

From the Dean's desk

November 11, 2022



Dear colleagues and friends

I would like to start this message by extending my appreciation to our students, faculty and staff for the positive and strong drive you have been investing to ensure our academic year is successful and uplifting!

I plan for this communication to be a personal venue to stay in regular touch with the family of the Wayne State University School of Medicine and its friends, and to provide them with updates on the progress of our key initiatives. While a major focus for the next several months will continue to be the diligent preparations

for the regularly-scheduled site visit by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, other important parallel tracks led by teams within the school have also been in high gear. This newsletter will highlight school initiatives that range from key features and timelines of the school's strategic plan to updates on our programs, partnerships and website, as well as share glimpses of our student, faculty and alumni achievements. ■

Wael Sakr, M.D.

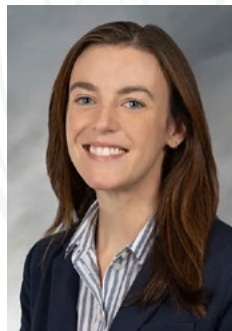
OUR STUDENTS CORNER



Meet the president of the Student Senate

Cullen Hudson started his role as executive senate president in April. Before accepting the position, he established himself as a strong student advocate as the Class of 2024 president and Executive Senate vice president. Assuming these responsibilities allows Cullen

to form great relationships with the administration and faculty, while continuously providing each with a comprehensive student perspective. ■



Jenna Carter, M.D./Ph.D. candidate in the Cancer Biology program, was awarded the prestigious Predoctoral Fellowship in Cancer Research from the DeRoy Testamentary Foundation. The academic award covers tuition and a stipend for the academic year as well as additional funds for research purposes. Jenna continues to be an active contributor to many School of Medicine drives and initiatives. ■



Samantha Heldman, Pharmacology Ph.D. student, won first place for her talk, "Identification of Liquid Crystal Monomers and their Mixtures as Novel Metabolism Disrupting Chemicals," at the annual Michigan Regional Chapter of the Society of Toxicology Conference. ■



Aarti Patel received the Outstanding New Policy Leader Award. This award highlights a new member who is a rising star within the American Medical Association-Medical Student Section and has shown outstanding involvement. Aarti shows great potential for future contributions to AMA and MSS. ■



DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHT

The Department of Biochemistry, Microbiology & Immunology's 2022 retreat provided a great opportunity for more than 50 new and old students, alumni, faculty, and other members and friends of the department to socialize and enjoy exciting stories of scientific adventures underway in departmental laboratories. Faculty talks ranged from protein biochemistry to structural biology, microbial biology and recent breakthroughs in immunology. Twenty students contributed to overview posters from departmental laboratories on subjects that included development of novel antivirals for treatment of SARS-CoV-2 infections, and the pathogenesis of *Vibrio cholerae*, an internationally important pathogen.

A special feature of this year's retreat was the participation of several recent department alumni, all of whom provided entertaining and informed talks about their professional trajectories (biotech, research and education) since their graduation, plus meaningful doses of sound and often humorous advice. The food was good, and the fellowship was better. ■



FACULTY PROFILE



Juliann Binienda, Ph.D., professor of Family Medicine and Public Health Sciences, was awarded a \$1.5 million, three-year grant from the United States Department of Health and Human Services to offer M.P.H. program tuition-based scholarships to current public health workforce employees and health professional students, including those training

in medicine and nursing. The goal of the program is to increase the capacity in public health systems to meet core public health functions and the Ten Essential Public

Health Services. Dr. Binienda will work with two co-investigators, Assistant Professor and M.P.H. Program Director Rachel Mahas, Ph.D., M.P.H., and M.P.H. Practicum Course Director Michael McLeod, J.D., M.P.H. Together they will expand field experience opportunities, enhance interprofessional collaborations, design new courses addressing emergency responsiveness and offer additional culturally-appropriate communication skills training in efforts to reduce health disparities and improve the overall public health in our community. "We are excited to expand our M.P.H. program by offering these scholarship awards to students who would otherwise be unable to pursue graduate training because of cost. We are also supporting the mission of the university by strengthening and diversifying our community partnerships, working together to reduce health disparities in the metropolitan Detroit community," Dr. Binienda said. ■

OUR ALUMNI



John Carethers, M.D. '89, was named vice chancellor for Health Sciences at the University of California San Diego. He is returning to UC San Diego after a 13-year tenure at the University of Michigan, where he served as the C. Richard Boland Distinguished University Professor and the John

G. Searle Professor and chair of the Department of Internal Medicine. ■



Lydia Watson, M.D. '84, was named president and chief executive officer of MyMichigan Health, effective Dec. 1. She currently serves as senior vice president and chief medical officer of MyMichigan Health. Before joining the administrative

staff for MyMichigan in 2013, Dr. Watson cared for thousands of women as a practicing obstetrician-gynecologist at the Medical Center in Midland. ■

FROM SCHOOL'S PARTNERS

Wayne State University finalized an agreement with Wayne County to partner in the operation of the county Medical Examiner's Office.

The agreement became effective Oct. 1. Through this new partnership, we aspire to provide a national model for comprehensive forensic services for Wayne County in a close collaboration with several WSU key health science colleges and programs. We plan to leverage the contributions and efforts of the School of Medicine, the College of Nursing, the Eugene Applebaum School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, and the School of Social Work. A key component is the establishment of the School of Medicine fellowship training in forensic pathology through the Department of Pathology. We will train highly competent forensic pathologists and

contribute to the long-term plan to alleviate the regional and national shortage in this key specialty. In a parallel tract and through the Eugene Applebaum School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, we will train pathologists assistants as well as specialists in mortuary sciences, toxicology and related fields.

We also will provide social services support through direct interactions with families and relatives. The partnership will also leverage data and findings to enhance the knowledge and plans toward better public health standards for residents of Wayne County and beyond. ■

