assessment in the Neuropsychology Clinic

My goal is to improve efficiency and modernize practices in the Neuropsychology Clinic, through using Epic in novel ways and moving from pencil-paper-based methods to digital assessment. This multifaceted project involves connecting with leaders in our department of Neurological Sciences and IT, as well as becoming acquainted with clinic finances. To this end, I took it upon myself to learn more about our academic medical center's finances through a formal course.



Strengths

1. Achiever
2. Harmony
3. Relator
4. Responsibility
5. Empathy



Kerry Miller, PhD

Munroe-Meyer Institute,
Department of Education and Child Development

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I see my leadership continuing to focus on systems-level improvement, particularly in areas where processes impact both people and outcomes. Through iLEAD, I have developed a more intentional approach to leading change, and I will carry that forward by prioritizing clarity, building alignment early, and fostering shared ownership across teams. I plan to continue leading initiatives that improve efficiency while enhancing the experience of those we serve. My iLEAD project reinforced for me that sustainable impact comes from designing systems that outlast individuals, and that will continue to guide how I approach leadership moving forward.

Why did you join iLEAD?

When I initially applied to iLEAD, I was looking for an opportunity to grow as a leader beyond my day-to-day responsibilities and strengthen my skills in communication, collaboration, and professional development. As my role at MMI evolved, so did my “why.” I found myself leading more complex, collaborative work and recognized the need to better understand how to influence systems, not just complete tasks. iLEAD provided the structure to intentionally develop those skills while applying them to a meaningful project. It became less about learning leadership in theory and more about actively growing into the type of leader my role needed.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD has helped me become more intentional and strategic in how I approach leadership. Through the experiences and learning, I have shifted from focusing on completing tasks to thinking more broadly about systems, alignment, and long-term impact. The relationships built within iLEAD provided valuable perspective and challenged me to consider different approaches to leadership, while the reflection components helped me better understand my strengths and areas for growth. Overall, iLEAD has strengthened my confidence in leading complex, cross-functional work and reinforced my ability to influence change.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

The iLEAD investment impacts UNMC by strengthening leadership capacity and enhancing collaboration. Through the program, there is increased ability to lead complex work, apply strategic thinking, and implement sustainable change. The relationships and networks developed within the iLEAD cohort support broader collaboration across the institution and bring diverse perspectives to problem-solving. Collectively, these skills contribute to improved organizational effectiveness and ongoing institutional advancement at UNMC.

Building a Systematic Student Onboarding Process at the Munroe-Meyer Institute

Over the past year in UNMC’s iLEAD program, I led the development of a standardized onboarding process for students and trainees at the Munroe-Meyer Institute. The project established a phased onboarding framework, clarified roles across teams, and created a centralized SharePoint hub to improve consistency, efficiency, and the trainee experience. This work required aligning multiple departments and systems, reinforcing that sustainable change is achieved by creating clarity, building alignment, and fostering shared ownership across teams. As a result, the process is more streamlined, reduces administrative burden, and better supports student readiness and integration into MMI.

Strengths

1. Learner
2. Relator
3. Arranger
4. Achiever
5. Belief



Chelsea Navarrette, MD

College of Medicine, Department of Internal Medicine

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I foresee myself as a clinician-educator-leader and advocate for inclusive medical training, holistic recruitment that diversifies the physician workforce, and advancement in health equity for all Nebraskans. These efforts could be within the context of Internal Medicine residency training, the College of Medicine, the Department of Internal Medicine, or even broader initiatives across university campuses or through Nebraska ACP.

Why did you join iLEAD?

Inclusion work requires complex systems-based culture change with varying attitudes, regulations, and competing priorities across power gradients. Success requires strategic logic, communication skills, influence, self-awareness, empathy, and resilience. I hoped to build confidence and credibility through iLEAD by developing a practical leadership skill set for sustaining meaningful change.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD has impacted me by building self-awareness and increasing my investment in sponsorship and coaching opportunities.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

Expectations about inclusion continue to evolve, but we are well-positioned to set a new standard of inclusion and belonging in residency training. We can define and model the new precedent of impactful engagement in residency, becoming a national leader and benchmark for health disparity education, community engagement, and a training program with an authentic culture of belonging and respect.

From Council to Catalyst: Advancing Inclusive Excellence in Internal Medicine Residency

My iLEAD project was to strengthen and sustain the Internal Medicine residents' Extraordinary Culture and Environment Council (ECEC) through deeper engagement, expanded initiatives, and development of a climate survey. The needs assessment was used to better align the ECEC's programming to meet resident needs, reimagine purpose, and provide a baseline of our residency's current standard of psychological safety. The goal is to build a culture where every resident is not only safe and welcomed, but celebrated and championed. One leadership lesson I learned was how integral mentorship, sponsorship, and coaching will be – both for residents and faculty members – in supporting our recruitment, advocacy, and belonging efforts in a manner that will leverage us to be a national leader in inclusive residency training.

Strengths

1. Positivity
2. Achiever
3. Futuristic
4. Developer
5. Maximizer



Rebecca Oberly Deegan, PhD

College of Medicine,
Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology



A New KIOS Radio segment: Communicate Science with the Omaha Public

My iLEAD project made me break out of my comfort zone and explore an idea that I have had for over a year but did not know how to implement. This iLEAD program gave me the opportunity to pitch my idea to the UNMC communications department. My idea was well received and then we contacted KIOS to determine if they would be interested in starting a radio segment on communicating science to the Omaha Public. KIOS was interested and this program is scheduled to start in May! This project has taught me to always ask even if you think the answer will be no.



Strengths

1. Learner
2. Relator
3. Responsibility
4. Consistency
5. Developer

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I plan to lead more research projects, especially multi-program and multi-leader research efforts. This will allow me to tackle bigger projects than I could do alone.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I have had zero leadership training. I am an introvert and felt like this was an opportunity to improve myself so that I could do a better job of leading in my current roles and future leadership roles.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

This program has provided me with more self-confidence and also more self-awareness to better handle a leadership role.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

I feel that training employees to be leaders will provide better leaders at UNMC in the future and also enhance retention of these employees.



Palsamy Periyasamy, PhD

College of Medicine,
Department of Pharmacology and Experimental Neuroscience

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I plan to expand this structured mentorship approach beyond my lab by piloting it within collaborating units and training programs. Building on demonstrated trainee outcomes over the past year, my focus will be to refine and adapt this framework across different research environments while incorporating measurable milestones and accountability systems. Through iLEAD, I have developed a more intentional, systems-level approach to leadership, which I will continue to apply in mentoring, training, and collaborative efforts to enhance research productivity and support more efficient transitions to scientific independence.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I chose to dedicate a year to studying leadership because my roles in mentoring, teaching, and leading collaborative research had grown significantly, and I recognized the need to move beyond intuitive leadership to a more intentional and structured approach. I joined iLEAD to better understand how to build systems that extend impact beyond individual effort and to develop skills that would allow me to lead more effectively at both the lab and institutional levels.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD provided a structured space for reflection that helped me move from reactive to intentional leadership. It strengthened my ability to think in terms of systems, accountability, and long-term impact rather than day-to-day execution. Interactions with peers across disciplines broadened my perspective and reinforced the importance of adaptability in leadership. Overall, the experience has helped me align my mentoring, teaching, and research efforts with a more deliberate and scalable leadership approach.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

The iLEAD investment impacts UNMC by strengthening leadership capacity that enhances mentoring, training, and collaborative environments. The program has enabled me to adopt a more intentional, systems-level approach to leadership, improving how I guide trainees, coordinate teams, and support research productivity. Over time, such leadership practices contribute to more effective training environments and strengthen UNMC's competitiveness in funding, publications, and faculty development.

Advancing Scientific Independence: From Mentorship to a High-Impact Training Model

Over the years, my mentoring approach evolved into a more structured, milestone-driven framework, during which I observed a pattern of trainee progression toward independence across multiple individuals, including promotions, faculty placement, and funding success. Recognizing this, I began intentionally shaping these practices into a more consistent training model emphasizing accountability, parallel execution, and early exposure to grants and manuscripts. This project reflects my shift from intuitive mentoring to a more deliberate and scalable leadership approach. Leadership Lesson: Consistent structure, not just effort, enables repeatable success.

Strengths

1. Learner
2. Achiever
3. Consistency
4. Responsibility
5. Harmony



Chittalsinh Raulji, MBBS

College of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I see my leadership future as one that increasing intentional, people-centered, and grounded in continuous growth and learning. Taking iLEAD into the future means carrying forward both its principals and its mindset, applying the principles of the program—fostering collaboration, art of negotiation, addressing difficult conversations head on, providing safe spaces or developing self-awareness.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I dedicated a year to studying leadership to build confidence, identify my strengths and personal style, and develop strategic skills to navigate complex challenges to drive personal growth along with organizational growth.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

Attending iLEAD has given me tools to self-reflect and thrive for a better me. It has enhanced my circle of influence, made me aware of my strengths, and has prepared me to thrive in leadership with respect.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

An organization is defined by its leaders. Investment in leadership and creating future leadership defines the future course for UNMC. Ultimately, iLEAD is not something that ends with this program—it becomes part of how we show up, how we lead, and how we help others.



From Foundation to Innovation: Leadership Journey in Developing a Multidisciplinary Bleeding Disorders Program

The project established a multidisciplinary bleeding disorders program from the ground up, building the foundational team and infrastructure required for hemophilia treatment center standards.

Through sustained collaborative leadership, the program now delivers integrated care to patients, including availability of clinical trials.

Currently, we are directing program growth initiatives focused on enhanced multidisciplinary staffing, patient-centered outcome measurement, and integration of emerging therapies to advance beyond minimum standards toward comprehensive care center excellence.



Strengths

1. Relator
2. Harmony
3. Learner
4. Adaptability
5. Intellection



STAMPP HTN: Systematic Treatment and Management of Postpartum Hypertension—Closing the Care Gap

Implementing STAMPP-HTN taught me a lot about staying flexible and being willing to adjust when things didn't go as planned. There were plenty of moments where I had to shift course, and I learned to be okay with that. I also came to appreciate how important it is to be persistent, but in a way that's kind and patient with the people around you. Change takes time, and not everyone moves at the same pace.

The experience reinforced that implementation is really about people. Building relationships, staying approachable, and keeping a shared goal in mind made all the difference. It wasn't always smooth, but it was meaningful, and it showed me that thoughtful, team-based work leads to the most sustainable change.

Strengths

1. Significance
2. Achiever
3. Competition
4. Focus
5. Learner

Rebecca Rimza, MD, FACOG

College of Medicine, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

My leadership journey is just beginning, and this experience has shown me how much there is still to learn. Participating in iLEAD and formal leadership training has given me a stronger foundation and practical tools to approach this work more thoughtfully and effectively. As we move forward with further implementation, I'm excited to keep building on what we've started. I hope that by staying flexible, leading with kindness, and continuing to show up with persistence, we can create meaningful and lasting change. I've learned that progress doesn't happen all at once, but with steady effort, the right support, and a strong team, real impact is possible.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I chose to participate in iLEAD because I wanted to spend time formally learning about leadership and building confidence in myself as a leader. Having the opportunity to step back and focus on these skills has been incredibly valuable. iLEAD has provided practical tools, structure, and space for reflection that I don't often get in day-to-day clinical work. It has helped me better understand my leadership style and approach challenges more intentionally. Most importantly, it has given me greater confidence to step into leadership roles and continue growing in this area.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

This experience has helped me transition from being more of an accidental leader to a more intentional one. It has given me a clearer understanding of my strengths and where I can have the most impact. I've also gained practical strategies to better understand team dynamics and navigate challenges as they arise. Instead of reacting in the moment, I feel more equipped to approach situations thoughtfully and with purpose. Overall, it has made me more confident and deliberate in how I show up as a leader.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

iLEAD is a valuable investment because it helps identify emerging leaders and gives them practical tools to lead more effectively. The program provides structured training, mentorship, and time to reflect, which can be hard to find in the day-to-day demands of work. It helps participants build confidence, understand their strengths, and approach challenges thoughtfully. At the same time, the institution benefits from leaders who can support their teams and contribute to the UNMC community in meaningful ways. Overall, iLEAD strengthens both individuals and the culture of leadership across the organization.



Priscila Rodrigues Armijo, MD, PhD

College of Medicine, Department of Internal Medicine

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I envision my leadership future in roles where I can influence system-level change at scale, expanding my reach across clinical, academic, and global platforms while both bringing external innovations into my institution and sharing institutional innovations outward. iLEAD strengthened my interpersonal skills and helped me better understand my strengths and how to leverage them across different contexts, including navigating difficult situations. It clarified my leadership style and reinforced ownership of how I show up as a leader, from contributing intentionally to engaging in difficult conversations and ensuring my voice is present at the table.

Why did you join iLEAD?

iLEAD is a prestigious program that covers domains and competencies highly relevant to both my current and future roles, which are not typically addressed through traditional training. I was particularly drawn to the diversity of topics and faculty expertise, as well as the opportunity to learn alongside peers with different perspectives. The program also offers retreats that provide intentional, immersive time for reflection while fostering community among participants. Finally, I was interested in the group project component, which addressed real institutional challenges and offered direct exposure to system-level needs, problem-solving, and implementation.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD helped me become more intentional and self-aware in my leadership approach. It clarified my strengths and leadership style, and how to leverage them across different and often challenging contexts. It also strengthened my ability to navigate complex conversations and show up more purposefully and confidently. The relationships built through iLEAD have expanded my perspective through exposure to diverse experiences and leadership approaches. The combination of reflection, peer learning, and faculty engagement has helped me approach leadership as an intentional area of continuous growth.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

iLEAD is an important investment in preparing the next generation of leaders who will serve at the institution. It creates a full-circle model in which iLEAD graduates return as presenters, mentors, and coaches, strengthening the leadership community over time. The program directly contributes to workforce development by building leadership capacity within the institution and preparing participants to thrive as future leaders across clinical, academic, and administrative settings.

Language Barriers as System-Level Drivers of Disparities in Sepsis Outcomes: From Data to Stakeholder-Informed Action

My iLEAD project examined communication and language barriers as system-level drivers of disparities among patients with limited English proficiency, particularly in high-risk conditions such as sepsis. This work included analysis of sepsis outcomes by language proficiency and stakeholder engagement across Nebraska, alongside broader advocacy on language access, including an invited presentation at a United Nations side event on sepsis. A key lesson is that meaningful change requires engaging diverse stakeholders and tailoring data-driven approaches to local context and resources.

Strengths

1. Learner
2. Input
3. Individualization
4. Futuristic
5. Significance



Melissa Soester, PhD, PA-C, CAQ-EM

College of Allied Health Professions,
Department of Medical Sciences

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I plan to take the leadership skills I gained through the iLEAD program back to the PA program and apply them to improve student and program outcomes. Additionally, I plan to use my skills to pursue leadership opportunities at the state and national levels in PA education and rural health workforce issues. The skills I have gained through the iLEAD program have given me the confidence to further develop as a leader, allowing me to use my skill set to the fullest.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I chose to dedicate a year to studying leadership to become a more effective servant leader for my students and the broader UNMC community. While my PhD coursework provided a strong foundation in leadership strategies, I recognized a gap in translating those concepts into practice. I joined iLEAD to bridge that gap. Through iLEAD, I have actively developed and applied these skills in meaningful ways, strengthening my ability to lead with intention and impact.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

The iLEAD experience has been an invaluable experience. Starting the program by completing multiple self-assessments allowed me to begin my leadership journey by understanding my strengths and weaknesses. That knowledge set the stage for skill-building opportunities moving forward. iLEAD retreats and monthly meetings provided the catalyst for building new connections and starting a reflective practice to improve my leadership skills.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

Investment in the iLEAD program impacts the UNMC community by fostering an environment of collaboration and growth. During our monthly cohort meetings, we have the opportunity to connect with a diverse group of individuals across UNMC. These conversations, paired with coaching sessions, provide us with the opportunity to make connections that would be unlikely to occur without the iLEAD program. Collectively, iLEAD serves as a catalyst for developing thoughtful, engaged leaders who contribute to a stronger, more connected institution.



Leading Change: Transforming Clinical PA Student Engagement Through Innovation

The iLEAD project I have explored over the past year involves enhancing communication and connection with our clinical PA students. This project will enable the UNMC PA program to enhance student engagement during the clinical phase of their education through professional learning communities, mentorship, advocacy, and podcasts, thereby supporting students where they are. One leadership lesson I learned through this process involves the importance of creating a culture of psychological safety. Psychological safety allows individuals to overcome barriers by creating an environment of excellence and collaboration.



Strengths

1. Achiever
2. Learner
3. Focus
4. Analytical
5. Restorative



Michelle Strong, PhD, MPH, MFA, CHES

College of Public Health, Department of Health Promotion

Mentoring with Meaning: A Peer to Peer Initiative for Shared Development

Over the past year, I have explored the ideas of mentoring, coaching, and sponsorship. Working with others in the College of Public Health on a previously developed mentorship proposal, I have incorporated concepts related to coaching and sponsorship to strengthen relationships and enhance impact. My leadership lesson revolves around the differences between coaching, mentoring, and sponsorship, and why each is important in fostering relationships and developing people.

Strengths

1. Belief
2. Learner
3. Individualization
4. Responsibility
5. Developer

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I aim to continue serving in a leadership role at UNMC in the future. I will continue to reflect on and implement the lessons learned from iLEAD in all the roles I perform. I think leadership development is personal development and while I think this benefits my growth at UNMC, I plan to use the knowledge in all aspects of my life.

Why did you join iLEAD?

Two of my top strengths are LEARNER and DEVELOPER; I think spending a year learning to grow and develop myself and others directly relates to my values and where I feel I can best serve those around me. I wanted to join a community of folks who similarly valued growth and development to positively impact our organization.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

The leadership lessons allow me to consider ways forward outside of my knee-jerk reactions. I feel myself pausing more to think about reactions, being more mindful of my intentions and the relationships with others.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

Having leaders invest in developing themselves can eventually lead to organizational culture change.



Melissa Teply, MD

College of Medicine, Department of Internal Medicine

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I am currently working on disseminating communication skills training done at UNMC to a more regional and national level. This will require significant networking and influential leadership skills. iLEAD has provided an enthusiastic and comfortable space to further develop these skills.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I joined iLEAD to work on my skills in influential leadership. While I have been a part of teams for all of my career, a significant amount of my time at work is on my own, where I can control my thoughts, organization, and plans. After coming into a leadership position, I quickly realized I cannot control my colleagues. What seems like a “duh!” to you was a painfully slow process for me. I wanted to find better strategies to engage my team and help influence rather than try to control. iLEAD has given me a space to explore this and several tools to practice this.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

The community of iLEAD has been the most impactful, in the specific sense that it’s re-invigorating to be with a group of people who are passionate, engaged, enthusiastic, and driven to keep improving the work we do at UNMC.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

1. Giving resources and visibility of this program highlights UNMC’s investment in its faculty and leaders.
2. The data on engagement, wellness, turnover, productivity etc., etc., etc., all supports that sturdy, engaged leaders influence the effectiveness of their colleagues and teams. So the ripple effect is huge.
3. The leadership skills from iLEAD are transferable to making me a better educator and clinician, so the impact is not just on administrative tasks, it serves the entire mission of UNMC.

What Got You Here Won’t Get You There: The Transition from Creating to Sustaining an Academic Palliative Medicine Program

The palliative care section at UNMC has grown exponentially in the past decade, with 1 faculty member in 2017 to 9 faculty in 2026. This growth included the creation of a fellowship that graduated 10 fellows as of 2026, and an outpatient palliative care clinic within oncology that later expanded outside of oncology to see any person with a serious illness diagnosis. The skills required to build a clinic and a fellowship differ significantly from those required to maintain a sustaining program and further develop faculty. A key leadership lesson was moving from people-pleasing and boundarylessness to setting expectations to create individual and group accountability.

Strengths

1. Achiever
2. Empathy
3. Learner
4. Ideation
5. Belief



Elizabeth Wellsandt, PT, DPT, PhD

College of Allied Health Professions Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, Physical Therapy

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I am already seeing the impact of iLEAD through opportunities to lead, both in small, everyday ways within my program and in broader roles across external networks. When I started at UNMC ten years ago, I would not have anticipated intentionally pursuing leadership development, which makes me excited about what comes next. What I know with confidence is that iLEAD has given me the skills and self-confidence to lead in a way that reflects who I am, and to say yes when the right leadership opportunities emerge.

Why did you join iLEAD?

Like the development of any meaningful skill, I recognized that leadership growth required deliberate time and focus. For several years, I had been intentionally observing both effective and ineffective leadership across my professional networks. iLEAD provided the opportunity to learn how to model the leadership behaviors I connected with, while shaping them in a way that aligns with my own values, strengths, and personality.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

One of iLEAD's greatest strengths is the foundational leadership framework it provides that I can return to as new challenges and opportunities arise. Equally impactful has been the expansion of my UNMC network into a community of trusted colleagues and friends. It is difficult for me to quantify the full impact of iLEAD. A deep sense of gratitude for the mentorship, relationships, and personal growth stands out most clearly.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

iLEAD strengthens UNMC by developing leaders who are prepared for future institutional challenges. Participants not only grow as leaders themselves, but also gain clarity around the standards and behaviors they should expect from others. This fosters a culture of accountability, collaboration, and readiness for leadership transitions, while creating an institutional network that supports UNMC's continued growth and success.



Building the Research Pipeline: Leading a New PhD Pathway in Physical Therapy

My iLEAD project aimed to strengthen graduate research training within the UNMC Physical Therapy Program by developing infrastructure for a first-of-its-kind, TA-funded PhD pathway. This work centered on integrating a scalable, sustainable PhD research pathway into curricular teaching needs of our program. Leadership lesson: I learned that intentionally leveraging the perspectives, expertise, and concerns of others transforms a new idea into a more innovative, rigorous program that is far more likely to succeed and endure.



Strengths

1. Competition
2. Learner
3. Developer
4. Analytical
5. Focus



Lei Yu, MD

College of Medicine, Department of Radiology

Bridging the Gap: Increasing Early Exposure to Interventional Radiology Among Medical Students

My iLEAD project focuses on increasing early exposure to Interventional Radiology among medical students. The goal is to improve awareness of IR as a career, introduce students to its clinical applications and procedural workflows, and create meaningful mentorship connections with IR faculty and residents. Because limited exposure to IR is a widespread issue rather than a single-institution gap, I began collaborating with student leaders and faculty across institutions to co-host webinars, share curricular materials, and develop cross-institutional mentorship opportunities, with the goal of expanding the project from a locally focused effort at UNMC into a broader regional and emerging national initiative.

A key leadership lesson from this experience is that sustainable impact comes from collaboration and scalability—effective leaders build systems that extend beyond their immediate environment.

Strengths

1. Significance
2. Activator
3. Competition
4. Learner
5. Communication

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

I see myself growing into a clinician-leader who advances patient care through innovation in image-guided, minimally invasive therapies while also helping shape the evolution of the specialty. Building on my experience with iLEAD, I want to expand my impact by bridging education and clinical practice, supporting innovation in both training the next generation of IR physicians and expanding access to effective, image-guided therapies for patients.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I chose to dedicate a year to studying leadership because I am committed to becoming a better leader through continued learning and reflection.

Many of my mentors on campus—iLEAD alumni and strong examples of leadership in medicine—influenced my decision to join the program, as I saw firsthand how it helped shape their growth and impact.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

Through iLEAD, I developed practical leadership skills such as communication, negotiation, public speaking, and initiative by working through real projects in a team setting and incorporating feedback in real time. I also learned the importance of networking, as building relationships with mentors, peers, and professionals helped me gain new perspectives and strengthen the development of my ideas.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

The iLEAD program helps develop the next generation of leaders across the UNMC campus by building a solid foundation of leadership skills. The creativity and innovation fostered through group and individual projects create meaningful, lasting impact within our institution.



Beyond the Budget: Expanding Clinical Innovation Through National Collaboration

My iLEAD project was originally about expanding the use of an eye-tracking diagnostic tool through a DHHS grant I secured, but since those funds haven't been released, I had to pivot. Instead of a budget-focused project, this year became about stepping outside my program—completing a multi-site study with another in progress, publishing in *Contemporary Pediatrics*, and submitting a symposium with new national partners. The biggest leadership lesson I've learned is that I can't truly support my team or my mission if I stay siloed in my own program. Real leadership requires building external bridges to advocate for our work and create the opportunities my team needs to grow, even when the funding climate is working against us.



Strengths

1. Relator
2. Activator
3. Focus
4. Arranger
5. Developer

Patricia K. Zemantic, PhD, BCBA-D, LP, LBA Munroe-Meyer Institute, Integrated Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

My time with iLEAD led me in a direction I wasn't entirely expecting. While I've been deeply focused on leadership within my own program, my project opened the door to connections with outside partners that shifted my perspective. In our field, we are constantly navigating a funding climate that demands we do more with less, and it is a delicate balance to ensure we are still providing the best possible care for our patients. It was incredibly validating to connect with leaders outside of MMI and realize we are all grappling with the same systemic issues—from insurance reimbursement hurdles to the way the skill and impact of our work are often undervalued. Moving forward, I want to take the lessons from iLEAD to bridge these gaps. I believe that by coming together with these partners, we can move toward real solutions that protect our team's mission and elevate the standard of care for our patients and the broader community.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I started iLEAD wanting to be a better leader for my team, but I realize now that my initial vision was actually a bit short-sighted. I previously viewed advanced leadership as a distant goal rather than a real possibility, but I've learned that I can't truly support my team if I stay focused solely on our internal operations. Being a leader means being willing to connect with partners outside of my program, my department, and my site.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

I was able to get a better sense of what I actually bring to the table. I realized that the things I thought were "weaknesses"—like being open about my mistakes or showing vulnerability—are actually the things my team and my peers value most. It builds a level of trust that you just can't get by trying to look perfect all the time. Learning that I'm a much harsher critic of myself than anyone else has been a huge relief. I've realized that being an authentic leader isn't about having all the answers; it's about being real enough to build the connections that actually move our program and our field forward.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

iLEAD builds stronger leaders who can actually collaborate across UNMC and beyond. A solid leader influences everything—job satisfaction, funding, and publications—which ultimately dictates the quality of patient care we provide. Especially in our current climate, where we're constantly asked to do more with less, having leaders who can connect and advocate is critical. iLEAD gives us a better sense of UNMC at large, helping us move past our silos so we can leverage the expertise here to move our field forward.



Holly Zimmerman, MS, CGC

College of Allied Health Professions,
Department of Medical Sciences

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

On July 1st, I start my term as President of the Genetic Counselor Educators Association. I currently serve as President-elect and have felt that this year is my learning year. I will continue to have the opportunity to work with six board members with diverse perspectives and engage with programs and members across the country. This role will bring more visibility and likely more complexity. I see that leadership is not just about getting things done but how you engage people in the process. I see the value of transparency and intentional engagement, especially when things feel high-pressure or uncertain.

Listening, Learning, Leading: Transforming Clinical Rotations Together

My leadership project focused on engaging program stakeholders to examine the clinical experiences of genetic counseling students. My goal was to celebrate what was working, fix what was not working, and leverage innovative opportunities to ensure our graduates are prepared for the workforce. My secondary goal was improving the overall experiences for all involved.

Through this project, I am learning the importance for leaders to create environments where people are not only valued but also supported as individuals. Equally important, leaders must model the skill of asking for help.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I wanted to become a more inclusive leader to support a diverse team. I wanted to improve my decision-making skills and conflict-management skills. I wanted to gain knowledge in financial accountability and negotiation. I wanted to gain confidence as a leader.

I wanted to participate in iLEAD because I was ready to explore my leadership potential. I was hopeful to find a guide for my path and was excited to join others on the journey. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with my small group and engaging with the larger cohort.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD changed how I think about leadership and my own leadership style and skills. I am more confident in my strengths as a leader and more aware of areas where I want to continue to grow. I have learned that leadership is intentional. It requires reflection and engagement with others. I most admired the campus leaders who spoke with authenticity and vulnerability. No one showed up with “here are all of the lessons you need” or “here’s how you do it.” They simply shared their story, their lessons learned, and things for us to consider. I loved seeing myself in these leaders (my story, my lessons learned, and things I consider). This program is very intentional about prompting self-reflection and group discussion to maximize our learning and futures as leaders.

Strengths

1. Achiever
2. Learner
3. Empathy
4. Developer
5. Arranger

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

iLEAD DOES impact UNMC! This has been an invaluable experience that has not only reinforced the value of reflection, colleague engagement, and communication but also showed me how to do these things well through the individual and small group assignments. UNMC will benefit from leaders who collaborate well and make more thoughtful decisions. We will be better prepared to navigate the change and complexity ahead of us!



Gregory M. Zumach, PharmD, BCPS

College of Pharmacy,
Department of Pharmacy Practice and Science

How will you leverage your iLEAD experience into the future?

It is a privilege to be a member of UNMC and the College of Pharmacy. I want to take a greater role in the College, especially in how we assess student performance and help PharmD students transition from learners to graduated pharmacists.

Why did you join iLEAD?

I have had the privilege of taking on leadership roles in my career, but my experiences in those roles always felt more about trial and error than a refined process.

How has iLEAD shaped and impacted you?

iLEAD has helped me better understand leadership as something that is built through relationships, reflection, and follow-through rather than simply through a formal role or title. The experience has pushed me to think more intentionally about how I communicate ideas, build trust with colleagues, and move a project from an idea into a realistic project.

How does the iLEAD investment impact UNMC?

The effect of the iLEAD program is hard to measure. Each participant has the possibility to directly impact their college and unit, but it's even broader. Not only does the program help prepare a generation of future leaders, but it also connects them together helping to pave the way for potential University-wide impact.

Closing the Loop: Taking a Project from Ideation to Execution to Improve Pharmacy Board Outcomes

Over the past year, my iLEAD project focused on a data-informed approach to curriculum review, exam mapping, and targeted student guidance. By examining student performance trends and aligning guided study opportunities with NAPLEX subdomains, I explored how faculty leadership can move from identifying gaps to building shared, sustainable solutions to help students prepare.

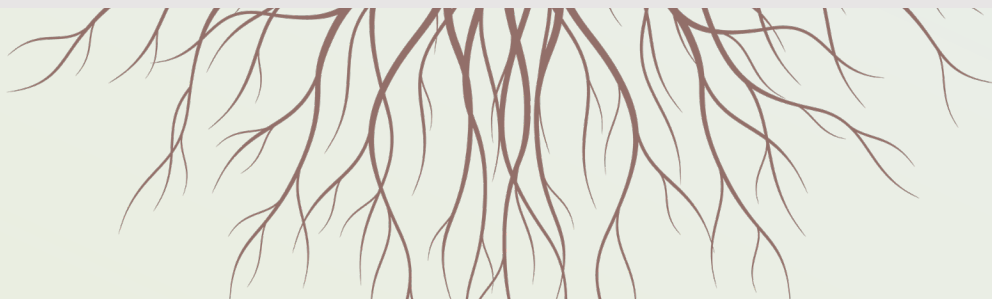
This project helped me see leadership as the work of creating clarity, coordination, and accountability among many contributors. One leadership lesson is that ideas can shape progress, but only if they lead to executing projects.

Strengths

1. Futuristic
2. Ideation
3. Individualization
4. Communication
5. Developer



CONGRATULATIONS 2026 iLEAD GRADUATES



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iLEAD IS POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF THE WORK OF DEDICATED COLLABORATORS!

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iLEAD 2027-2028
applications open this fall!

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