

Celebrating 10 years of homegrown health care

Annual Report 2025



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
Elson S. Floyd
College of Medicine



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Message from Dean Record

“The level of our success is limited only by our imagination.”

—Aesop

What a momentous year it has been for the WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine.

We had the honor and privilege to celebrate a remarkable milestone: our tenth anniversary. It’s amazing to see how far we have come during this journey and recognize the collaborative vision, dedication, and stewardship that brought us here.

Our college was founded on the bold and audacious vision of the late WSU President Elson S. Floyd to develop a regional hub for health care education in eastern Washington and change a 100-year-old law—and, in doing so, make a difference in the delivery, quality, affordability, and access to health care for Washingtonians and beyond.

Today, we are fulfilling this vision. We are fostering an environment of academic excellence and continuous improvement. We are training more health care leaders, preparing them with the skills necessary to succeed and fill critical national and state shortages. Our faculty, residents, and students are advancing the frontiers of

medical science, shaping the global health landscape. Through our community-based education and clinical care models, our residents and students are receiving quality training and delivering patient-centered care to Washington’s communities.

We are making a difference—addressing health provider shortages, driving research, improving care access, and collaborating with communities to transform their well-being beyond hospital walls. But though we are making progress, we recognize that our work is far from complete. Our communities continue to face significant and evolving health care challenges, and we are ready to tackle them.

Doing so will require us to overcome barriers with a strength of purpose, embrace new strategies, and remember Dr. Floyd’s legacy: that anything is possible if you have the imagination and drive to make it so. That is what it means to be a College of Medicine Coug.

We are committed to becoming a transformational force for improving health and embracing possibility.

Our community deserves nothing less.

With deep gratitude,



James M. Record, MD, JD, FACP

Dean



Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine Celebrates Tenth Anniversary

More Than 1,000 Health Care Professionals Graduated

Ten years ago, WSU planted a bold idea: a medical school created for and with Washington’s communities. Some said it couldn’t be done. But guided by the unwavering vision of late WSU President Elson S. Floyd, WSU showed that purpose and passion could overcome even century-old barriers—and change lives.

The college marked its tenth anniversary on April 1, 2025, in memory of the day Washington’s legislature cleared the path for its creation in 2015. But its roots go deeper, stretching back across years and distance to the many communities across the state that rallied behind Dr. Floyd’s

vision to transform medical education and health care in Washington state.

Many of these same supporters—community and legislative partners, alumni, faculty, staff, and students—gathered to celebrate a decade of homegrown health care at the April 1 event. WSU Regent Marty Dickinson and City of Spokane Mayor and former WSU Spokane Chancellor Lisa Brown spoke about the immense amount of community support it took to not only advocate for legislative change, but also to fundraise for the college’s future.



1,000+

health professions graduates

\$176.6+

million cumulative total research awards

319

new medical doctors graduated

10%

of first MD class returning as community faculty

62%

of first MD class practicing or planning to practice in Washington*

**Percentages represent survey respondents only*



“Don’t you underestimate the caliber of doctors the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine has already graduated and will graduate. The state of Washington will be better because of your work.”

—Carmiento Floyd

“People came together from all corners of the state who believed in expanding the capacity of health science research and medical education,” Brown recalled.

Since its inception, the college has grown a statewide, community-based educational system that has graduated more than 1,000 homegrown health care professionals, including 319 medical doctors. Many of these graduates have gone on to serve as health care providers in Washington, helping to meet critical needs.

The significance of these newly minted health care leaders has not been lost on those who helped found the college.

“WSU students are the future health care leaders, and they serve community health care issues in rural and underserved areas. I happen to live in one of those types of communities,” Monica Tonasket, Spokane Tribal Council member, said at the celebration. “What would it look like

to have access to adequate health care? This has been a question plaguing my community for generations. WSU has paved the way for the continued growth of our health care needs in the communities that need it.”

Tonasket shared meaningful moments she’s been able to share with the medical students, such as the opportunity to place blankets around the college’s first Native American MD graduate and later graduates, including her niece.

Dr. Floyd didn’t live to see his vision of Cougar doctors realized, though his widow, Carmiento Floyd, has been part of the college’s journey for the past ten years.

“Elson saw greatness in Washington State University, and he was joined by many other like-minded individuals who saw his vision and the need for the medical college,” she said in a speech. “Without you, there would be no Elson S. Floyd legacy.”



“Washington State University has worked to serve the needs of our state, nation, and world for 125 years, and successful development of a medical school is one more way for us to improve the health and well-being of Washingtonians.”

—Elson S. Floyd, PhD
Tenth WSU president

Cassidy MacArthur, MD, Class of 2022 graduate, is part of that legacy. She was drawn to medicine after losing her father due to a lack of timely medical care. Once she completes her training in physical medicine and rehabilitation in Spokane, she will become the first fellowship-trained spinal cord injury specialist practicing in eastern Washington.

“Spokane is my home,” she said to the group. “The people here are my people, and I will dedicate my career to serving them, advocating for them, and making sure that no one is left behind or forgotten when it comes to health care.”

MacArthur’s commitment to improving health care access echoed strongly with Carmento Floyd’s impassioned call: “Don’t you underestimate the caliber of doctors the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine has already graduated and will graduate. The state of Washington will be better because of your works.”

The college continues to honor Elson S. Floyd’s legacy and make an impact in medical and clinical education and service to communities across our state. The college’s research enterprise keeps progressing, tackling some of

the most pressing challenges in health, such as developing early interventions for children with autism spectrum disorder and exploring leading-edge methods to address substance use and mental health.

These initiatives are not merely academic and educational practices; the college is making discoveries and providing care that changes lives, today and for the future.

As Dean Record reminded the gathered crowd: “We’re just getting started.”



Learn more about our history!
medicine.wsu.edu/10year







The Art and Science of Speech and Hearing: A Department with 100 Years of History

From the theater stage of the Roaring Twenties to the twenty-first-century speech-language pathology clinic, Washington State University's Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences has evolved over the past century from an art to a science.

The department traces its roots to 1925, when Professor Maynard Lee Daggy, namesake for Daggy Hall on the Pullman campus, established WSU's first Department of Speech in the School of Fine Arts.

"We've been here since the beginning," said Professor Emerita Gail Chermak, PhD, who served as department chair from 1990 to 2021. "That longevity speaks volumes—not just about our value to the university and to the clinical communities we serve, but also about the value of an education in speech and hearing sciences."

A Century of Communication: From Elocution to Evidence-Based Practice

Soon after arriving at WSU, Daggy reorganized the existing “oral expression” courses into three new units: Theatre Arts and Drama, Rhetoric and Communication Studies, and Communication Disorders, the latter being the forerunner of the modern Speech and Hearing Sciences department. The nascent field of “speech correction” coalesced into a national association in the same period, reflecting a growing interest in the topic.

“Speech is the most salient aspect of communication—it’s what people notice first,” said Professor Amy Meredith, PhD, CCC-SLP, chair from 2021 to 2025. “In the early days, an emphasis on elocution and ‘correct speech’ was a catalyst for our profession.”

World War II brought more students to the school and accelerated the development of speech pathology as a distinct field of health care. In keeping with these shifts, the department’s Communication Disorders unit began to adopt an increasingly clinical approach to addressing speech and language disorders and hired its first faculty trained in speech pathology.

Students gained hands-on experience at the department’s state-of-the-art Communication Disorders Clinic and later through a partnership with a private clinic in Spokane, which would grow into a regional hub for medical education and specialized health care. The program received

“Joining the College of Medicine allowed us to grow and collaborate more effectively across clinically focused disciplines.”

—Gail Chermak, PhD
Professor emerita and chair, 1990–2021

accreditation by the mid-1970s, now granting master’s degrees in speech pathology and audiology.

A New Identity and Academic Expansion: Speech and Hearing Sciences

By the late 1980s, the speech department’s more artistic and scientific units had diverged to the point of restructuring, with theatre and drama joining the School of Music and rhetoric and media courses migrating to what is now the Edward R. Murrow College of Communication.

In 1987, the department was renamed Speech and Hearing Sciences in recognition of the discipline’s increasingly





comprehensive approach to the science of human communication.

That same year, WSU and Eastern Washington University began a 35-year partnership to expand educational and research programming in health care fields in Spokane. Outgrowing Daggy Hall in Pullman, the department began to consolidate its programs at WSU's growing Spokane campus, training students in a variety of clinical settings in the surrounding city.

Joining the College of Medicine: New Era, New Possibilities

The most recent decade has marked a shift for the department and opened new opportunities for clinical and community initiatives.

In 2015, Speech and Hearing Sciences became the founding department of WSU's newly created Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine. After an itinerant path through WSU's administrative divisions, the department found its home alongside cutting-edge medical education and

research to train speech-language pathologists and other professionals equipped to serve in an increasingly interprofessional health care landscape.

"Our colleagues in medicine understand us. We speak the same language," Chermak said. "Joining the College of Medicine allowed us to grow and collaborate more effectively across clinically focused disciplines."

The department now offers an array of academic programs that prepare students for impactful careers in clinical practice and research through community-based and on-campus clinical experiences. Faculty and students conduct innovative research on communication disorders across the lifespan, from autism and neurodevelopmental disorders in infants to aging-related changes to speech and swallowing.

"As we celebrate 100 years of excellence, we're not just looking back—we're looking forward to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead," said Associate Professor David Jenson, PhD, who took over as chair on July 7, 2025. "Our goal is to prepare the next generation of clinicians and researchers while continuing to evolve along with the needs of the communities we serve."

"Our goal is to prepare the next generation of clinicians and researchers while continuing to evolve with the needs of our communities."

—David Jenson, PhD
Associate professor and chair



By the Numbers

Educational Highlights

9

degrees
and
certificates
offered

235+

medical
education
clinical
affiliates



24

specialities
taught by
clinical
sciences
faculty

Faculty and Staff

385

full-time
faculty
and staff

2000+

community faculty for
graduate and undergraduate
medical education programs



Research

\$92 million

in active award line research funding



Student Body

306

Medical Program students

58

Graduate Medical Education residents

51

Nutrition and Exercise Physiology students

89

Speech and Hearing Sciences students

12

Certificate students



Philanthropy Impact

“A Hand Up”: The Harold R. Brown Endowed Scholarship Shares Legacy of Service

The Harold R. Brown Scholarship at the WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine is deeply rooted in the simple yet profound philanthropic philosophy of its founder: help people who have the ability, but lack the resources, to make a difference.

As the college’s largest endowed fund, the scholarship is a transformative investment in the future of health and in students from a range of backgrounds and rural communities.

“Our students come from a range of backgrounds, many from the rural Washington communities who desperately need greater access to health care,” WSU College of Medicine Dean James Record said. “The Brown Foundation’s gift provides these students with the opportunity to get an education and be a catalyst for change in these same communities.”

Harold Brown, a self-made entrepreneur and Korean War veteran, built his own construction company from the ground up. Starting with just \$2,500 and three employees, including his mother, with an office behind his grandmother’s house, Brown grew the company into a successful enterprise that spanned western America.

Despite his financial success, Brown remained humble and deeply loyal to those he worked with. His humanism and enduring commitment to help give others a “hand up” guided his lifelong philanthropy, which continues through the work of the Harold R. Brown Foundation after his passing.

The foundation itself is a testament to Brown’s commitment to people. He delegated its management to lifelong



colleagues and friends Ronald Mandell and Leon Janks, as well as his nephew, Timothy Murray.

“Harold was looking for people who needed some assistance to reach their full potential,” Janks recalled. “We have the honor of giving away money in legacy of what Harold would have wanted.”

The decision to support the young WSU medical school began with Murray, a long-time WSU professor who has lived in Washington for nearly 50 years. He recognized the opportunity to make a significant impact in a region facing acute shortages of health care professionals. The trustees were also drawn to the college’s focus on rural communities and Tribal Nations as well as its commitment to train physicians from Washington who could one day serve in the communities they call home.

“I appreciate the challenges that rural areas face in terms of needing medical professionals,” Murray said. “This scholarship can not only impact a young medical school but help support health professionals who can meet that challenge.”

For trustees, this work is both a responsibility and a privilege. Watching scholarship recipients such as WSU medical student and scholarship recipient Destiny Vaisberg mature as a person and future health professional is both inspiring and uplifting.

“She started as a young student. Now she’s out doing rotations. It’s interesting and gratifying to have that opportunity,” Murray said.

“I appreciate the challenges that rural areas face in terms of needing medical professionals. This scholarship can not only impact a young medical school but help support health professionals who can meet that challenge.”

—Timothy Murray

Brown’s legacy of charitable giving spans far beyond WSU. He and the foundation support cancer research—Brown being a cancer survivor himself—through institutions like Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, funded scholarships at University of Southern California Law School and USC Norris Cancer Comprehensive Center, and contributed to the Blind Center of Nevada, where he served on the board. The foundation also supports food banks, wildfire relief efforts, and programs that mentor women and youth with challenging backgrounds.

At the College of Medicine, the Harold R. Brown Scholarship does more than fund education: it empowers future physicians to embody the values of integrity, humility, and hard work as they carry forward a legacy of purpose-driven service.

“It’s been one of the great honors of my life,” Mandell reflected. “What a great pleasure to do what we get to do.”

Now more than ever, our community informs and accelerates our ability to serve Washington through mission-centered education, research, and health care. This past year, we secured \$9.9M in philanthropic support—including \$2M for scholarships. Looking ahead, we are unwavering in our commitment to our mission and our students. Our scholarship endowment now stands at \$5.5M, up \$1.2M from last year.

As we look ahead, we drive toward our goal of reaching a \$25M scholarship endowment to meet the growing needs of our students. Every investment moves us closer to a future full of opportunity.

Total Funds Raised

\$9,906,106

Outright Gifts and
New Pledges

\$2,957,615

Other Contributions

\$141,450

Planned Gifts

\$2,943,878

Private Grants

\$3,517,638

Together, we are investing in future health care leaders who will serve Washington and beyond.

Thank you for being part of our inspiring mission.

Philanthropy Impact

Dr. Joel DeLisa PM&R Lectureship Empowers WSU's Next Generation of Health Care Leaders

For Joel DeLisa, MD, a proud Washington State University alum and international leader in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R), medicine was a career “that never should have happened.”

He grew up and graduated from high school with just 60 students in Buckley, Washington. A small, rural town near Mt. Rainier, Buckley had only one primary care physician, who devoted his life to serving his community.

DeLisa had a strong appreciation for hard work at an early age. His grandparents had immigrated through Ellis Island before going on to work in coal mines. Having lost their father to cancer at the early age of 42, he and his two younger siblings were raised by their mother.

“She strongly felt our future depended on education,” DeLisa recalled.

This belief became his compass, and DeLisa began working at age 11 to help fund his college education. A scholarship at WSU opened that door.

“That made all the difference,” DeLisa said.

At WSU, DeLisa found himself drawn to the medical field and immersed himself in study. He began working as a lab instructor in his third year and was able to graduate with no debt. These early experiences grounded DeLisa’s enduring commitment to furthering access and education for future physicians.

During his four years of medical school at the University of Washington, DeLisa met his wife-to-be, Janet Hopper DeLisa, who was working at Swedish Hospital Medical Center.



“I wanted other people who came from an underserved background to go into medicine. I would hope for them to go back to their communities to serve.”

—Joel DeLisa, MD
Washington State University alum

After medical school, DeLisa went on to complete an internship at St. Joseph's Hospital in Arizona. He was then drafted into the U.S. Army. Though it delayed his residency, the experience profoundly impacted his perspective, steering him toward preventive medicine and broad health care systems over individual patient care.

After two years in the military, he completed a three-year residency in PM&R at the University of Washington. He spent the next 12 years in the department, working alongside its founding chair, Justus Lehmann, MD, further honing this skillset.

DeLisa's career then took him to New Jersey, where he assumed several simultaneous leadership roles. He was the medical director of the Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation, founding director of the Kessler Foundation's Research Division, and the chair of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. These roles positioned him at the intersection of health care, research, and policy, though perhaps his greatest contribution to medicine is his textbook, *DeLisa's Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation: Principles and Practices*, first published in 1988 and now in its seventh edition. It remains a foundational resource in the field.

DeLisa remained committed to improving access to medical school, especially for those from rural communities. When WSU launched its medical school, he and Janet saw a chance to give back in a transformative way. In partnership with Providence St. Luke's Rehabilitation Medical Center, they established the DeLisa Lectureship and Continuing Education Fund in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation—the college's first lectureship.



The lectureship reflects a life guided by a belief in the importance of helping others succeed. From training medical students and residents to advocating for greater access to care, DeLisa's career has been defined by purpose and service.

"He trained everybody to succeed, whether one chose to serve clinically or to enter academic medicine," reflected Janet. "He treated them like they were family."

DeLisa retired at 70 and now lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Though they are no longer working in the medical field, the DeLisas continue to shape medicine through this new legacy.

"I never imagined something like this would bear my name, but I wanted other people who came from an underserved background to go into medicine," DeLisa said. "I would hope for them to go back to their communities to serve."



If you would like to learn more about giving opportunities at the college, please email give.medicine@wsu.edu.

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more stories.

Research

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94

active research projects



31

NIH-funded principal investigators



164+

research publications



Top 10

in National Institutes of Health (NIH) funded research amongst community-based medical schools*

**According to Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research data.*

Fiscal year 2024–25.

A New Chapter for a Global Leader in Sleep and Performance Research

WSU's Sleep and Performance Research Center (SPRC) welcomed new leadership and marked two decades of groundbreaking research with a global impact on public health and safety.



College of Nursing Associate Professor

Lois James, PhD, was appointed as director of the center in November 2024. She succeeds Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine Professor **Hans**

Van Dongen, PhD, who oversaw a decade of remarkable growth in research productivity and scientific breakthroughs at the center.



"The SPRC is a research powerhouse, bringing unparalleled return on investment to WSU and a reputation for

research excellence that is recognized globally," said Daryll DeWald, PhD, executive vice president for WSU Health Sciences and chancellor of WSU Spokane. "I am confident that as the new director, Dr. Lois James will care for this unique center with the same commitment and passion as

her predecessor, and that the SPRC will continue to lead cutting-edge WSU research that solves real-world problems."

Founded as a lab in 2004, the center has grown into a university-wide coalition of faculty from multiple colleges and is unique for its multidisciplinary approaches to investigating the impacts of sleep loss and other stressors on health and performance, with methods ranging from the test tube to the field.

"The next decade will be transformative for sleep science."

—Lois James, PhD
Sleep and Performance Research
Center director

“The SPRC is a research powerhouse, bringing unparalleled return on investment to WSU and a reputation for research excellence that is recognized globally.”

—Daryll DeWald, PhD

WSU Health Sciences executive vice president and WSU Spokane chancellor

“There is a synergy here that helps to sharpen us all,” said WSU College of Medicine Associate Professor Kimberly Honn, PhD. “We often work together to hone our ideas and develop projects through identifying unanswered questions, challenging existing ideas, and designing novel experiments and technology to move the science forward.”

SPRC research has informed policies and practices in a range of sectors, including health care, emergency services, the military, and transportation. For instance, the team developed software to predict pilot fatigue and design safer work schedules, technology now in use at major airlines worldwide.

“It’s been a joy to lead the center alongside such a talented and dedicated team,” Van Dongen said. “Together, we’ve turned an initial \$4.5 million federal investment into a twenty-fold return—an incredible testament to the value of this work. My hope is that with renewed support from the

university and from the community, the center will continue to grow under Dr. James’ leadership, advancing science that improves lives.”

Looking ahead, SPRC faculty note that the field is poised for further breakthroughs, as technological developments open new frontiers in scientific areas such as epigenetics, and cultural shifts reshape approaches to sleep and workplace safety.

“The next decade will be transformative for sleep science,” James said. “My vision is to honor the legacy of leaders like Dr. Van Dongen and founding director Dr. Gregory Belenky by continuing to grow the SPRC’s research portfolio, expanding our clinical outreach, strengthening our global collaborations and standing as a leader in the field.”



Sleep and Performance Research Center Impact

\$100+ million

in external research funding

700+

scientific peer-reviewed articles

550+

students and post-graduate researchers trained

Data from 2004–2024.

Research

Inaugural Student and Resident Research Day Showcases Impactful, Collaborative Projects

More than 70 learners presented original projects at the WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine's first Student and Resident Research Day, setting the stage for a new college tradition of excellence in interprofessional scholarship and discovery.

"We envisioned a space for students to not only share their work but also to foster further collaborations with their peers and other researchers," said Assistant Dean for Student and Resident Research Olivia Coiado, PhD, who organized the event.

"Research experience is so important because it helps students and residents develop the critical thinking and communication skills necessary for practicing evidence-based medicine."

Medical student Stella Lee, who took home a best poster award in the community and humanities category, joined the Advanced Rural Cancer Outcomes and Screening (ARCOS) research team in her first year, driven by a desire to better understand the barriers faced by those in rural Washington when accessing preventative care. She hopes to use insights from her interviews with breast cancer patients to inform more effective screening interventions and deliver compassionate care to her future patients.

"This research provides a unique opportunity to center patients' voices," Lee said. "Each interview I conduct leaves a lasting impression; some are emotionally intense, others profoundly eye-opening."

"This research provides a unique opportunity to center patients' voices."

—Stella Lee
Second-year medical student



Best Poster Awards

EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH:
BEST OVERALL

Evelyn Rowe (MS2)

EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH:
SECOND BEST

Ali Schroeder (MS2)

BASIC SCIENCE

Sofia Hassapis (MS2)

Katie Gaffney (MS2)

CASE REPORT

Scott Erickson (MS3)

CLINICAL RESEARCH

Victoria Dinh (MS3)

Natalie Stagnone (MS2)

COMMUNITY AND HUMANITIES

Yanet Torres (MS2)

Stella Lee (MS2)

MEDICAL EDUCATION

Ali Schroeder (MS2)

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Evelyn Rowe (MS2)

Research That Drives Health Solutions Across Communities

Elderberry Juice Shows Benefits for Weight Management and Metabolic Health

Elderberry juice may be a potent tool for weight management and enhancing metabolic health, according to a WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine study.

A clinical trial published in the journal *Nutrients* found that drinking 12 ounces of elderberry juice daily for one week causes positive changes in the gut microbiome and improves glucose tolerance and fat oxidation.

Elderberry, a small dark purple berry found on elder trees native to Europe, is commonly used as a medicinal plant and immune supplement. Its other potential health benefits are poorly understood, however.



“Elderberry is an underappreciated berry, commercially and nutritionally,” said lead author **Patrick Solverson**, PhD, an associate professor in the

Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology. “We’re now starting to recognize its value for human health, and the results are very exciting.”

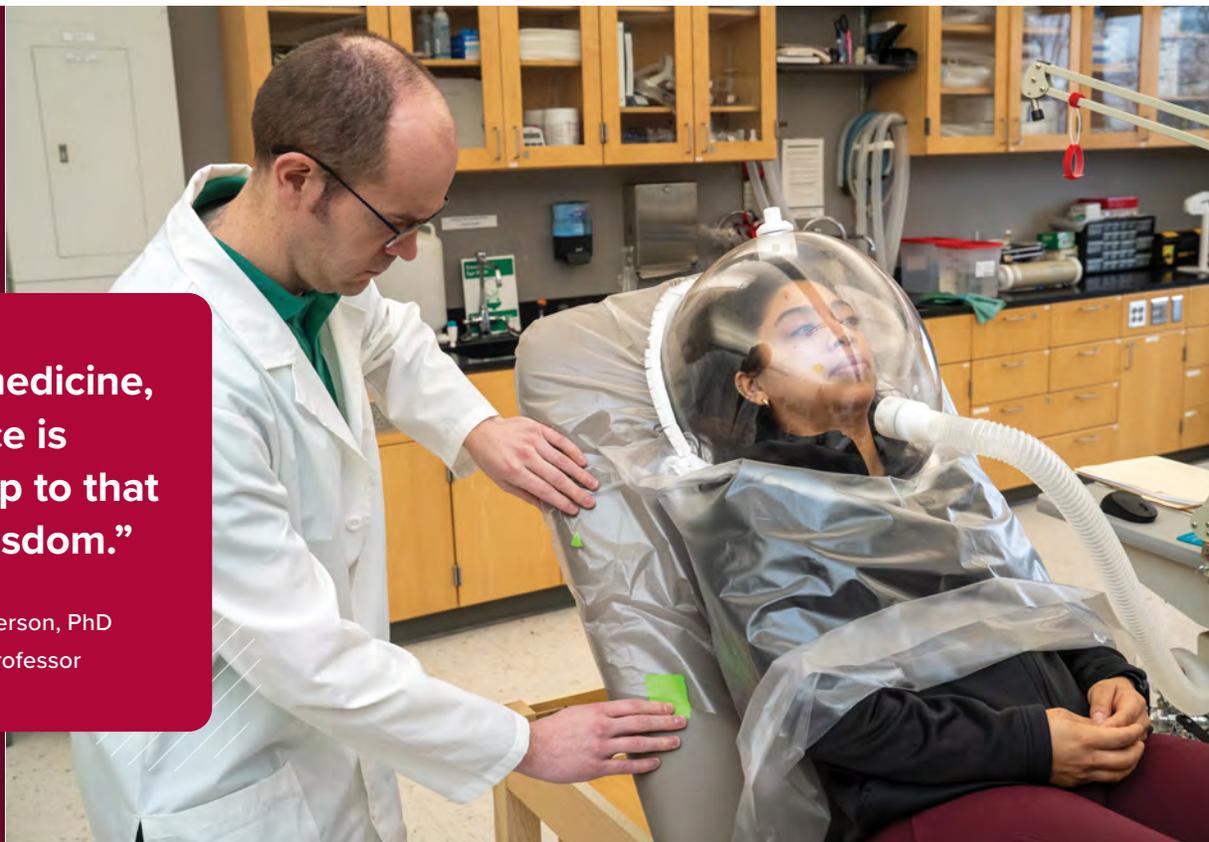
The researchers tested the effects of American black elderberry on metabolic health in a randomized, placebo-controlled clinical trial with 18 overweight adults. Clinical testing following the intervention showed that elderberry juice reduced participants’ blood glucose levels by an average of 24% and insulin levels by 9%.

The researchers attribute these positive effects to elderberry’s high concentration of anthocyanins, plant-based bioactive compounds that have a variety of health benefits.

“Food is medicine, and science is catching up to that popular wisdom,” Solverson said. “This study contributes to a growing body of evidence that elderberry, which has been used as a folk remedy for centuries, has numerous benefits for metabolic as well as prebiotic health.”

“Food is medicine,
and science is
catching up to that
popular wisdom.”

—Patrick Solverson, PhD
Associate professor



College Joins National Program to Support Indigenous-Led Research on Substance Use, Pain

The WSU College of Medicine was awarded \$2.2 million in first-year project funding to participate in a new National Institutes of Health (NIH) program designed to support Indigenous communities in leading culturally-grounded research on substance use and pain.

American Indian and Alaska Native communities are developing innovative approaches to respond to the

ongoing overdose and pain public health crises and improve related factors such as mental health. The NIH's Native Collective Research Effort to Enhance Wellness (N CREW) Program aims to support research projects led by Tribes and Native American-serving organizations. The program will provide approximately \$268 million in funding over seven years, enabling communities to focus on self-identified priorities and solutions.

“This marks a significant shift in how the NIH funds this research—supporting Tribes to do the research that they want to do.”

—Michael McDonell, PhD
Professor and PRISM
Collaborative director



“This marks a significant shift in how the NIH funds this research—supporting Tribes to do the research that they want to do,” said co-principal investigator **Michael McDonell**, PhD, a College of Medicine professor and

director of the Promoting Research Initiatives in Substance Use and Mental Health (PRISM) Collaborative. “Our job is to listen, learn, and determine how to best support them.”

The program will also fund the development of a Native Research Resource Network. College of Medicine researchers from PRISM and the Institute for Research and Education to Advance Community Health (IREACH) will lead one of four teams forming this network, offering their research expertise to Indigenous communities across the country.

Dehydration Linked to Muscle Cramps in IRONMAN Triathletes

A WSU analysis of three decades of data from the IRONMAN's top competition found a connection between dehydration and exercise-induced muscle cramps, contrary to previous research.

While many popular theories hold that unbalanced levels of electrolytes, potassium, and salt contribute to cramps, this study did not find supportive evidence. Rather, an analysis of medical data from over 10,500 triathletes found a strong link between dehydration and participants seeking treatment for muscle cramps during the competition.

“We pretty much know that electrolyte imbalance is likely not related,” said corresponding author **Chris Connolly**, PhD, a WSU College of Education physiologist.

“Muscle cramps are complex but may be due to altered neuromuscular function issues, and now we think that more severe dehydration might be playing into that for ultra-endurance triathletes.”

Published in the *Clinical Journal of Sport Medicine*, the study was led by then-WSU medical students **Paal Nilssen**, MD, and **Kasey Johnson**, MD, in collaboration with Connolly and WSU College of Medicine community faculty member **Douglas Hiller**, MD, who is an IRONMAN Hall of Fame inductee.

Connolly and Hiller are the official curators of World Triathlon and IRONMAN data housed at WSU, which they use to improve the sport and its safety through ongoing research.

Babble Boot Camp Shows Promise for Children with Down Syndrome

An innovative early intervention method for childhood speech and language disorders developed at the WSU College of Medicine's Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences has shown promise for boosting the verbal communication skills of infants with Down syndrome, according to new research published in the *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*.

Babble Boot Camp aims to prevent or minimize speech and language disorders in at-risk infants through a series of caregiver-led activities, implemented from birth to 24 months of age. While children typically begin speech therapy at the age of two or later, after they start talking and show signs of a speech delay, Babble Boot Camp is unique for providing therapeutic interventions before children show signs of a delay—when they “babble” but don't yet talk.



The intervention, created by College of Medicine Professor Emerita **Nancy Potter**, PhD, CCC-SLP, and Associate



Professor **Mark VanDam**, PhD, was first tested in babies with classic galactosemia. Clinical trial testing showed nothing short of “spectacular” results, Potter noted, with participating children showing typical language scores and increased speech and language development.

Researchers are now testing the intervention across multiple other high-risk populations for childhood speech and language disorders, including individuals with Down syndrome, who frequently face lifelong verbal communication challenges that begin with language delays in infancy.



“Muscle cramps are complex but may be due to altered neuromuscular function issues, and now we think that more severe dehydration might be playing into that for ultra-endurance triathletes.”

—Chris Connolly, PhD
Associate professor

Research

Report Highlights “Hidden Epidemic” of Drug-Exposed Infants

Babies born in Spokane County experience neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) at more than three times the national rate, according to a WSU College of Medicine report. The syndrome is a spectrum of withdrawal symptoms in babies with prenatal exposure to drugs.

Commissioned by the Washington Health Care Authority, the study found that 21.1 out of every 1,000 live births in Spokane were affected by NAS in 2022, compared to 11.2 statewide and 6.2 nationally. The report evaluated outcomes at

Maddie’s Place, one of only two recovery nurseries in the state.



“The numbers were quite high,” said lead author **Ekaterina Burduli**, PhD, an associate

professor in the Department of Community and Behavioral Health.

Infants in the study were exposed to an average of four substances, most commonly methamphetamines and fentanyl, complicating their treatment. Nearly 80% of the

infants’ mothers were experiencing homelessness, highlighting the complex social factors involved.

The report underscores the critical role of Maddie’s Place in supporting both infants and families, offering not only medical care but also housing and social support.

“Maddie’s Place is a real safety net for the most vulnerable families in our community,” Burduli said, emphasizing that addressing this hidden epidemic requires a holistic approach that invests in both maternal and infant health.



“Maddie’s Place is a real safety net for the most vulnerable families in our community.”

—Ekaterina Burduli, PhD
Associate professor



“The single most important reason to support this area of research is that people’s quality of life can truly be changed for the better if we pay attention to their needs early, holistically, and with respect.”

—Poppy Gardiner, PhD
Postdoctoral research associate

Researchers Advance Quality of Life with Neurodegenerative Diseases

Supported by funding from the Steve Gleason Institute for Neuroscience, faculty from the WSU College of Medicine’s Department of Translational Medicine and Physiology and other units are leading innovative research to improve the lives of those living with neurodegenerative diseases, including Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and Alzheimer’s disease.



A major emphasis within the department is exploring how sleep impacts ALS symptoms and care. Professor **Christopher Davis**, PhD, and Affiliate Associate Professor **Travis Denton**, PhD, were awarded a seed grant to investigate new drug therapies to alleviate ALS symptoms and reduce chronic sleep loss. Shifting the focus to caregivers of those with ALS, Postdoctoral Research Associate **Poppy Gardiner**, PhD, and Professor **Matthew Layton**, MD, PhD, will investigate caregiver sleep disturbances, mood, and family functioning, shedding light on an understudied research area.



“The single most important reason to support this area of research is that people’s quality of life can truly be

changed for the better if we pay attention to their needs early, holistically, and with respect,” Gardiner said.



The institute is also supporting multidisciplinary research through its new fellowship program, which aims to identify new diagnostic and therapeutic tools for neurodegenerative diseases. Denton and Assistant Professor **Jason Gerstner**, PhD, are inaugural fellows, as well as College of Medicine community faculty member **Gregory Carter**, MD, and Department of Community and Behavioral Health Chair **Naomi Chaytor**, PhD.



These partnerships extend beyond the department, and community faculty are also playing a key role in driving this research. Carter is collaborating with Denton on ongoing research to identify ALS biomarkers to improve early diagnosis and treatment. Translating work into practical solutions, **Glen House**, MD, will develop new assistive technology for patients with neurodegenerative diseases and other conditions such as spinal cord injury.

The funding initiatives reflect the institute’s collaborative approach to addressing challenging diseases, bringing together investigators with a range of research expertise and clinical experience to deliver tangible improvements for patients and their families.

Community Care

Clinical Care

Primary Care Health Services

1,590+ patients
2,790+ patient visits



Internal Medicine Residency Program

43 residents
88,620+ hours of care



Specialty Health Services

440+ patients
4,800+ patient visits



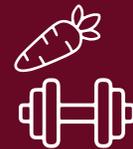
Family Medicine Residency Program

6 residents
13,300+ hours of care



Nutrition and Exercise Physiology
Health and Fitness Clinic

40 clients
950+ clinic sessions



Pediatric Residency Program

6 residents
12,310+ hours of care



Range Community Clinic Provides Health Services to WSU Spokane

The on-campus clinic brings convenient and comprehensive health services to Spokane campus students.

“Being integrated on the WSU Spokane campus has enabled us to provide timely, coordinated, and holistic health care services that support our students’ physical and mental well-being, while fostering a healthier, more resilient academic community.”

—Julie Eastlund, MPA, PMP
Range Community Clinic business director



Clinical Care

First Pediatric Residents Join Spokane Medical Community Amid Nationwide Pediatrician Shortage

The WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine's pediatric residents hail from across the country and the globe. Still, they cite a common motivation for pursuing a career in pediatrics: the fulfillment that comes from taking care of children in need. The amenities of living and working in the city of Spokane are just a bonus.

"When I thought about what I wanted my life and career to look like, the choice was easy," said second-year resident McKenna Skinner, DO. "It brings me so much joy to work with children and see them bounce back from whatever illness or situation is thrown their way."

The college's Pediatric Residency Program, a partnership with Providence Sacred Heart Children's Hospital, is growing despite a nationwide trend of declining interest in pediatrics. While 150 pediatric residency seats went unfilled in this year's match, WSU's program has brought 11 new pediatricians in training to Spokane since welcoming its first class in 2024.

Having a pediatric residency in Spokane is key to attracting physicians to where they're needed most, said Program Director Chris Rocholl, MD, noting that eastern Washington has half as many pediatricians per capita as western Washington.

For second-year resident Lindsey Klein, DO, the program provided the perfect opportunity to continue her medical training in her home state.

"As a lifelong Washingtonian, it was a major goal of mine to be able to give back to the communities that raised me," Klein said. "I was also excited to join a new program where I could help shape a productive and inclusive culture."

Residents cite how the program's close-knit and supportive culture stood out to them, including attending physicians' genuine commitment to each resident's success.

"What stands out most is how invested everyone is in our growth. From day one, the attendings have been incredibly supportive—not just of our clinical development, but also



"When I thought about what I wanted my life and career to look like, the choice was easy. It brings me so much joy to work with children and see them bounce back from whatever illness or situation is thrown their way."

—McKenna Skinner, DO
Second-year resident

of our individual goals," said second-year resident Parvin Uddin, MD.

Training in Spokane also offers unique advantages. As a regional health care hub, the city's large catchment area encompasses neighboring rural counties and enables residents to gain hands-on experience with a wide variety of cases. The city's urban amenities and proximity to nature have also been a boon for residents.

"Spokane has been a great place to live—I love experiencing all four seasons and the outdoor activities that come with them," Uddin said.

Access to the outdoors is one of many things that first attracted Rocholl to the area 20 years ago.

"Spokane has it all," he said, citing good local schools and airport access. "We have an amazing medical community, and we want our residents to know that there is a home for them here."



“We want to lay the groundwork for real, lasting change.”

—Matt Layton, MD, PhD
Professor and psychiatrist

Community Collaborations

College Hosts Youth Suicide Education and Prevention Summit

The WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine held its first-ever Youth Suicide Education and Prevention Summit in Chewelah, Washington, bringing together over 70 leaders from education, health care, Tribal Nations, public service, and government.

The summit, organized by professor and psychiatrist Matt Layton, MD, PhD, was designed to be a catalyst for change, one necessary to address the urgent youth mental health crisis impacting communities nationwide.

“We called it a summit intentionally,” Layton said. “It’s a meeting of leaders—Tribal, rural, urban, academic, and legislative—coming together to address a crisis that affects every community.”

Made possible by a \$40,000 gift from SMILE, a nonprofit created by Ted and Christy Toribara after the loss of their son, the summit emphasized community collaboration. With SMILE concluding its operations, the organization entrusted its final funds to WSU to continue its mission through sustainable, community-driven work.

Breakout sessions focused on solutions-driven strategies across five key areas: access to mental health and substance use treatment, educational system challenges, government policy, creative youth support strategies, and the impact of social media. Featured keynote speaker Jeffrey Sung, MD, a nationally recognized expert in suicide prevention, provided additional tools and training to extend the summit’s reach beyond the event.

Layton stressed the need to de-stigmatize open conversations about mental health. “You don’t have to have all the answers,” he said. “You just need to care.”

Importantly, the summit addressed the growing concern of rising suicide rates in children as young as eight. Layton hopes to build on this foundation and do more work to support local communities in implementing suicide prevention strategies and advocating for policy changes.

“This is about building long-term relationships and showing communities that we’re here to help,” Layton said. “We want to lay the groundwork for real, lasting change.”

Community Impact

PATHWAY PROGRAMS

19
students

OUTREACH AND MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS

967
students across eight schools in Eastern Washington

70+
attendees at Youth Suicide Education and Prevention Summit



College Launches New Pathway Program for Enrolled Tribal Members

The Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine has launched its first post-baccalaureate program to help prepare American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) learners from federally recognized tribes who aspire to become physicians.

Nmryaqs (pronounced en-MURR-ee-Ahks), meaning “medicine road” or path to medicine in the Spokane dialect of Interior Salish, is a free 10-month program designed to support the successful recruitment, training, and graduation of medical students with hopes of serving Tribal communities. The program will enroll up to four scholars each year who are passionate about providing health care to populations in need but have been unsuccessful in their prior applications to medical school.

Nmryaqs builds on the foundation of the Wy’east Post-Baccalaureate program, which has supported other enrolled Tribal members for more than six years. The college recently celebrated the graduation of its first Wy’east scholar, Lexie Packham, MD, now in residency training in internal medicine/pediatrics. The MD Class of 2029 includes the program’s next scholar in this legacy.

“We have been working for many years to build partnerships and support to encourage these scholars to pursue their dreams,” said Leila Harrison, PhD, MA, MEd, vice dean for admissions, student affairs, and alumni engagement.

The inaugural Nmryaqs cohort began in fall 2025, joining the college in Spokane to study Indigenous health and

well-being alongside foundational sciences courses and other learning experiences. The program will help candidates strengthen their applications to medical school and build the skills necessary to succeed once there. Students who complete the program will have conditional acceptance to the WSU College of Medicine.

“We want to ensure this program is long-term and sustainable,” said David Garcia, MEd, associate dean for community and health equity. “We hope the program serves Native and Indigenous communities for generations to come.”

Amid an acute need for knowledgeable physicians committed to serving Tribal communities, AI/AN populations have historically been underrepresented in both medical school and the physician workforce. Garcia hopes Nmryaqs will help close that gap—not only by supporting individual scholars, but by fostering trust in the health care system and improving health outcomes across Washington.

“This program is positioned to help our greater community and improve health care in our state,” Garcia said. “It’s an opportunity to strengthen our commitments with the Tribes. We are thankful for the Tribes, Elders, the Native American Health Sciences Tribal Advisory Board and Consultants, Native American Health Sciences, and the many people who have contributed to this program.”

Celebrating People: Awards Across the College and University

University Awards

WSU WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Naomi Chaytor, PhD, ABPP

Department of Community and Behavioral Health chair

WSU PRESIDENT'S EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE AWARD

Jennifer Anderson

Collaboration for InterProfessional Health Education
Research and Scholarship (CIPHERS) coordinator

WSU CRIMSON SPIRIT AWARD

Shannon McCarthy

Office of Curriculum administrative assistant

WSU Spokane Chancellor's Excellence Awards

EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE AWARD

Team

Accreditation-Operations Team

STUDENT EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Excellence in Leadership

Diana Pham – Speech and Hearing Sciences

Liam Quinn – Nutrition and Exercise Physiology

Noushyar Panahpour – MD (MS2)

Community Engagement

Kishanee Haththotuwegama – MD (MS2)





Community Faculty Honored with Awards Ceremonies

The college celebrated its community faculty at the annual Community Partner Award Ceremonies, held across the state. They play a vital role in shaping Washington's future physician leaders, equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the evolving health care needs of Washington State.

OUTSTANDING CLINICAL TEACHER – MS1/MS2

Mohit Girotra, MD – Everett
Trevor Sudweeks, DO – Spokane
Fareed Arif, MD – Tri-Cities
Knewton Sakata, MD – Vancouver

OUTSTANDING CLINICAL TEACHER – MS3

Emily Prazak, MD – Everett
Scott Hadley, MD – Spokane
Saira Tandon, MD – Tri-Cities
Amelia Ryan, MD – Vancouver

OUTSTANDING CLINICAL TEACHER – MS4

Matthew Hall, MD – Everett
Casey Harms, MD – Spokane
David Thayer, MD – Tri-Cities
Jordan Chiarriano, MD – Vancouver

OUTSTANDING CLINICAL TEACHER – ACADEMIC HALF DAY

Christopher Greenman, MD – Everett
Charles (Chris) Anderson, MD – Spokane
Perliveh Carrera, MD – Tri-Cities
Lissa Daimaru-Enoki, MD – Vancouver

OUTSTANDING SERVICE OF EDUCATION – INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLEAGUE

Renae Windler – Everett
Jenn Espeseth – Everett
Victoria Symonds, ARNP – Spokane
Adrian Garcia, PsyD – Tri-Cities
Jennifer Camacho, RMA – Vancouver

REGIONAL DEAN DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

Michael Chun, MD – Everett
Wendy Smith, ARNP – Spokane
Eastern State Hospital – Spokane
Matthew Mesick, MD – Tri-Cities
Kris Kobalter, MD – Tri-Cities
Cortney Taylor, MD – Vancouver

RESIDENT OF THE YEAR

Melody Dalde, MD – Tri-Cities

Education

MD Program Graduates Fifth Class of Coug Doctors

The Class of 2025 walked across the stage to the cheers of a sold-out commencement audience this May, joining a total of 319 doctors who have graduated from the WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine since its creation. The ceremony gathered this year's grads from communities across Washington, where they completed hands-on training in local hospitals and clinics, following the MD program's community-based model. These immersive clinical experiences enable students to explore their professional interests while equipping them with the skills needed to deliver high-quality patient care wherever their careers take them.



MD Program

306 future doctors enrolled

(Class of 2025–2028)



14.4% underrepresented in medicine (URiM)

(Black/African American, American Indian Alaska Native, Hispanic)

55% non-traditional

(25 and older)

29% first generation college graduate

(Parents did not earn Bachelor's Degree)

39.1%

low socioeconomic status

(Based on Pell Grant and/or Fee Assistance Program)

62.5% women



Match Day

100%
residency
attainment

40.6%
matched in
Washington

46.4%
matched
into primary
care
specialties

SPECIALTIES MATCHED INTO:

- Anesthesiology
- Dermatology
- Diagnostic Radiology
- Emergency Medicine
- Family Medicine
- General Surgery
- General Surgery–Preliminary
- Internal Medicine
- Interventional Radiology
- Medicine–Pediatrics
- Neurology
- Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Operational Emergency Medicine
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopedic Surgery
- Otolaryngology
- Pediatrics
- Psychiatry
- Psychiatry/Family Medicine
- Radiation Oncology
- Transitional Year



Match Day 2025: A Milestone for Future Physicians

The WSU College of Medicine matched 100% of our fourth-year medical students into residency as we celebrated Match Day on the third Friday of March with medical schools across the country. The Class of 2025 is now helping to fill a critical need for more doctors locally and nationwide as they complete the next phase of their training. Nearly 70% will remain in the western U.S. for residency, with 40.6% remaining in Washington. An impressive 46.4% chose primary care specialties, including family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, internal medicine-pediatrics, and obstetrics and gynecology.

MD Alumni – Class of 2021 and 2022

65%

of those who have entered practice
are practicing in Washington

30%

who are practicing outside of Washington indicated they
plan or hope to return to the state to practice in the future

Percentages represent survey respondents only.



“We are returning to our roots in agriculture with a modern approach to nutrition science embedded within medicine.”

—Glen Duncan, PhD, ACSM-CEP
Nutrition and Exercise Physiology chair

New Degree Connects Human Health and Agriculture through Cross-College Collaboration

The WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine’s Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology (NEP) and the College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences (CAHNRS) have joined forces to cultivate a new era of health and sustainability.

The colleges launched a new collaborative bachelor’s degree program, the Human Nutrition and Food Systems major, in 2024 as part of a larger slate of joint educational and research initiatives. The program

draws on a long-standing relationship with CAHNRS, where the nutrition major was previously housed.

“This partnership came naturally,” said NEP Chair Glen Duncan, PhD, ACSM-CEP. “We are returning to our roots in agriculture with a modern approach to nutrition science embedded within medicine.”

The new program will equip students with an understanding of nutrition and health from “soil to society,” preparing them for careers in

professions ranging from dietary counseling to international food security advocacy. Students will have opportunities to complete internships and be involved in innovative research from both colleges.

“WSU has fantastic agriculture, food science, and nutrition programs, but they’ve mainly been siloed,” said NEP Associate Professor Pablo Monsivais, PhD. “This new major will bring them together so students can learn how the food system impacts diets and human health.”

Nutrition and Exercise Physiology Program

100%

job placement for BS and MS CPD within one year of graduation



100%

program retention for BS and MS CPD



100%

exit exam pass rate for BS and MS CPD



Speech and Hearing Sciences Program

100%

five-year praxis examination
pass rate



100%

job placement rate across
programs within one year



New Medical ASL Course Aims to Bridge Communication Gaps in Health Care

Deaf and hard-of-hearing patients face significant barriers to accessing quality health care, from a lack of qualified interpreters to miscommunication in the exam room.

To address these challenges, the WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine's Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences launched a new online course designed to equip future health care providers with foundational skills in American Sign Language (ASL) and an understanding of Deaf culture.

"Working with Deaf patients is very different from working with someone who speaks another verbal language," said WSU Associate Professor and course creator Melissa Ratsch, citing unique considerations for working with

interpreters and the integral role of body language in ASL. "This course is designed to help students navigate those differences with confidence and respect."

Ratsch was inspired to create the course after interpreting via FaceTime during a Deaf relative's emergency room visit, an experience that underscored the urgent need for better provider training.

Open to all WSU students, the course is especially relevant for those pursuing careers in health care fields and other client-facing roles. Students will learn how to work effectively with ASL interpreters in clinical settings and will be introduced to over 200 basic ASL signs.



"Working with Deaf patients is very different from working with someone who speaks another verbal language. This course is designed to help students navigate those differences with confidence and respect."

—Melissa Ratsch
Course creator and instructor



“This new fellowship is a vital step toward strengthening the critical care workforce in Washington and beyond.”

—Tomasz Ziedalski, MD
Program director

College Announces New Fellowship Program to Train Critical Care Physicians in Everett

The WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine launched its first fellowship program in partnership with Providence Regional Medical Center Everett. The Critical Care Medicine Fellowship—Everett expands the college’s graduate medical education offerings to train more doctors in-state and will help address a growing national and statewide shortage of intensive care specialists.

“This new fellowship is a vital step toward strengthening the critical care workforce in Washington and beyond,” said Program Director Tomasz Ziedalski, MD. “We are proud to offer a rigorous, community-based training experience that prepares physicians to work collaboratively in multidisciplinary teams and deliver high-quality care to the sickest patients.”

The new openings are a step forward in the college’s work to alleviate severe physician shortages facing Washington in primary care as well as specialty care. The two-year program will train physicians to care for critically ill patients in an intensive care unit (ICU) setting, providing subspecialty training to doctors after residency.

“We are thrilled to collaborate with Washington State University’s Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine on this innovative fellowship program,” said Cambree McCoy, medical education manager at Providence Regional Medical Center Everett. “This partnership underscores our commitment to advancing medical education and

addressing the critical need for skilled intensivists. By nurturing the next generation of ICU specialists right here in Everett, we are investing in the future of patient care and reinforcing our commitment to serving our community.”

The program will help address an ongoing shortage of ICU specialists impacting hospitals nationwide, a challenge exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and an aging population. It will also help attract more physicians to the Pacific Northwest, which until now has had only two accredited critical care fellowships.

The fellowship program will have a collaborative relationship with the college’s Internal Medicine Residency Program—Everett at Providence, allowing fellows to teach residents and providing an opportunity for internal medicine residents to continue their training in critical care, which is a subspecialty of internal medicine.

“Having a critical care fellowship at the same institution as our internal medicine residency enhances the academic and clinical environment by offering residents hands-on guidance and real-time feedback from near-peer educators,” said Matthew Hansen, MD, director of the residency program.

The ACGME-accredited critical care medicine fellowship will accept two fellows per year. The inaugural class will begin training in the summer of 2026.



“At no time has it been more important to be involved in the critical business of keeping physicians and other providers up to date.”

—Radha Nandagopal, MD, FAAP
Vice dean for educational and faculty affairs

Continuing Medical Education Program Receives Full Accreditation

The WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine’s Continuing Medical Education (CME) program received full accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education in March 2025, an important operational milestone that reflects the program’s commitment to providing high-quality education that meets the evolving needs of health care professionals.

“Being an accredited provider means physicians and other health care professionals can trust the information provided to them is free of commercial bias and meets high levels of medical care and practice,” said Vice Dean for Educational and Faculty Affairs Radha Nandagopal, MD, FAAP. “For physicians, accredited CME can improve performance by focusing on the unique needs of individual learners. For organizations, it can be a catalyst for change, providing practical solutions to many of their most pressing problems.”

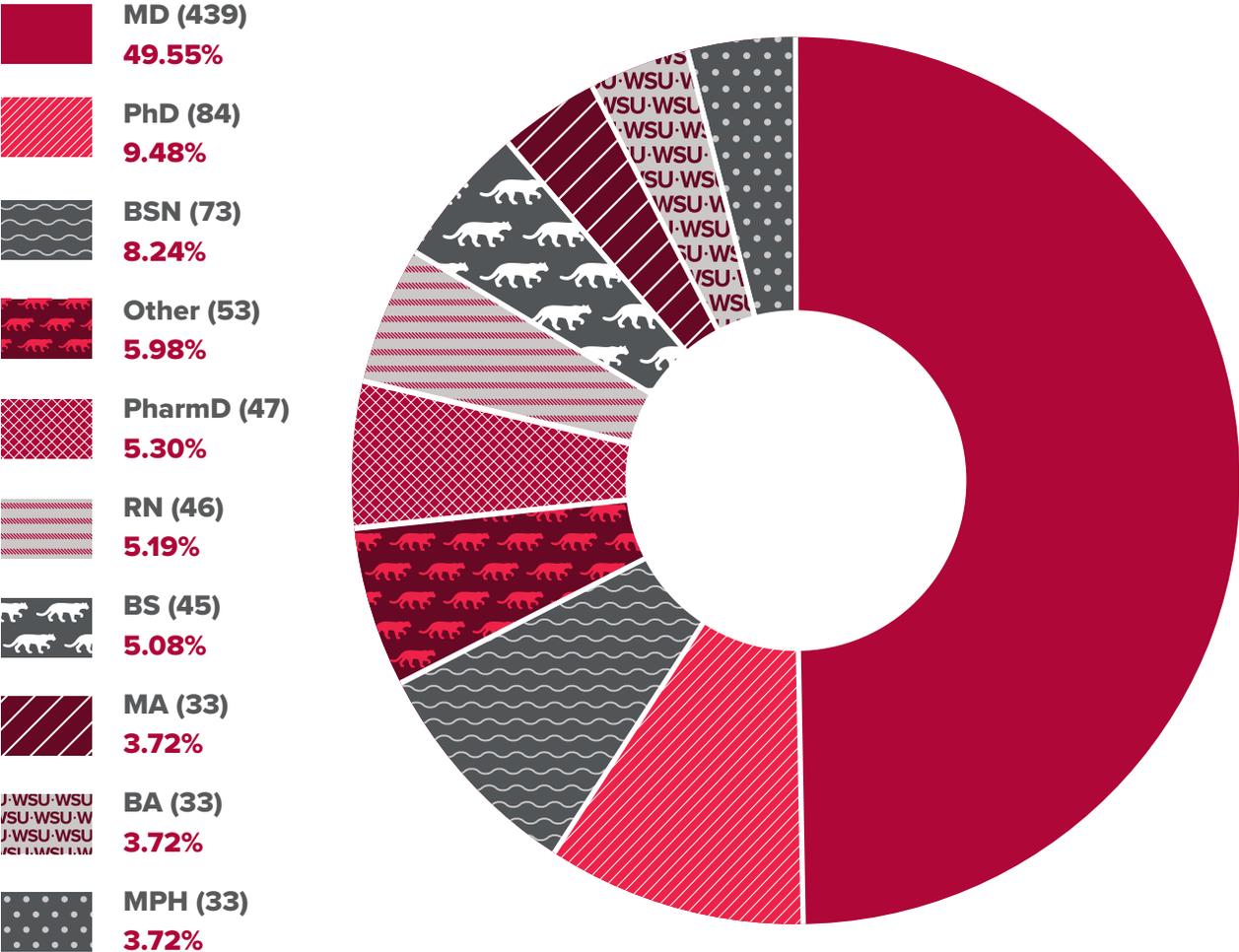
CME programming at WSU has expanded significantly since its inception in 2020. In addition to offering individual learning activities, the office now offers Maintenance

of Certification (MOC) credits, which are required by many board-certified physicians, and developed two “homegrown” CME activities for the first time: one on detecting health care fraud presented in partnership with the FBI and Washington State Office of the Attorney General, and the other on prescription drug abuse in collaboration with the Drug Enforcement Agency.

The CME program aims to further expand its learning activities to more specialties moving forward and bring additional collaborations with WSU Health Sciences to offer interprofessional, accredited continuing education to doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and more.

“The CME landscape is evolving and complex, but at no time has it been more important to be involved in the critical business of keeping physicians and other providers up to date,” said Nandagopal. “Medical knowledge and practice are changing and adapting faster than ever, and physicians are expected to keep up. What we learned in medical school is far from how we practice now, and CME is the bridge.”

CME Credits Awarded by Degree Type



Continuing Medical Education Program

40+
CME sessions
accredited

125+
unique learning
activities

360+
learners

471+
credits awarded

Financial Highlights

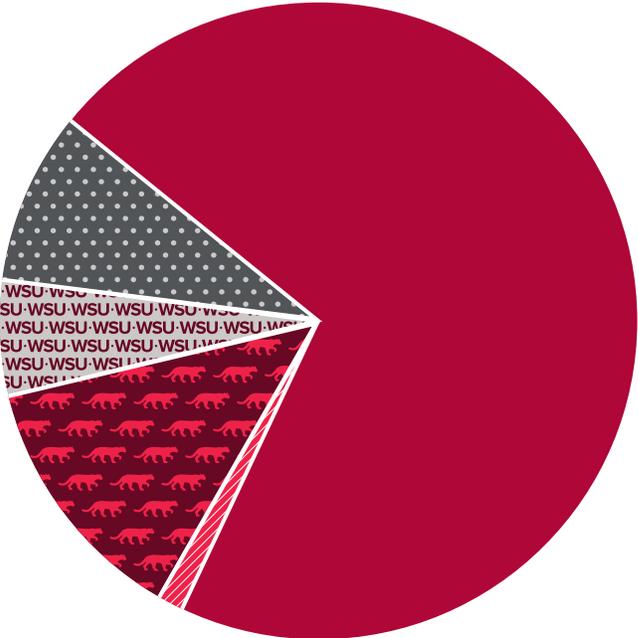
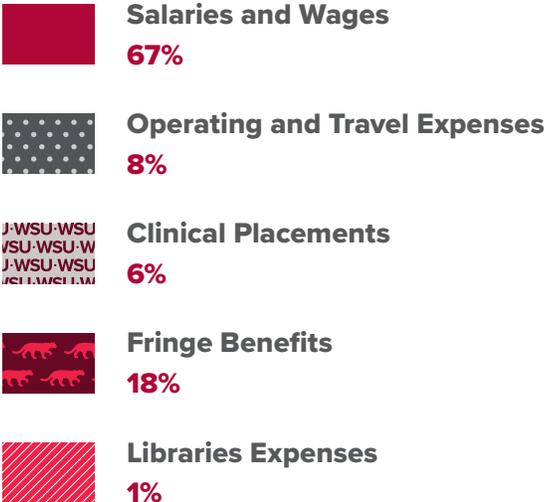
Operating Revenues

From Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 to FY 2025, total allocations increased by approximately \$2.53 million, rising from \$39.88 million to \$42.41 million. This increase was driven primarily by a boost in enrollment-based funding and increased benefits allocated to the college.

Operating Expenses

Over the past fiscal year, total expenses increased by \$4.79 million, reaching \$44.95 million in FY 2025, primarily due to higher personnel costs and increased spending on benefits and other operating expenses. A portion of the growth in operating expenses is tied to investments necessary to support accreditation requirements. Adjustments are currently being made to better align FY 2026 expenses with available allocations and to improve financial sustainability moving forward.

FY 2025 Medical School Spending \$44,750,039



Profit and Loss Statement

FD001	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	Estimated FY 2026
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Central Allocations

Initial Base Budget	\$18,810,743	\$20,194,117	\$19,238,864	\$20,841,950
Enrollment-Based - After Holdback	\$11,059,053	\$10,438,684	\$11,627,970	\$11,636,000
Proviso\One-time	\$640,000	\$640,000	\$454,000	\$376,000
Other Allocations	\$565,513	\$760,538	\$1,056,137	\$330,000
Annual Reduction Target	(\$954,000)	(\$1,225,400)	(\$197,000)	-
University Annual Commitment	-	\$1,400,000	\$1,605,000	\$1,000,000
Initial Base Budget Changes	\$1,134,000	\$312,051	\$420,000	\$69,000
Benefit Allocation	\$6,778,309	\$7,356,831	\$8,207,081	\$8,207,081
Total Allocations	\$38,033,618	\$39,876,821	\$42,412,052	\$42,460,031

Expenditures

Salaries and Wages	\$24,380,312	\$26,627,627	\$29,845,049	\$28,568,021
Benefits	\$6,778,309	\$7,356,831	\$8,006,823	\$8,207,081
Other Operating	\$6,316,121	\$5,910,413	\$6,601,787	\$5,488,628
ERP Fee @ 1.0%	\$239,658	\$265,201	\$296,380	\$285,680
Total Expenditures	\$37,714,400	\$40,160,072	\$44,750,039	\$42,549,410

June 2025

Alumni

MD Alum Joel Bervell named to TIME100 Creators List for Transformative Digital Advocacy

Joel Bervell, MD, a 2025 graduate of the WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine, has been named to the inaugural TIME100 Creators list, recognizing him as one of the most influential digital voices of the year.

Known to his 1.3 million followers as the “medical mythbuster,” Bervell uses platforms like TikTok and Instagram to challenge health disparities, debunk medical misinformation, and empower patients to advocate for themselves. He also hosts “The Dose” podcast with the Commonwealth Fund to discuss fresh ideas about the future of health care.

Bervell’s inclusion on the TIME100 list is the latest in a series of national accolades. He was named to the Forbes 30 Under 30 list and garnered a Peabody Award for his innovative use of digital storytelling to illuminate the real-world impact of bias in medicine. His work has been featured on TODAY, TED, and other national forums.

The recognition is “a powerful reminder of how unconventional platforms like social media can meet patients where they are, reshape medicine, and spark change,” Bervell said.

A Ghanaian-American, Bervell has long been driven by a mission to make medicine more accessible for students who are underrepresented in the field. His animated YouTube series, *The Doctor Is In*, aims to inspire young students to pursue careers in STEM.

At WSU, Bervell founded the Coug Health Academic Mentoring Program (CHAMP), a student-led initiative that aims to connect medical students with high school students across Washington. He also served as president of WSU’s Medical Student Council and chapter of the Student National Medical Association.



“My journey to choosing a specialty has been shaped by a deep commitment to health equity, patient advocacy, and a desire to bridge gaps in care—whether through direct patient interactions or systemic change.”

—Joel Bervell, MD
Class of 2025

Now with a medical degree in hand, Bervell plans to stay in Washington to complete his training through an internal medicine residency. The specialty aligns with his passion for connecting with patients and solving complex puzzles, he noted.

“My journey to choosing a specialty has been shaped by a deep commitment to health equity, patient advocacy, and a desire to bridge gaps in care—whether through direct patient interactions or systemic change,” Bervell said.

From the airwaves to the exam room, Bervell remains committed to using every tool at his disposal to build a better health care system for all.



SHS Alum Shapes Communication Care in Washington

Sometimes it takes an individual with varied life experiences to see the bigger picture and shape the future.

Washington State University Speech and Hearing Sciences alum Karyn Driscoll-Teague has, in many ways, “done it all.” And in doing so, driven untold change.

Driscoll-Teague graduated in 1979 with a degree in Communications Disorders, now known as Speech and Hearing Sciences (SHS). Initially a Spanish major, she discovered her passion for language science in a phonetics course, which led her to SHS.

With that degree change, she launched a dynamic career that spanned elementary schools to higher education, hospitals to skilled nursing facilities and private practice. She also ran Spokane’s Scottish Rite Center for Childhood Language Disorders and served on the Washington Speech-Language-Hearing Association board, where she helped shape early certification discussions and the future of speech-language pathology (SLP).

“I love my field because I could practice in so many settings,” Driscoll-Teague said. “WSU gave me a good basis for being able to learn along the way. I was able to do a diverse work career with many leadership roles.”

Today, Driscoll-Teague and her husband Gary, also a Cougar alum, continue to shape communication care in Washington through their partnership with WSU Foundation and Speech and Hearing Sciences.

“I still want to help the community,” she said. “Being able to give both time and money is helping—it can help the whole world.”

Her philanthropic giving to the college’s scholarship fund is changing the world one voice at a time by helping train new SLPs. Driscoll-Teague also hopes to inspire future SLPs to embrace a life of learning across a variety of experiences.

Her advice to students: be open to trying things and to continue learning, even once you’re out of school. Embrace new situations and go outside your comfort level. She also asks them to spread their love of speech-language pathology in the hope they, too, can shape the future.

“People need to hear about us. They need to know the breadth of what we do,” Driscoll-Teague said. “Talk us up.”



