

# Bridges

A magazine of people, connections and community for alumni of the OHSU School of Medicine



Spring 2022



Tackling the  
Problem of Student  
Food Insecurity P. 8





David Jacoby, M.D.

I invite you to learn more at [www.ohsu.edu/som](http://www.ohsu.edu/som) and contact me at [somdeansoffice@ohsu.edu](mailto:somdeansoffice@ohsu.edu).

## The Joy of Our Missions

THINK YOU WILL AGREE THAT THIS SPRING HAS BEEN SPECIAL. IN FEBRUARY, I HAD THE honor of speaking at the White Coat Ceremony for the M.D. Class of 2024, delayed by the pandemic. In March, I joined fourth-year medical students for the first in-person Match Day celebration since 2019. And this month, I shared in the school's revived Honors and Awards Ceremony, recognizing the excellence of our M.D. and graduate students and their teaching faculty.

Seeing these celebrations of achievement and the culmination of so much work reminds me of the human contact we all missed. Experiencing the reading of the Oath of Geneva at White Coat, the envelope opening at Match Day, and the applause at Honors and Awards, I felt the joy of our missions and my pride in OHSU after two years of crisis and uncertainty.

Now I am feeling restored hope as OHSU is growing.

To meet the urgent demand for more patient beds in Oregon and access to specialty and routine care in our state's expanding and aging population, OHSU is launching construction of a new inpatient wing on the former School of Dentistry site and discussing additional expansion projects with the OHSU Board of Directors. Keep up with this work at <https://news.ohsu.edu>.

Our education mission is moving front and center to support the state's health care workforce needs with the Legislature's passage of the 30-30-30 initiative. This \$45 million investment will expand the number of OHSU students in clinical programs by 30 percent and the diversity of the student body by 30%, all by 2030. It will change the face of medicine in Oregon and greatly expand our alumni community. (Read more p. 4.)

This is an exciting time as we broaden opportunities for talented students to contribute their diverse life experiences and skills to serve more Oregonians. As biomedical scientists and clinicians whose work was paramount to emerging from the pandemic, I hope you will join me in re-embracing the daily joy of our work and in going forward with confidence that we participate in something noble and more sustained than even the problems we continue to confront.

David Jacoby, M.D.  
Interim Dean

### ON THE COVER

M.D./Ph.D. student Gina Calco (left) volunteers in OHSU's new Food Resource Center, staffed by Nicky Ulrich.

Photo by Aaron Bieleck

## In this issue



### 8 Access to Food on Campus

Students and faculty have led the charge in addressing student food insecurity at OHSU.

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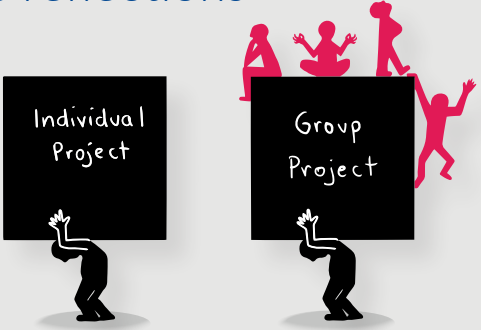
### UP FRONT

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# State Legislature Funds OHSU's 30-30-30 Plan to Address a Health Care Workforce Shortage, Increase Education Program Diversity

This spring, the Oregon Legislature passed legislation that included a \$45 million prioritized investment in OHSU's innovative 30-30-30 plan to help address the state's urgent health care workforce needs.

OHSU 30-30-30 will increase the number of graduates from clinical programs by 30% and increase all OHSU learner diversity to 30% by the year 2030.

The \$45 million investment will enable OHSU to expand culturally competent health care access in communities across the state.

It includes two parts:

- An increase of \$20 million per year in OHSU's direct state appropriation. This ongoing investment will allow OHSU to expand class sizes across its schools, graduating up to 2,000 additional health care professionals – nurses, clinical psychologists, physicians, physician assistants, nutritionists, public health leaders, and others – within the decade. It will also increase diversity through learner pathway programs such as the Oregon Consortium of Nursing Education, Area Health Education Centers, HealthSteps, Wy'east and OnTrack OHSU!
- A \$25 million one-time investment, which the OHSU Foundation will seek to match with philanthropy, creating a \$50 million OHSU Opportunity Fund. This fund will provide tuition assistance, loan repayment and student resources to help recruit and retain more diverse classes of learners at OHSU.

OHSU developed its 30-30-30 plan to help the state address the current health care workforce shortage and health care inequities that were exacerbated by COVID-19 and its disproportionate impact on underserved communities.

Without action, the state projects that by 2030, Oregon is expected to need 40% more physician assistants, 12% more registered nurses, and 60% more nurse practitioners – even as the Oregon Health Authority's 2021 Health Care Workforce Needs Assessment Report calls for increased workforce diversity and geographic distribution to more effectively address community health care needs.

"We're emerging from a crisis and looking to the future,"

said Oregon House Speaker Dan Rayfield. "We know that our health care workforce needs to be more diverse and more robust. Our investment in OHSU's 30-30-30 plan is an investment in affordable education, quality jobs and healthy futures for Oregon's families."

"OHSU 30-30-30 will lead to a larger – and more representative – health care workforce in Oregon that understands, and can address, the unique needs of the state's diverse and rural communities," said David Robinson, Ph.D., OHSU interim executive vice president and provost. – *SH*



## OHSU 30-30-30

The \$45 million investment will allow OHSU to significantly increase the number of graduates from several key health care professions programs, including the PA program (PA Class of 2023 pictured above), adding thousands of new clinicians to the state's hospitals and clinics over the next decade.

## M.D. Program Earns Continued Accreditation

On March 1, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) affirmed the full accreditation status of the school's M.D. Program, shifting the status from "full accreditation with an indeterminate term" to "full accreditation."

Following a January 2020 visit to the school, the LCME found that the M.D. program's performance was satisfactory in most elements, but also pinpointed elements requiring improvement.

Subsequently, the school

- Remade the student career, academic and wellness advising system
- Provided education and training, especially for faculty and residents, regarding student concerns about mistreatment and the need for deepened accountability
- Created a comprehensive Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism Strategic Action Plan
- Opened private study space for medical students in the Robertson Life Sciences Building
- Added more ways for students to give feedback on their courses and clinical experiences

The one continued area rated "unsatisfactory" is career advising, which the M.D. Program is actively addressing.

"This process has showcased the best aspects of our medical school, led to remarkable new initiatives and helped galvanize the whole institution," said Interim Dean David Jacoby.

The next LCME visit is scheduled for 2027-28. – *EHB*



## A Rite of Passage Returns

Rebecca Cantone, M.D., assistant dean of student affairs for undergraduate medical education, helps Maliyan Binette, M.D. Class of 2024, don her white coat in the first of the medical school's rites of passage to return to in-person status since the pandemic began. From left, Benjamin Schneider, M.D., assistant dean for student affairs, Tracy Bumsted, M.D., M.P.H., associate dean for undergraduate medical education, and Interim Dean David Jacoby look on. The M.D. Class of 2024 celebrated the completion of its White Coat Ceremony at the Robertson Life Sciences Building Feb. 11.





## CAREER-DEFINING

Francie Goodstein leaps with joy at learning that she matched to a residency at the University of California at San Francisco in anesthesiology. “I found the most fulfillment and meaning when caring for the sickest patients,” Goodstein said of her chosen specialty.



## M.D. Class of 2022 and OHSU Residency Programs Post 100% Match

At 9 a.m. on March 18, students in the M.D. Class of 2022 ripped open their match envelopes in unison, following a time-honored tradition playing out at the exact same time at medical schools across the country. Shouts, hugs and tears erupted across the room as students learned about their placements in residency programs.

After two years of virtual Match Day gatherings, students and their loved ones were able to come together to celebrate the culminating moment in person.

The M.D. Class of 2022 posted a 100% match rate, with all 149 students matching to a residency program. Students matched in 23 specialties in 32 states – including 28% of the class matching in Oregon, the highest percentage of any state. (View additional statistics in the below infographic.)

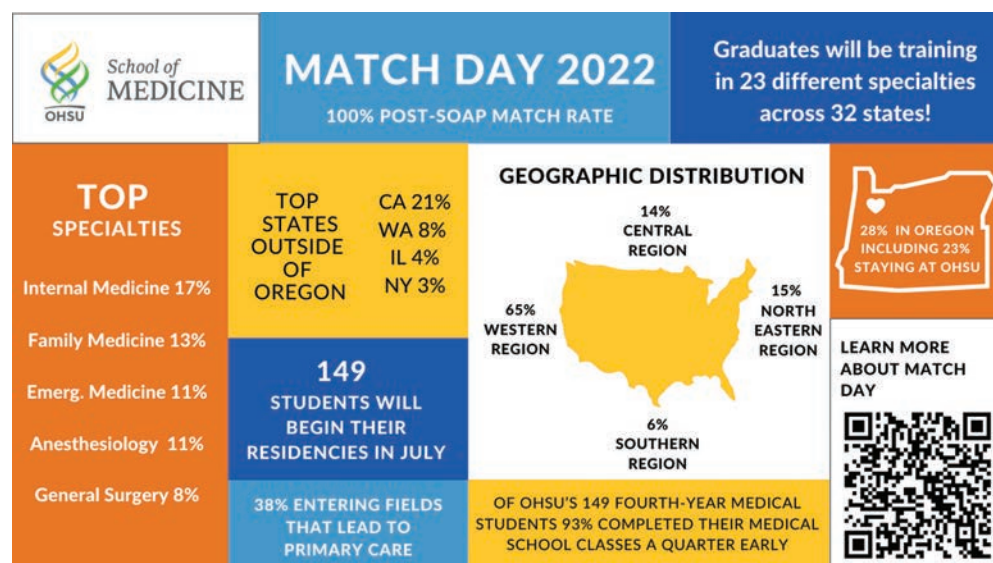
For more than 93% of the class, March 18 also marked their last day of medical school. Because of the school’s time-variable, competency-based curriculum, the majority of fourth-year students complete their graduation requirements by the end of the third quarter.

OHSU’s 23 residency programs that take part in the match also posted a 100% match rate, with 191 out of 191 slots filled,

including the new transitional year program that prepares physicians for entry into specialties such as radiology, anesthesiology, ophthalmology, dermatology, radiation oncology, and others.

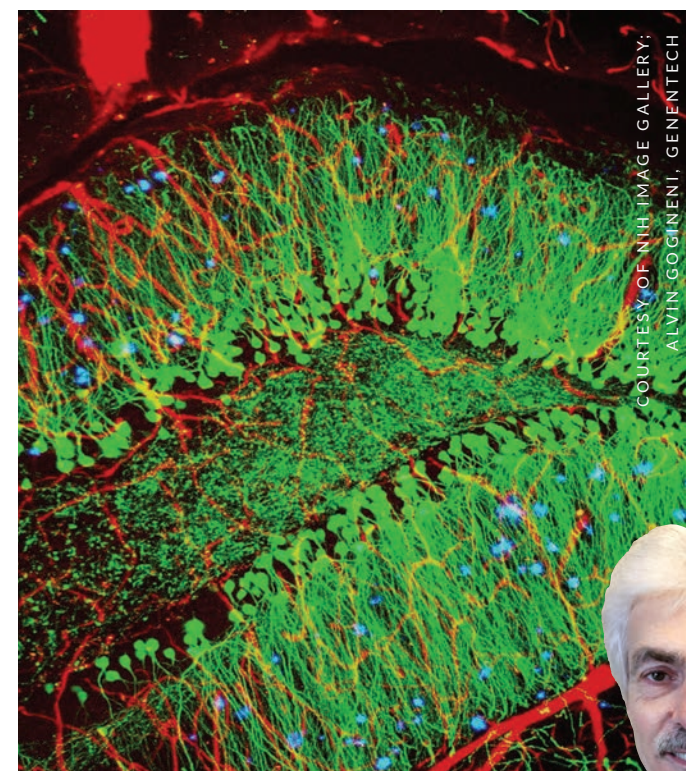
The dual 100% match rates are indicators of OHSU’s strong national reputation.

“As you step into this next chapter, remember that you’re not alone,” said Craig Swinyard, senior director of alumni engagement. “Approximately 1,500 OHSU alums have graduated in just the past 10 years, and they’re ready to serve as a resource to you.” (Learn more about Swinyard on p. 20.) – MP



## WHAT'S NEW IN THE SCHOOL

- Beth Habecker, Ph.D., professor of chemical physiology and biochemistry, received one of the top honors from the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). On Jan. 26, she was named an AAAS Fellow in the pharmaceutical sciences section “for distinguished contributions elucidating the roles of the sympathetic nervous system in cardiovascular disease.”
- Yali Jia, Ph.D., developed an algorithm that greatly improved the sensitivity of a highly efficient, non-invasive eye imaging technology called optical coherence tomographic angiography, or OCTA. For that and other significant contributions, the National Academy of Inventors elected Dr. Jia, the Jennie P. Weeks Professor of Ophthalmology and an associate professor of biomedical engineering, a National Academy of Inventors Senior Member.
- A study led by Fikadu Tafesse, Ph.D., assistant professor of molecular microbiology and immunology, found more than one path to robust immunity from COVID-19. Two forms of immunity – breakthrough infections following vaccination or natural infection followed by vaccination – provide roughly equal levels of enhanced immune protection. In both cases, the immune response measured in blood serum revealed antibodies that were equally more abundant and at least 10 times more potent than immunity generated by vaccination alone.
- A study of mice by Jacob Raber, Ph.D., professor of behavioral neuroscience, and team found that modulating the gut microbiome via fecal implants drove behavioral and cognitive changes in an Alzheimer’s model. The findings suggest new avenues involving the use of probiotics to treat and potentially forestall symptoms of dementia associated with neurodegenerative diseases, including Alzheimer’s.



## GUT MICROBIOME

Image of a mouse brain showing hallmarks of Alzheimer’s disease (plaques in blue). Research of mice by Dr. Jacob Raber (below) and team suggests the gut microbiome could be a path toward treating or forestalling cognitive decline.

## Following Investigation, OHSU Commits to Culture Change

In December, Covington & Burling LLP concluded its eight-month investigation into OHSU’s institutional culture.

The firm, led by Eric Holder, 82nd U.S. Attorney General, was retained by OHSU to investigate its culture in response to incidents of racial and gender discrimination and harassment at the university.

“Covington’s findings show how challenging the work environment has been for some OHSU members and let us be clear: just one person experiencing inequitable treatment, discrimination, harassment, bullying, intimidation or retaliation is one too many,” said OHSU President Danny Jacobs in a statement. “It is clear that we have a significant amount of work to do, in addition to efforts currently underway, to overcome the past and change the future so that OHSU can become a place where everyone can thrive.”

To address the findings, OHSU:

- Convened an implementation committee focused on planning and adoption of Covington’s recommendations with metrics and milestones for measuring progress that will be regularly shared with our members.
- Created an oversight committee to ensure accountability that will report to the president, board of directors and implementation committee.

Learn more at [news.ohsu.edu](https://news.ohsu.edu).



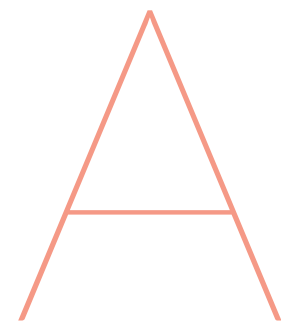
# Hungry No More

Student food insecurity shocked the OHSU community. Students and faculty launched an effort to do something about it.

Written by Romel Hernandez; photos by Aaron Bieleck

## NOURISHMENT

Nicky Ulrich, left, oversees OHSU's new Food Resource Center, helped by student leaders like Gina Calco, an M.D./Ph.D. student.



than a mere convenience.

“It’s an indispensable resource for reducing the strain on your budget and on your time,” said the first-year biomedical sciences Ph.D. student, originally from San Diego. “There have been some weeks where I haven’t been able to go food shopping and had to scrounge a little, making quesadillas or eating whatever was in the freezer. I definitely find that more regular trips to the center means a better and healthier diet.”

Since launching in December 2020, the FRC has distributed

bout once a week, Marin Miner makes time in her hectic graduate student schedule to swing by the OHSU Food Resource Center and stock up on items like olive oil, meatless burgers and fresh veggies. Living on a stipend and without a car to get to supermarkets easily, she considers the center more

free groceries – pantry staples, organic produce, microwavable meals, even a variety of specialty items – to over 1,000 individual students. Located on the OHSU Student Center’s first floor, the center offers both in-person shopping and online ordering for students only, regardless of financial need.

Recent OHSU surveys indicate that 1 in 4 students experienced some level of food insecurity over the course of the previous year. Nationally, over 30 percent of college/university students report being food insecure. (See the USDA definition of “food insecurity” in sidebar p. 11.)

“Everyone’s situation is unique, and a range of factors contribute to student food security,” explained Nicky Ulrich, M.N.M., M.A., Food Resource Center coordinator. “Student demographics have evolved over time as OHSU becomes more socioeconomically diverse with more first-generation students and students caring for families – such as children or aging parents. Faced with rising tuition costs, students on financial aid are essentially living on fixed incomes in an area with a high – and rising – cost of living. This can make it difficult to adapt to unexpected expenses and can result in uncertainty around how to afford basics like food.”

On top of economic pressures, students’ rigorous academic schedules leave precious little time for grocery shopping (especially with few supermarkets close by), planning or cooking meals—and even eating.

Food insecurity “isn’t a new problem – it’s a problem we’re finally recognizing and coming to grips with,” said Diane Stadler, Ph.D., R.D.N., L.D., professor of medicine and director of the school’s graduate programs in human nutrition. “There’s a stereotype of grad students surviving on ramen, and it doesn’t have to be that way. We’ve become more aware that food insecurity is a root cause of stress and anxiety. The well-being of our students shouldn’t be compromised because they weren’t able to eat breakfast.”

Jodi Demunter, M.D., assistant professor of medicine, who worked in a community clinic in a low-income area before becoming medical director of the Student Health and Wellness Center, was shocked to find the problem was so widespread at OHSU. She helped oversee a food insecurity task force formed to study the issue and propose solutions, including the FRC. The group also advocated for a 10% student discount at on-campus cafes and trained a cadre of student and staff volunteers to educate students about expanded eligibility for federal food benefits in response to the pandemic.

“Our students are in programs that keep them busy all day, every day, with classes, labs, practicums and clinical rotations,” Dr. Demunter said. “We have to meet their basic needs, or they won’t be successful academically.”

It is fitting that two students – Gina Calco, a sixth-year M.D./Ph.D. student from Michigan, and Madison Egan, a fourth-year M.D. student from Portland, Ore. – were among the driving forces behind the FRC’s creation.

After COVID-19 hit campus in the spring of 2020, Calco



“

Food insecurity “isn’t a new problem – it’s a problem we’re finally recognizing and coming to grips with.”

– Dr. Diane Stadler

and Egan, who met through the food insecurity task force, launched a free grocery delivery service for their fellow students. With a modest start-up grant from the Student Health and Wellness Center, they operated out of their own homes, stockpiling food items and delivering boxes. The grassroots venture proved popular enough to evolve into what has become a full-fledged food resource center, supported with funding from the OHSU Foundation and OHSU, as well as employee donations through payroll deductions.

Growing up, Calco says she experienced food insecurity and qualified for free school lunches as her family, at times, struggled to make ends meet. At OHSU she saw many of her fellow medical students facing similar challenges, and often found herself attending random campus events just to get free food.

“There’s a misperception that all students are privileged,” Calco said. “If OHSU wants to keep diversifying and bringing in students from all backgrounds, it has to do more to help them succeed. That includes ensuring they don’t have to worry about access to good food.”

Today, the FRC is open Monday through Wednesday and Friday with well-stocked shelves and refrigerators; on-site student volunteers greet clients and answer questions. A core of about 20 regular student-volunteers helps keep the center running smoothly.

Nicky Ulrich was brought on board at the end of 2021 as the center’s full-time coordinator. She works



#### OPEN DOOR

The 600 square-foot Food Resource Center is designed to promote a welcoming and culturally affirming shopping experience.

closely with the Oregon Food Bank, which provides more than half the center’s stock, and a network of community food pantries. Other contributions come from area grocery stores and food producers such as Bob’s Red Mill. OHSU’s Food and Nutrition Services contributes unsold microwavable meals from its campus cafes, food that would otherwise go to waste. The microwavable meals are one of the more popular items among shoppers – in particular the quinoa loaf with beans.

The 600 square-foot FRC is designed to promote a welcoming and culturally affirming shopping experience, with a selection of foods that reflect the diverse needs and tastes of the student body. The center carries a range of pantry staples from coffee and sugar to cooking oils and spices, as well as refrigerators

and freezers filled with fresh produce and meat. (Cornish game hens are particularly in-demand because they are small and easy to cook.) Shelves are stocked with multicultural foods as well as vegan alternatives such as soy and oat milk and gluten-free options. Students can also find household products, including laundry detergent and toilet paper. The center also has plans to start



providing kitchenware as a way to support students’ ability to cook at home.

The FRC staff makes a special effort to solicit feedback through surveys and focus groups about the types of food and products students would like to have. For example, when students suggested carrying Spam, the center made sure to carry the canned-meat product because it has cultural relevance in some Asian and Pacific Islander cuisines and reminds students of home.

Dr. Stadler herself makes weekly shopping runs to stock up on items not provided by the pantry’s main sources of food. Overall, the emphasis is on healthier alternatives – organic and non-processed foods are best, of course, and there isn’t much “junk” food, though the center does aim to please all palates. There are cookies and pre-packaged cakes, for example.

Outreach is an essential part of the effort to eliminate any social stigma that might be attached to using a food pantry, which may be seen as a resource only for the extremely needy. Shoppers are not required to prove financial hardship; they only have to show their OHSU student identification to enter and can fill one box or bag at a time any time they shop.

“I was a little nervous to go in at first,” said Shannon Baker, a nursing student from Albany, Ore., who is solo parenting. She

#### Definition of Food Insecurity

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, answering “Yes” to either of the two statements is an indicator of food insecurity.

1. “Within the past 12 months, we worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more.”
2. “Within the past 12 months, the food we bought just didn’t last and we didn’t have money to get more.”

was unsure if the center only served those experiencing severe hardship. “My budget is tight and we don’t have much extra, but we’re also not going hungry. Shopping at the center has been a very positive experience – I’d encourage anyone to go.”

Looking to the future, the FRC hopes to extend its reach to the South Waterfront campus and OHSU’s rural campuses. Ulrich is also exploring ways to expand offerings, including hosting events such as cooking demonstrations. “This space,” she said, “has created its own community where folks can shop together and talk. I’ve seen students meet up here with classmates they only knew from their online courses.”

The center’s success is a jumping-off point for exploring other ways OHSU might better meet students’ basic needs, Dr. Demunter notes, such as expanding housing support or establishing a student emergency fund to provide limited emergency financial assistance to students who are unable to meet essential expenses due to a temporary or unexpected hardship.

For Calco and Egan, it’s been especially gratifying to see how something that started out as a small project by well-meaning students can make such a big difference – and keep on going even after they graduate.

“I know many OHSU students want an outlet for community service,” Egan said. “It’s been great to be a part of something built from the ground up that’s proven itself to be sustainable.”



#### Donate to the OHSU Food Resource Center

Volunteers are always welcome to help staff the center, make deliveries, stock shelves, pack online orders and more. For more information about volunteering, please contact [food@ohsu.edu](mailto:food@ohsu.edu) Instagram: @foodresourcecenter

There are several avenues for donating to the center:

- Donate by debit or credit card by emailing [ohsufoundation@ohsu.edu](mailto:ohsufoundation@ohsu.edu), and you’ll receive a secure online donation form from the OHSU Foundation.
- Donating food or equipment: Please email [food@ohsu.edu](mailto:food@ohsu.edu) to inquire about donating food or equipment. The center currently needs:
  - Reusable grocery bags
  - Clear plastic bins for dry food storage
  - iPad for customer check-out





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COURTESY TODD TAYLOR

## Stories of the 2022 Alumni Awardees



“

He’s an incredibly generous, upbeat and open person – and a very natural teacher.

— Dr. Susan Hayflick

## Mapping His Way Across the Pacific

Dr. Taylor carried his scientific passion across the sea to Japan where he helped sequence the Human Genome Project.

**TODD TAYLOR, PH.D. '99**

**RICHARD T. JONES DISTINGUISHED  
ALUMNUS SCIENTIST AWARD**

Just before graduating from college in mathematics, Dr. Todd Taylor stumbled upon an ‘introduction to genetics’ course – something that really sparked his interest.

“I wished I’d discovered it earlier,” he said.

It was the late '80s, and genetics was a burgeoning field of research. But as fate would have it, his life took a few twists and turns; he got married and taught English in Japan for a couple of years.

But the interest in genetics was always in the back of his mind. After finishing his second teaching year in Japan, he and his wife returned to the U.S., where he applied to the Ph.D. program in molecular and medical genetics at OHSU. He was accepted as one of only three graduate students in the program – and that intimate level of learning suited him well. “I really liked the fact that the program was so small,” he said. “That’s where I worked with Susan Hayflick and really enjoyed my time there. I had very little background knowledge in biology when I first started, so I really appreciated Susan’s and my other mentor’s patience with me.”

At the time, Susan Hayflick, M.D., was just starting out in her own career as a scientist and credits Dr. Taylor for helping her understand how to be a mentor. She recalls her very first graduate student fondly. “From a personal standpoint, we were figuring it all out together. He would show me his results, and together we would plan where we needed to go next with our project.” They were hunting for a specific human disease gene at a time when “it was incredibly hard to do,” said Dr. Hayflick. “This was before the Human Genome Project and all of its gene mapping and discovery tools – when that was still a challenging scientific problem.”

Dr. Taylor created tools that facilitated the painstaking work of localizing the gene to a chromosomal region. “He brought a level of creativity and energy to the work, in ways that made it a more fun and interesting project,” Dr. Hayflick recalled.

“I remember he paged me on a Monday afternoon, which was really unusual for a student to do,” she said. “I came to the lab and he showed me his discovery.” They were looking for the gene for a rare genetic disease called PKAN – a degenerative disease of the brain that can lead to Parkinson disease, dystonia, dementia and ultimately death. “It was *his* work that got us to the gene’s general location and allowed us to pivot and actually find it,” said Dr. Hayflick.

Shortly thereafter, Dr. Taylor and his now family of three moved back to Japan where he found a job at RIKEN, a major scientific research center, working with the main group of scientists toiling on the sequencing phase of the Human Genome Project. He spent the next five years assembling and analyzing three human chromosomes. After the Human Genome Project was completed in 2003, he extended his genomic research expertise to other species, including chimpanzees and mice. Over time, computer-driven capabilities advanced the field in remarkable ways, making it possible to sequence genomes anywhere, in any environment – including the human microbiome. In 2008, he and several scientists from the Human Genome Project formed the International Human Microbiome Consortium (IHMC), a research collaboration that brings together the most renowned scientists and researchers in the microbiota field.

As Dr. Taylor’s career wound down at RIKEN in 2020, he continued to maintain connections with the microbiome lab as a visiting scientist. He’s still on the steering committee for the IHMC and works with post-doc students who are researching the relationship between gut microbes and immunology.

Dr. Taylor also continues to give lectures a couple times a year on the Human Genome Project. He laughs when he says “Now I talk with students who weren’t even born before the Human Genome Project was finished. With current computers and sequencing technology, they could probably do my Ph.D. in a week!” While that may be true, students today continue to use the laboratory techniques that Taylor helped pioneer at the dawn of the genetic revolution. – *Karen Bishop* [@](#)



# Cartographer of Cardiology

Dr. Aslan maps the biology of blood in hopes of developing better therapeutics for vascular conditions.

**JOSEPH ASLAN, PH.D. '09, M.S. '12**  
EARLY CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

In high school, Dr. Joseph Aslan discovered a liking for science, specifically chemistry and biology, but he found a passion for the lab life at UC Berkeley. He worked for two years as an undergraduate researcher before graduating with a degree in biochemistry and molecular biology in 2000. He stayed two more years at Berkeley, working as a staff researcher before traveling north to graduate school at OHSU, lured by the stellar neuroscience coming out of the Vollum Institute. In 2009, he earned a Ph.D. in neurobiology.

Initially, Dr. Aslan planned to continue studying molecular neuroscience, he says, but during a postdoctoral fellowship in the bioengineering lab of Owen McCarty, Ph.D., he alighted on his life's work: the mystery of blood cells.

"I quickly became interested in platelet biology because there was a lot of work to do in terms of understanding how proteins and signaling pathways in platelets relate to health and disease," said Dr. Aslan, now an assistant professor of medicine in the school's Division of Cardiovascular Medicine.

Today, Dr. Aslan is a rising star cardiovascular scientist who

“

He works tirelessly at his craft.

– Dr. Owen McCarty

uses state-of-the-art proteomics and computational biology tools to map the critical relationships between signaling pathways in platelets and other immune cells in order to improve treatments for vascular diseases.

"He works tirelessly at his craft," observed Dr. McCarty.

In a notable study published last year in the *American Journal of Physiology-Cell Physiology*, the Aslan Lab was the first to define the effects of kinase inhibitors on platelets.

"As signaling proteins in blood cells, spleen tyrosine kinase (Syk) and Bruton's tyrosine kinase (BTK) help orchestrate inflammation and immunity as well as blood clotting or hemostasis," explained Dr. Aslan. "Over the past decade, several different inhibitor drugs against Syk and BTK have been approved to treat inflammatory and immune disorders as well as hematologic malignancies. But they can have bleeding-related complications."

Why and how? his lab wondered. Through a clever approach to comparing different inhibitors, the research team uncovered the physiological mechanisms by which these agents interfere with platelet signaling and function. The nationally recognized work helps address a growing need to better understand the effects of such compounds on our molecular machinery in order to reduce unwanted complications.

One secret to Dr. Aslan's success is his collaborative style. "Joe truly understands how collaboration opens up new avenues and moves the science forward," said colleague Norah Verbout, Ph.D. '08. – *Rachel Shafer* [@](#)

“

Anthony has proven himself to be an outstanding collaborator who easily synthesizes input from a diverse group of people to solve problems and make decisions.

– Dr. Heather Angier

## Bringing His Whole Self into the Room

Dr. Cheng's leadership skills are just a part of who he is.

**ANTHONY CHENG, M.D. R '16**  
EARLY CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

When COVID-19 hit in March 2020, Dr. Anthony Cheng, assistant professor of family medicine in the school, remembers how quickly hierarchies flattened and silos fell apart.

Practically overnight OHSU became collaborative and nimble, he says, drawing upon the expertise of people from all over the organization and around the world.

"In many ways, it was an exhilarating time," Dr. Cheng said. "I felt grateful for being able to translate the fear and anxiety I felt about the pandemic into something productive."

While many people could call their primary care physician (PCPs) for advice about the new disease, Dr. Cheng knew that 25% of Oregonians don't have a PCP. "Maybe they live in an underserved rural area, maybe they have limited English proficiency, or they're hesitant to enroll in care due to their immigration status," he said. By establishing a hotline and virtual care service, those patients would be served, too.

As fate would have it, Dr. Cheng had already been leading the development of OHSU's virtual visit services. His expertise prompted the primary care team to recruit him as the founding medical director of what would become the COVID-19

Connected Care Center, (C4). Under his leadership, the C4 was fully funded and operational in only ten days. "Anthony is someone whose contributions in response to COVID-19 have been extraordinary and life-saving," said Jennifer DeVoe, M.D., professor and chair of family medicine.

The experience taught Dr. Cheng what it means to be a leader. "Before, I thought a leader was someone who looked, talked and dressed a certain way, but I came to realize a leader is anyone who convenes and connects people, organizes the work and gathers a team to accomplish a goal," he explained. "I realized I like to lead."

His commitment to inclusion, he says, stems from knowing what it's like to feel like an outsider. As a child of a Chinese mom and American dad growing up in Hershey, Pa., he was conscious of being different than other kids. This perspective drives him to think outside the box and strive to truly understand his patients. He also tries to shine a light on areas of medicine that are more on the margins, like LGBTQ+ care, addiction medicine and geriatrics.

As one of two inaugural Diversity Navigators in the M.D. program, Dr. Cheng also provides support and mentoring to medical students who request it. "The idea is to support a more diverse workforce by making sure, as physicians develop their identities, they don't leave behind who they are," said Cheng. "It's when physicians bring their whole selves into the room that they are at their best." – *Karen Bishop* [@](#)



AARON BIELECK



AARON BIELECK



# Sending Out Ripples of Care

Dr. Hollander-Rodriguez is a strong voice for rural communities.

**JOYCE HOLLANDER-RODRIGUEZ, M.D. '00 R '03**  
**ESTHER POHL LOVEJOY LEADERSHIP AWARD**

Dr. Joyce Hollander-Rodriguez grew up in a small rural community in Western Oregon, so it's not a surprise that her life's work focuses on rural and community health.

But it wasn't such a straight line – when Dr. Hollander-Rodriguez's family traveled to India and spent time overseas, she was struck by the vastness of poverty and suffering she saw. She always wanted to be of service to people, and her first thought was to do that work internationally.

But she came back to a rural setting when she did her family medicine residency at OHSU's Cascades East campus in Klamath Falls. "I realized that there was a lot of need, and a lot of the same barriers right here," she said, like geographic, language, financial and cultural barriers to care.

Now, as Cascades East's residency director, Dr. Hollander-Rodriguez gets to see the ripple effect of rural health education across the state and beyond.

“

There is no greater advocate for rural health care and education than Joyce.

– Dr. Holly Montjoy

"We're training providers to meet their patients where they're at – to be creative and develop self-efficacy so they can provide excellent care in areas with scarce resources," she explained.

"Not only that, but we're training them to go out and train others to do the same," she said. "As we work to get more rural residency programs across Oregon and the country, you'll see graduates of our program running those programs. That's really rewarding."

Cascades East boasts a large percentage – around 80% – of graduates who continue their careers in rural health. That success is just part of what earned Dr. Hollander-Rodriguez this year's Lovejoy Award.

"She is a fierce leader within our community," said Holly Montjoy, M.D., assistant professor and associate residency director of family medicine at Cascades East. "There is no greater advocate for rural health care and education than Joyce."

The list of boards and committees Dr. Hollander-Rodriguez serves on is long. She's a strong voice for rural communities at OHSU, say peers, and a trusted one for OHSU's mission of teaching and learning in Klamath Falls.

She doesn't take all the credit for this honor, though. "I'm so grateful for all the people I lean on," said Dr. Hollander-Rodriguez. "I'm standing on the shoulders of all the amazing people who created this program – this sort of success is never a solo effort." – *Amber Hollingsworth* [@](#)



BEN VALLEJOS



AARON BIELECK

“

He's had a vision for the institute and took bold steps to achieve that.

– Dr. John Morrison

# The Future of Ophthalmology is Bright

Dr. Wilson sees the promise of what lies ahead for the Casey Eye Institute.

**DAVID J. WILSON, M.D. R '85**  
**CHARLES A. PREUSS DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD**

After 17 years as director of the Casey Eye Institute, Dr. David Wilson is retiring July 1, leaving behind a very accomplished legacy. "As chairman and director, he's had a vision for the institute and took bold steps to achieve that," said long-time colleague and friend John Morrison, M.D. "There are 85 faculty members at Casey, and Dave has somehow managed to keep everyone moving in the same direction while allowing them to still work toward their personal goals. It's a real tribute to his ability to work with people and recognize their strengths."

Dr. Wilson views himself like a movie producer, he says, providing resources for the science superstars on his team, and supporting them in their starring roles. And by all standards, Casey Eye has become a world-class institute under his leadership, with innovative gene and cell-based therapy programs that will play a big role in the future of treating eye disease. "Any place you look, there's been substantial growth in all areas with him as director," said Jan Meriwether, associate director of the Casey Eye Institute. "He's always looking ahead toward opportunities for the future success of Casey. He's a visionary."

But caring for patients is at the heart of what motivates Dr.

Wilson. "Treating severe eye disease is an aspect of medicine that really highlights the importance of trust in a provider, and professionalism in medicine," said Dr. Wilson. His greatest academic interest is eye pathology and examining tissues to understand the diseases. He especially loves doing retinal surgery, and he even pioneered a type of surgery for specific, rare eye tumors that if left untreated lead to blindness.

Dr. Wilson is also extremely proud of the community outreach programs at Casey, including efforts to screen adults and children across Oregon for eye disease. "That's a real forward-looking way to practice medicine," he said. "If I have a regret, it's that I'm going to be retired before I see the programs at their full glory."

In retirement, Dr. Wilson hopes to spend more time making ceramics on his potter's wheel or being out on his road bike. You might even see him on the Tour de Casey, a Wilson-organized bike tour of all the Casey clinical locations in Oregon and southwest Washington, including five in Portland, and in Hood River, The Dalles, Vancouver and Astoria.

Dr. Wilson keeps his eyes on the road ahead. "I've always been a person to not dwell on the past, but really the future – the future is the fascinating part of medicine." – *Karen Bishop*



# Reflections on Today's Work Life

Comics by Jason McDermott,  
Ph.D. '00, @RedPen/Black Pen

"I've always doodled, but I never considered myself to be an artist," said Pacific Northwest National Laboratory computational scientist Jason McDermott, Ph.D. '00.

"Then one day a colleague made a metaphor that struck me so well, I had to draw it out. Great metaphors make great comics. When I posted it online, I received such positive feedback, I wanted to create more."

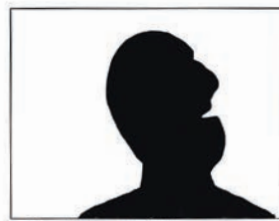
Since then, the comic artist has posted hundreds of his creations to his Twitter account @RedPen/BlackPen, which has over 20,000 followers. Dr. McDermott's comics depict all aspects of science, including research culture and experimental results, and have been featured in both mainstream media and scientific journals, like *Science* and *PLOS Computational Biology*.

@redpenblackpen

## Common Zoom Looks



Where's that button?



Checking Twitter on a second monitor



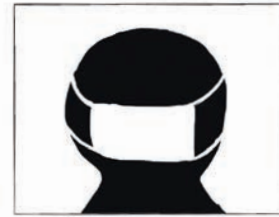
DIY standup desk



Deep in thought (or asleep)



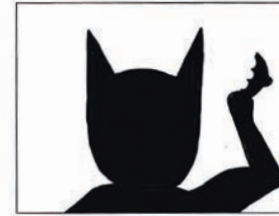
Forgot about camera



Social distancing champ



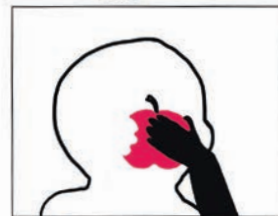
Oh Haha! The wacky hat guy



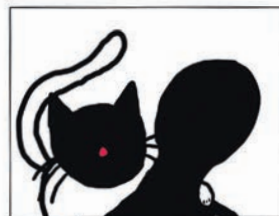
I'm Batman



Cutting own hair



Munch, munch



Pet coworker



Outdoorsy



Runaway beard



Too far away



Too close



Disorienting virtual background



Well-caffeinated



Multi-tasker

## Deities of the Work From Home Pantheon



Our Lady of the Side Wine



Snackus, god of Stress eating



Snüz, goddess of afternoon zzzz's



Fluffus, god of LOOK AT ME NOW HOOMAN



Stretch, god of comfy pants

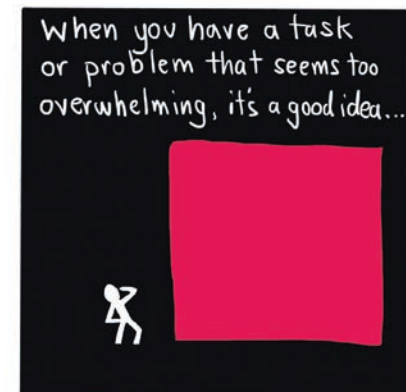


Netta, goddess of network connectivity



Scalos, god of work-life imbalance

## Productivity is a Lie



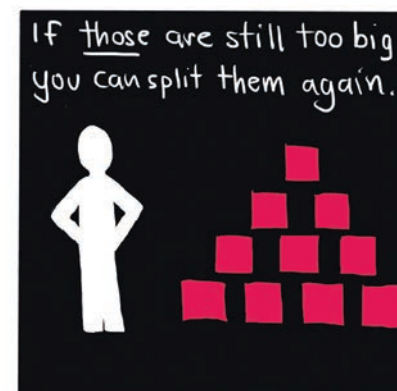
When you have a task or problem that seems too overwhelming, it's a good idea...



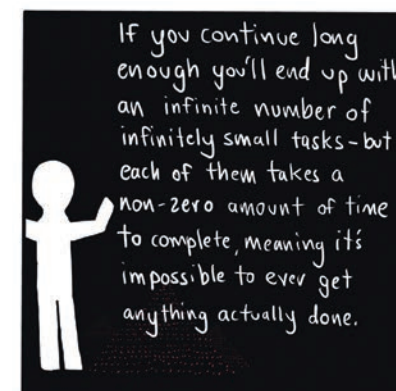
...to split it into smaller, more manageable parts.



If those are still too big you can split them again.



If those are still too big you can split them again.



If you continue long enough you'll end up with an infinite number of infinitely small tasks-but each of them takes a non-zero amount of time to complete, meaning it's impossible to ever get anything actually done.



You're welcome.



# Hi! We're Your New Alumni Engagement Team, At Your Service



## BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF ALUMNI

Clockwise, from top left: Craig Swinyard, Hayden Rahn, Anna Lageson, Mark Kemball and Kasey Stombaugh.



As the OHSU Foundation's new senior director of alumni engagement, Craig Swinyard says his goal is to help alumni engage with each other, with current students and with the university. To understand the wants and needs of alumni, Swinyard and his team have met with alumni leaders, engaged in personal one-on-one outreach and conducted an all-alumni survey. With over 20,000 graduates of the School of Medicine alone, there are countless alumni interests represented within the alumni community. Swinyard's team is excited to provide more consistent and diverse opportunities for alumni to pursue these interests. Two new opportunities offered this year include the School of

Medicine Alumni Association's Timely Topics webinar series and the virtual OHSU Alumni Book Club (see p. 23 calendar section).

Before coming to OHSU, Swinyard spent more than a decade as an associate professor of mathematics and several years as director of alumni and parent relations at his alma mater. In his new role, Swinyard is driven to absorb and understand OHSU's history and traditions. He is just as driven by his life goal of running a marathon in every state in the U.S. To date, he has finished 22 marathons in 19 states.

Mark Kemball has contributed to community building at OHSU for nearly 30 years, first working in OHSU's Community Relations office and then in communications for the School of Medicine. He has spent the past 11 years as OHSU's alumni director. He is a relationship builder as well as his team's source for all aspects of OHSU history and culture. Kemball advises and supports all of OHSU's alumni boards and councils. Outside of the OHSU community, this man of diverse skills has hiked the Inca Trail in Peru and conducted a university chamber choir at Disneyland.

Anna Lageson recently joined the team as associate director of digital alumni engagement. After 12 years with the University of Portland's marketing and communications team, Lageson is focused on meeting and listening to OHSU alumni tell their stories. When she isn't storytelling, Lageson is often jamming with musician friends. In her early years, she handled lead guitar and vocals in an all-female rock trio, gigging at Satyricon, Key Largo and other Portland venues.

Kasey Stombaugh joined OHSU in 2018, working first in development and currently as alumni engagement specialist. She is a multi-tasking, multi-talented, puzzle-solving teammate. But when she is not keeping all aspects of the office flowing smoothly, she might be mistaken for an adrenaline junky, having bungee jumped off the Stratosphere Hotel in Las Vegas and gone ziplining, skydiving, cave spelunking and whitewater rafting.

As the newest member of the team, Assistant Director of Alumni Engagement Hayden Rahn spent six years nurturing the development and growth of a national fraternal organization at colleges and universities. Rahn is now focused on experiential engagement and building community at OHSU, helping alumni organize their class reunions and connecting with current students as they transition into the larger alumni community. He is also committed to visiting every state in the union by the age of 30, and has only five to go.

Swinyard wants it known that if alumni have ideas for a gathering, event or continuous learning, "we value your perspective! Please contact us at [alumni@ohsu.edu](mailto:alumni@ohsu.edu). The alumni engagement team is here for you, so you can be there for each other." – Anna Lageson

## Opportunities Aboard with Your Alumni Council

Change is in the air! The School of Medicine Alumni Association Council seeks your help as it transitions from a committee structure to alumni engagement through work groups. The new work groups will oversee and accomplish a single, time-delimited task; most work group activity is open to all alumni via remote meetings. Work groups are currently forming around Awards, Admissions, Career Advising and Students Today Alumni Tomorrow programming. Email [alumni@ohsu.edu](mailto:alumni@ohsu.edu) to learn more.

## Participate in the M.D. Admissions Process

Are you able to help the school assess future physicians? The M.D. Program Admissions Office is looking for volunteers to become raters of M.D. program applicants in the multiple mini interview (MMI), a series of short interviews with standardized scenarios and questions. Volunteers should be physicians (practicing or retired), providers, nurses, scientists or others with a connection to the health care field.

Volunteers commit to a minimum of four sessions (more if possible) of rating applicants between August



## Happy 25 Years, PA Program!

### MAJOR MILESTONE

This year, the PA Program celebrates the 25th anniversary of its first graduating class, pictured here at graduation on September 12, 1997. Front row, left to right: Rachelle Waldron, Connie (Barry) Strong, M.P.A.S. '97, Laura Hanks, M.P.A.S., PA-C, Dorthe Leth, M.P.A.S. '97, Brian Lauf, M.P.A.S. '97, Kurt Atkin, M.P.A.S. '97, Kristi Skoog, M.P.A.S. '97, Ted Ruback, M.S., PA-C Emeritus, Colleen Schierholtz, M.S., Susan Bauman, M.P.A.S. '97. Back row, left to right: Maria Fogg, M.P.A.S. '97, Bruce Goldberg, M.D., Jeff Melnick, PA-C, Eric Moen, M.P.A.S. '97, Ronald Holmes, M.P.A.S. '97, Chris McGlothlen, M.P.A.S. '97, Rob Soans, M.P.A.S. '97, Pat Kenney-Moore, M.S., Ed.D., PA-C, Juanita Moore.

2022 and March 2023. Volunteers can select the days that work best for them. Each session is 3.5 to 4-hours long and primarily on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. The scoring is completed during the session, and there is minimal

preparation required ahead of time. This cycle, all MMIs will be virtual, including a virtual training process. For additional information or to volunteer, please contact Kari Kriedberg at [mdinterviews@ohsu.edu](mailto:mdinterviews@ohsu.edu).



## Virtually Tour Historical Marquam Hill

Have you ever wondered what the Marquam Hill campus looked like when the very first building was constructed? Or where Doernbecher Children's Hospital was located when it opened in 1926? The OHSU Library's Historical Collections and Archives team is pleased to present a virtual Marquam Hill campus

### LOOKING BACK

Mackenzie Hall and the Marquam Hill campus with Mt. Hood in the background circa the 1960s.

history tour, created using the collaborative history application Clio. Access the tour at <https://theclio.com/tour/2028>.



Class Notes

WE WELCOME YOUR NEWS AND PHOTOS

Email alumni@ohsu.edu or write a note to *Bridges* Class Notes c/o Rachel Shafer, OHSU School of Medicine, 3181 S.W. Sam Jackson Park Rd., MC L102, Portland, OR 97239. Please write a maximum of 250 words and include your name, degree/training information and graduation/completion year. We may not be able to publish all items and may edit for length and clarity.

1980s

**James Nelson, M.D. ’82**, recently completed 25 years as a full-time staff member for the U.S. Army as an anesthesiologist at Madigan Army Medical Center near Lakewood, Wash. He is busy with outdoor activities, primarily road cycling and is currently preparing for the ‘Ride from Redmond to Bellingham and Back’ in August. Dogs Cinnamon and Nutmeg keep him active, and he assists his wife Dr. Teresa Jacobs with her practice in sleep medicine.

1990s

The *New England Journal of Medicine* published an essay entitled “Merging Mortalities” by **Sean Stitham, M.D. R ’90**. “That evening shift brought home to me the ever-narrowing gap between my age and those of my patients,” he wrote in the June 3, 2021, essay. “I’m healthy, but the odds of tumors or Parkinson’s disease or a catastrophic stroke relentlessly increase with age. I am not exempt.” Dr. Stitham is a hospitalist and medical director at Kaiser Permanente in Seattle, Wash.

2000s

**Laura Pompel Jordhen, M.D. ’01**, returned to the Pacific Northwest in December 2020 from Shanghai’s United Family Hospital, where she was chair of infection control before becoming chief of the hospital’s family medicine department. She continues to direct the “Tending the Flame” course on resiliency and work satisfaction for fellows. Dr. Jordhen started a new role as primary care provider for Daimler Trucks of North America in April 2022.

► **Pediatrician Travis Riddell, M.D./M.P.H. ’06**, was reappointed as the Teton District Health Officer for Teton County, Wyo, in December. He completed his pediatrics training at the Boston Combined Residency Program and was a teaching fellow at Boston University and a clinical fellow at Harvard before moving to Jackson Hole, Wyo. Dr. Riddell and his wife Annie have two children Case and Lauren. Dr. Riddell hikes, bikes, climbs and backcountry skis from the Teton Range to the Himalaya.



◀ **Carrie Tillotson, M.P.H. ’07**, released her debut picture book, *Counting to Bananas*, after working as a biostatistician for more than 10 years. “When I wrote this book, I kept thinking of my first day in my first epidemiology course when Dr. John Stull told us that the most basic thing that epidemiologists do is...‘epidemiologists count!’” she said. “Who knows? Kids learning to count today could be future epidemiologists!” She lives in Oregon with her husband and son, two dogs and two chickens.



2010s

**Paul DeMuro, M.B.I. ’10, Ph.D. ’12**, a biomedical informatics graduate, has joined Nossaman LLP in Austin, Texas, as an “of counsel” attorney. He was previously chief legal officer of health and wellness for the Royal Palm Companies in Miami, Fla.

**Jackie Wirz, Ph.D. ’10**, has been appointed the executive director of Donate Life Northwest. Dr. Wirz will lead the health care nonprofit to provide education, outreach and advocacy for organ, eye and tissue donation.

▼ **Stefanie Linch, Ph.D. ’11**, wrote, “Realizing that my passion for science and my general strengths were not most effectively used at the bench, I tried a number of different career paths – freelance manuscript editor, adjunct faculty, nonprofit grant writer and fundraiser and scientific writer. I’m currently focusing on team science and effective collaboration in cancer early detection as an associate scientist and facilitator at OHSU Knight Cancer Institute.”



► **Ryan Gardner, Ph.D. ’14**, wrote, “I was fortunate enough to land a role as a medical science liaison at Merz Therapeutics, which took me across the country to New York City where I still live with my wife, Miranda, and our two dogs Jack and Henry.”



◀ Since receiving his Ph.D. in behavioral neuroscience, **John Harkness, Ph.D. ’16**, founded Rewire Neuro, Inc., and has

led the company as its president and CEO. Dr. Harkness has been issued two patents for Rewire’s technology and helped Rewire successfully raise over \$2.5 million in funding from grant and early-stage investors. Dr. Harkness participated in an Alumni Career Development Panel for graduate students on March 1.

In Memoriam

**Cecille S. Beyl, M.D. R ’70**, of Upland, Calif., died Dec. 1, 2021, at age 86.

**Carol S. Bogardus, M.D. ’77 R ’80**, of Portland, Ore., died Jan. 30, 2022, at age 78.

**Larry T. Brice, M.D. ’63 R ’68 R ’69** of Battle Ground, Wash., died Dec. 14, 2021, at age 84.

**Gilbert W. Byers, M.D. ’52**, of Walnut Creek, Calif., died Feb. 1, 2022, at age 95.

**Alonzo D. Calhoun, M.D. R ’78**, of Albany, Ga., died Nov. 14, 2021, at age 78.

**Donald D. Denney, M.D. ’57 R ’62 R ’85** of Portland, Ore., died Feb. 27, 2022, at age 91.

**Tara D. Dixon, M.D. R ’07**, of Charlotte, N.C., died Jan. 18, 2022, at age 48.

**Noel L. Hoell, M.D. R ’65**, of Missoula, Mont., died Feb. 19, 2022, at age 82.

**Pamela M. Lasselle, B.S. ’67**, of Portland, Ore., died Nov. 26, 2021, at age 77.

**Larry J. Maukonen, M.D. R ’75**, of Medford, Ore., died Dec. 10, 2021, at age 76.

**Kenneth A. Solen, Ph.D. ’76**, of Orem, Utah, died Nov. 5, 2021, at age 74.

**Joan K. Tanner, M.D. ’66**, of Maple Valley, Wash., died Dec. 2, 2021, at age 96.

**David W. Wilder, M.D. ’66 R ’71** of Allison Park, Pa., died Jan. 7, 2022, at age 82.

Additional in memoriam entries are at [www.ohsu.edu/alumni](http://www.ohsu.edu/alumni).

Calendar

Events

OHSU Convocation and School of Medicine Hooding Ceremonies

JUNE 5

10 a.m.

OREGON CONVENTION CENTER, PORTLAND, OREGON

M.D. Class of 2025 White Coat Ceremony

JULY 8

5-7 p.m.

VIA LIVESTREAM:  
YOUTUBE.COM/USER/OHSUVIDEO/VIDEOS

M.D. Class of 2026 White Coat Ceremony

AUG. 12

10 a.m.–noon

VIA LIVESTREAM  
YOUTUBE.COM/USER/OHSUVIDEO/VIDEOS

New! Timely Topics

A new monthly webinar series presented by alumni for alumni. Join us for a discussion of issues that impact alumni, students and faculty. View upcoming webinars: [ohsufoundation.org/alumni/school-of-medicine/timely-topics/](https://ohsufoundation.org/alumni/school-of-medicine/timely-topics/).

New! OHSU Alumni Book Club Virtual Meet-ups

Join our virtual community as we read and discuss various book genres such as lifelong learning, personal growth, novels and other topics. Participation is free! Learn more and sign up at [www.pbc.guru/OHSU](http://www.pbc.guru/OHSU).

Continuing Professional Development

Infectious Disease for the Non-Specialist

JUNE 9–10

TIMBERLINE LODGE, ORE.

When Things Go Wrong in the Outdoors 2022

AUG. 19

TIMBERLINE LODGE, ORE.

17th Annual Northwest Regional Hospital Medicine Conference

SEPT. 22–23

SENTINEL HOTEL, PORTLAND, ORE.

Schedules are subject to change. Please contact 503-494-8700 or [cme@ohsu.edu](mailto:cme@ohsu.edu) for brochures and program updates. For the latest information on these and other continuing professional development events, visit [www.ohsu.edu/som/cme](http://www.ohsu.edu/som/cme).





Alumni Engagement Program  
2020 SW 4th Ave., Suite 900  
Portland, OR 97201

# You carry the *light* of hope

**OHSU School of Medicine alumni** are healers, teachers, scientists, researchers and visionaries committed to improving lives through improving health care for our whole community. You listen with empathy, offer innovative treatment and continuously push for discoveries, seeking new methods to bring comfort and healing to all.

**The OHSU Alumni Engagement team** is committed to building a thriving alumni community by providing meaningful opportunities for you to connect and share your knowledge, passion, memories and friendship.

**We are here for you so you can be there for each other**

OHSU Alumni  
Engagement Program  
503-228-1730  
[alumni@ohsu.edu](mailto:alumni@ohsu.edu)  
[ohsufoundation.org/alumni](https://ohsufoundation.org/alumni)



ALUMNI  
ASSOCIATION