



Connections

MAYO CLINIC SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES ALUMNI ASSOCIATION FALL 2017

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTORS

Eugene Anderson
and Kevin Seisler



>> NOTE FROM THE NEW PRESIDENT

Making a good deal even better

The Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences Alumni Association (MCSHSAA) Annual Meeting in April was a tremendous success. It is always great to see so many familiar faces and have the chance to meet new people. The annual board meeting is our once-a-year opportunity to bring together the board of directors, alumni, and Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences (MCSHS) leaders to discuss association updates and events, school news and novel ideas and socialize a little, too.

One of many highlights for me this year was meeting Kevin Seisler, RT(R), and Eugene (Gene) Anderson, PT, recipients of the alumni association's Recognition of Outstanding Contribution award. Hearing their stories, meeting their families, and seeing their passion and dedication to education and patient care was inspiring. Read their stories starting on page 2.

The board of directors learned more details about the innovative Alumni Connect mentor program. Alumni Connect is a new web-based tool for MCSHS students to connect to alumni mentors. It is an easy way for our alumni to continue to influence our future allied health leaders and employees. Being a mentor is such a rewarding experience for both parties, and I hope that you will consider getting involved. I would not be where I am today without many mentors along the way, and I am grateful for their time. Read how to sign up on page 25.

For the next year, the board is seeking opportunities to further increase the value of membership to our alumni. (It's already a good value. By graduating, you are a member!) We discussed ways to expand member participation, highlight the successes of our alumni and make communication channels easier to use. You can look forward to seeing new electronic communication and more attention to alumni accomplishments.

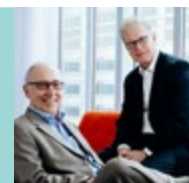
Lastly, during the meeting I had the privilege to officially become president of the MCSHS Alumni Association. I'm honored to have this opportunity to give back and stay connected to the organization that helped to guide my career path. I am working as pharmacy operations coordinator at Memorial Hospital Miramar, Miramar, Florida.

I welcome your ideas or suggestions. Just email mshsaa@mayo.edu. Consider getting involved as a board member or mentor. And hope to see you next April in Rochester.

Regards,

Matt Curran, PharmD, CPh
President, MCSHS Alumni Association
Pharmacy Residency, Florida
Class of 2014

ON THE COVER / Eugene Anderson and Kevin Seisler, recipients of the 2017 Recognition of Outstanding Contribution award.



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New, convenient way to connect



Nurse practitioner
Claudia Swanton is
breaking down barriers
for nurses in Chile.
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Mayo Clinic
School of Health Sciences
Alumni Association

Connections

A publication for alumni, students,
faculty and friends of Mayo Clinic
School of Health Sciences

» <https://mshsalumni.mayo.edu>
» facebook.com/mshsalumni

Recognition of Outstanding Contribution honorees

In 2017, Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences Alumni Association honored two alumni with its Recognition of Outstanding Contribution award. Congratulations to:

Kevin Seisler,
RT(R), education coordinator,
Department of Radiology, assistant
professor of Radiology, Mayo Clinic
College of Medicine and Science

Eugene (Gene) Anderson,
PT, retired, former private practice
owner, community volunteer

Directing the education of radiologic technologists

Kevin Seisler hit the right notes with half of his college major. Seisler, who plays the violin and earned a bachelor's in music education, realized before graduation that a career in music wasn't for him. Education, however, was indeed his calling — but in an entirely different field. And he has his parents to thank for helping him discover it.

After graduating from Augustana College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Seisler moved home. That's when his parents, both with medical backgrounds themselves, made a suggestion. "They told me about a new radiography program that was starting at Mayo," Seisler says.

Seisler was curious. He visited Mayo Clinic to learn about the program. "It looked pretty interesting," Seisler says. "And working with people appealed to me." He was accepted into the Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences (MCSHS) Radiography Program in 1982.

"Being part of the inaugural class was a lot of fun," he says. "It was an exciting venture for the department. Everyone had a stake in the program."

Seisler soon had a stake in the program as well. After working at Mayo Clinic for two years as a radiologic technologist, he started teaching skeletal imaging to MCSHS radiography students. The

following year, he was hired as the young program's first full-time clinical instructor.

"It was definitely a challenge," Seisler admits. "I had to develop everything." That included clinical objectives, competency forms and evaluation procedures similar to those still used today. Seisler's responsibilities grew, and in 1992, he was named assistant director of the Radiography Program.

While working on the program's administrative side, Seisler continued to teach. And teach. And teach. He's taught more than 2,000 hours in the Radiography Program. But his classroom contributions didn't end there. He also taught courses for technologists, physician assistants, and respiratory and physical therapy students, and developed the first new employee orientation program for radiology employees. (That education degree came in handy after all.)

In 2003, Seisler took on a new challenge as education coordinator for allied health staff in the Department of Radiology. One of his signature contributions is the establishment of the annual allied health symposium for technologists and nurses. Over the past 13 years, the symposium has provided more than 90 hours of continuing education for attendees.



Kevin Seisler, RT(R)

“Staff really like it,” Seisler says of the event, which takes place one Saturday each spring. “It’s one big event just for them.” He’s also produced more than 70 online continuing education modules, accessible to Mayo Clinic technologists working in Arizona, Florida and Minnesota as well as throughout Mayo Clinic Health System.

Seisler has a hand in recruiting technologists to the field. For years, he’s spoken to student groups touring Mayo Clinic. And he’s taken his show on the road as well, visiting high schools and colleges throughout the Midwest. “Typically, the kids are like I was at their age and don’t know anything about the field,” he says. So he gives them a crash course, bringing in bells and whistles (in the form of X-ray tubes and interesting images). “It’s pretty cool to think I could spark something for them.”

A few years ago, Seisler started the Imaging Careers and Networking (ICAN) Scholarship

Program. It is a week-long camp that brings minority students to Mayo Clinic to learn about radiology. “It’s a way to increase diversity in the field,” he says, noting that he’s seen a number of participants return to attend the University of Minnesota Rochester — one of the Radiography Program’s affiliated academic institutions — following high school graduation.

Seisler’s contributions stretch beyond Mayo Clinic. He served as education chair for two Minnesota Society of Radiologic Technologists meetings, chaired the group’s annual meeting and served as the organization’s president and chairman of the board.

Seisler says receiving the alumni award has provided an opportunity to step back and reflect on his career. Instead of developing musicians, Seisler has directed technologists. Hearing he’s made an impact on that group is music to his ears. “This recognition is confirmation of what I’ve been doing for the past 33 years,” he says. “It’s truly an honor.” >>



Eugene (Gene) Anderson

Serving patients and serving others

Gene Anderson's professional life could be divided into two chapters. Both are focused on service and worthy of recognition.

The first chapter begins right after Anderson's graduation from the Physical Therapy Program at Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences (MCSHS). It was 1969, and like many young men of his generation, Anderson was drafted into military service. "I was blessed to help people coming back from Vietnam," Anderson says of his two-year stint in the Army Medical Service Corps at Martin Army Hospital in Fort Benning, Georgia.

After completing his service, the Nebraska native became a southern transplant. "I fell in love with the Ozarks," he says. He established a private physical therapy practice with two other MCSHS grads in northwest Arkansas, working primarily with patients recovering from orthopedic surgeries.

Anderson also supervised physical therapy students doing clinical rotations. He served his profession, too, holding several positions within the Arkansas Physical Therapy Association, including president. And he was tapped by then-Gov. Bill Clinton for a position on the Arkansas State Board of Physical Therapy.

"I didn't want to be someone who worked from 8 to 5 and went home," Anderson says of his extracurricular activities. "I wanted to give back."

"Giving back" could well be the title of the second chapter of Anderson's career. Since retiring in 2005, he has devoted himself to service.

"After I retired I was seeking guidance for what to do with the rest of my life," Anderson says. "I believe that God calls us to service."

He's answered that call in many ways. Anderson has been active with a number of local nonprofits, including a community clinic that provides free and low-cost medical care to underserved patients. He spends half a day each week providing physical therapy to patients who would otherwise not receive care.


"The clinic serves a great need for people who do not have health insurance," Anderson says, adding that the thanks he receives from his grateful patients — often in the form of hugs — "is worth more than anything else I've done in the past 48 years."

But that's hardly Anderson's only contribution to the greater good. He's also part of two Springdale, Arkansas, Rotary Club projects that help young people. The group distributes dictionaries to every third grader in the Springdale school district, a project Anderson chaired for several years. That meant coordinating the purchase and distribution of some 2,000 dictionaries each year. "Lots of these kids do not have a book in their house," he says. "It's very rewarding to change that."

He's also a presenter for the Rotary Club's Choices Program, which brings professionals into eighth-grade classrooms. "We talk about the impact the choices they make today can have on the rest of their lives," Anderson says. "We encourage them to make good choices and talk about the importance of education."

Anderson has served on the board of the Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund. He's deeply committed to the organization's mission to enable single parents to attain self-sufficiency through post-secondary education. "Not only is a parent getting an education, but they're also setting an example for their kids," he says. "I've witnessed so many heartwarming stories through this program."

Most recently, Anderson has gotten involved in Stephen Ministry. The program trains laypeople to minister to members of their congregations. Anderson has been matched with two older gentleman with physical challenges and visits with each once a week. "They're lonely," he says. "So I go to them and just listen."

At age 72, Anderson says he is happy to help wherever he can. His avocation for service early in his career has become his retirement vocation. "It's work I plan to continue for a long time," he says. 

We want to hear about outstanding alumni

The MCSHS Alumni Association honors graduates each year with the Recognition of Outstanding Contribution award.

Graduates considered for the award:

- Are dedicated to the service of patients
- Promote the art and science of medicine through education of students
- Participate in or encourage research
- Are leaders in their fields
- Are involved in community service
- Have made contributions to underserved populations or provide service in challenging situations
- Are involved with MCSHS

Nominate a colleague, former classmate, or yourself. The next deadline for nominations is Jan. 31, 2018.

» LEARN MORE

<https://mshsalumni.mayo.edu/people/awards>

Connecting, learning and honoring

More than 200 Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences alumni — from new grads to retirees — gathered in Rochester April 21, 2017, for the alumni association's annual meeting. They made new connections, learned new information and honored outstanding alumni.

Highlights of the annual meeting:

- Keynote speakers David Soma, MD, and Cara Prideaux, MD, Mayo Clinic physicians, shared their expertise and experience in treating concussions.
- Eugene Anderson, PT, and Kevin Seisler, RT(R), each were honored with the Recognition of Outstanding Contribution award. It was the first time two alumni were honored.
- Claire Bender, MD, was recognized as the first recipient of the association's Champion of Allied Health Award.
- Outgoing alumni association president Karen Sherk, NP, passed the gavel to new president Matthew Curran, PharmD, CPh.

Mark your calendar: April 21, 2018

Save the date for the 2018 annual meeting in Rochester. The event is free for MCSHS graduates.

Watch for details at <https://mshsalumni.mayo.edu> 





A Champion for Allied Health

Claire Bender, MD, was honored with the Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences Alumni Association's inaugural Champion of Allied Health Award. Dr. Bender was dean of the Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences from 2002 to 2014. She developed the school's Radiography Program and was a leader in establishing the University of Minnesota campus in Rochester and its Bachelor of Science in Health Professions degree.



>> MCSHS ASSOCIATE DEAN

Exploring a space-age therapy

Do human stem cells grow faster in space? Yes and no, says Abba Zubair, MD, PhD, associate dean of Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences – Florida Campus. It all depends on the type of stem cell, he says of Mayo Clinic’s first orbiting experiment.

Four years ago, Dr. Zubair submitted his proposal for space-based research to NASA. He hoped to prove that stem cells — the undifferentiated cells in the body used to replace damaged or dying cells — can be mass-produced more quickly in microgravity. And although NASA selected his experiment nearly three years ago, aerospace glitches repeatedly bumped the mission until earlier this year, when three types of adult stem cells from Dr. Zubair’s laboratory in Mayo’s Center for Regenerative Medicine spent time aboard the International Space Station.

During the month the stem cells spent in a microgravity environment, where objects are essentially weightless, the cells grew in carefully controlled conditions. For comparison, identical sets of the stem cells were monitored in Dr. Zubair’s lab back in Florida.

The initial findings? In general, the three types of stem cells reacted differently to the lack of gravity. Some grew up to four times faster in space; some showed no change in growth rate. All exhibited other differences from their twins on Earth. For example, in space the stem cells grew in sheets, while in the lab the cells grew in clumps.

“It looks promising,” Dr. Zubair says. “There are differences, but what does it mean? It will take more than a year to figure out the whole story.”

His ultimate goal is to produce clinical-grade cells for safe treatment of patients following a hemorrhagic stroke. Working with mouse models, Dr. Zubair previously



Dr. Zubair has been associate dean of MCSHS for three years. His focus areas have been faculty development and the expansion of the Clinical Research Internship Study Program (CRISP).


found that an infusion of stem cells at the site of stroke stimulates regeneration of neurons and blood vessels.

Dr. Zubair attended the Feb. 19, 2017, launch of the rocket carrying his experiment during a resupply mission at NASA’s Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida. The stem cells safely landed back on Earth in mid-March.

Dr. Zubair will continue to compare the growth, gene expression and cell functionality of both collections of stem cells to gauge their safety for use in humans.

“We’ll study them to make sure they’re normal, functional and safe for patients with stroke,” he says. “We want to treat patients.”

Dr. Zubair, who has had a passion for space since his childhood in Nigeria, is developing curriculum on his high-flying stem cells for Orion’s Quest, an organization that teaches math and science through classroom participation in research conducted on the International Space Station.

“It’s pretty exciting,” he says. “The idea of going into space and doing research first entered my mind early in high school. I want to pass that on to the next generation.” 

PA Program marks 20th graduating class

New PA education options in 2019

In 2017, the Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences (MCSHS) Physician Assistant (PA) Program marked its 20th graduating class.

This unique program is a tri-partnership, with the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, Gundersen La Crosse Hospital and Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences. Students are enrolled in the PA master's program at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.



Robert Adams

They complete their clinical experiences at Mayo Clinic, Mayo Clinic Health System, Gundersen La Crosse Hospital and other practice sites in southwestern Wisconsin, southern Minnesota and northeastern Iowa.

All graduates have passed the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE). MCSHS ranks No. 9 in the top U.S. PA schools based on student results in the certifying exam.

Robert Adams, who has been PA Program director since its inception, says the biggest change over 20 years has been the expanding practice for PAs. "PAs now are part of nearly every practice area at Mayo Clinic."

Education opportunities have grown, too. Mayo Clinic hosts clinical rotations for PA students from several partner schools. MCSHS also offers PA fellowships for specialty training.

New PA program to launch in 2019

In 2017, the Mayo Clinic Board of Governors approved a new physician assistant master's degree program through MCSHS in collaboration with Saint Mary's University of Minnesota and University of Minnesota Rochester.

Students will be able to become a physician assistant in as little as five years — with three years at the Saint Mary's University of Minnesota Winona Campus or at the University of Minnesota Rochester, followed by two years of graduate study in Rochester. The first class of 24 students will start in 2019.

"There is great need for more physician assistants, especially in rural communities," says Adams. "This new program will help address that need. >>

"PAs now are part of nearly every practice area at Mayo Clinic."

>> ROBERT ADAMS

No 'typical' PA job: Snapshots of four career paths

Gaining expertise through Otolaryngology Fellowship



Anthony Mendez

Anthony (Tony) Mendez, PA-C, works alongside the chair of the Department of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery at Mayo Clinic in Arizona. He cares for patients both in the operating rooms and the clinic.

He completed the MCSHS PA Fellowship in Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery on the Arizona campus. Established in 2005, it's the only accredited PA fellowship in otolaryngology in the U.S.

"During my PA master's degree program, I rotated at Mayo Clinic in Arizona and spent six weeks in the otolaryngology department," says Mendez. "The PAs on staff encouraged me to apply for the fellowship. It was too good of an opportunity to pass up."

Today, all seven of the PAs working in the Department of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery are graduates of the MSCHS fellowship. "Our fellowship immerses PAs in a rigorous curriculum that is equivalent to about three years of private practice experience," he says.

"Fellowship training helps PAs stand out and improves your marketability, giving you a significant leg up in a specialized area," says Mendez.

Mendez now knows about the fellowship from another perspective. He has been program director since 2015. Working with fellow alumni Carlene Donald, PA-C, associate program director, they developed standardized curriculum, schedule rotations for two fellows each year, assist fellows with research and publication, and field questions from the fellows.

"When I was a fellow, I saw how valuable it was to have a mentor, and I wanted to serve in that role," he says. "I enjoy teaching." >>



Chelsey Hoffmann

Relieving pain for patients

Chelsey Hoffmann, RD, PA-C, says her goal is to be a physician assistant expert in pain management.

“I’m still working on that,” she says. “As soon as I feel like I master something, a new pain management technology comes along.” She sees patients in the Division of Pain Medicine, Department of Anesthesiology, at Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

Hoffmann is a graduate of the MCSHS Dietetic Internship. She quickly found she wanted more direct patient care.

“It seemed to me that physician assistants are in a unique position to form relationships with patients and have hands-on time with them,” she says. “There was no question in my mind that I wanted to come back to Mayo to pursue a second degree as a physician assistant.”

She graduated from the MCSHS PA Program, a collaboration with the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and Gundersen La Crosse Hospital.

Hoffmann provides inpatient and outpatient care for patients with cancer, spine pain, complex regional pain syndrome, nerve pain disorders and other conditions. She administers injection therapies for pain relief. She helps manage intrathecal pain pumps and evaluates patients to determine if they’re candidates for spinal cord stimulators to manage pain. She manages prescription medications and, when necessary, works with patients to taper off of narcotic medications.

On an initial consult, patients are seen by a physician and either a PA or nurse practitioner. On return visits, the PA or NP sees the patient and implements the treatment plan. “We customize pain management to align with patient goals. It’s really rewarding to improve patients’ quality of life and help them be able to do things they love.” »



William "Patricio" Aleman

Seeing patients first in their diagnostic journey

When patients with complex illnesses come to Mayo Clinic, William "Patricio" Aleman, PA-C, could be the first care provider they see. He works in the Section of Consultative Medicine in the Division of General Internal Medicine in Rochester.

"They see me first, before they see a physician in Consultative Medicine. We refer them to the appropriate specialists to complete their diagnostic journey at Mayo," he says. "After they see specialists, patients see me again for their final visit and dismissal."

He typically sees two new patients each day and follows 16 to 20 patients a week.

Aleman joined Mayo Clinic in 1994 as the first physician assistant in the Department of Medicine. "I felt a lot of responsibility because I was the only one for a year and a half," he says. "It was a learning process for the department and for me. The first year went really well, and the department showed it was a good decision economically and in terms of patient satisfaction."

Aleman's career at Mayo Clinic illustrates some of the many ways physician assistants care for patients.

He has worked in the international medicine clinic, inpatient internal medicine and psychiatric care as well as treating patients with nicotine dependency.

Aleman studied medicine in his native Ecuador. When he moved to the U.S. in 1983, the cost of medical school was out of reach. Instead, he trained and worked as an emergency medical technician, a radiologic technologist and administrator of a small medical clinic. "The doctors I worked with always said, 'You know a lot of medicine. Go back to school.'"

He enrolled in the primary care physician assistant program at the University of California, Davis, in 1988 and then, in 1993, in the MCSHS PA Surgical Training Program, the predecessor to today's Physician Assistant Program.

"I like the detective work involved with my work," he says. "Patients come with symptoms, and I look for the clues to make a diagnosis. I enjoy talking with patients and understanding their illnesses. I try to engage with the mental and emotional part of each patient as well." >>

Caring for cancer patients and PA students

Nicole Gannon, PA-C, is a physician assistant in the Division of Hematology/Oncology at Mayo Clinic in Florida. She's also the director of PA Student Education Program on the Florida campus.

She says her interest in hematology and oncology care was sparked during PA school. "I enjoy the focus on the patients, who we might see in the clinic two or three times a week," she says. "I really get to know patients and their families. It feels like we're making a big difference in their cancer care and seeing them through one of the hardest journeys in their lives. I can't imagine working in another area."

Gannon sees patients before they begin chemotherapy and between chemotherapy sessions. She cares for them when they're hospitalized for bone marrow transplants and at their post-transplant follow-up visits. She performs some procedures and provides patient and family education about what to expect during and after treatment.

After a year on the job, she became assistant director of the Physician Assistant Student Education Program and, recently, program director.

"I've always been drawn to education," she says. "I got my undergraduate degree in health education and worked with community partnerships on outreach. I've always had mentors who helped me along in my career. Now, I want to put my passion for education toward helping our PA students."

The Physician Assistant Clinical Rotation at Mayo Clinic in Florida works with six affiliated schools in Florida and southeastern Georgia, with 20 to 30 students rotating each year. In addition to serving as program director, Gannon hopes to teach one day.

"Ten to 15 years from now I want to start teaching PA students, become a professor and continue to be a preceptor during rotations," she says. 🌐



Nicole Gannon

"It feels like we're making a big difference in their cancer care and seeing them through one of the hardest journeys in their lives."

» NICOLE GANNON

Honoree puts a premium on collaborative, innovative education

When Jill Tryon, RT(R)(M)(CT), arrived at Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences (MCSHS) in 2011 to take on the role of Radiography Program director, she knew right away she had come to the right place.

“A world-class institution with an impressive reputation for excellent patient care, I felt Mayo Clinic’s academic environment would be a great place to teach,” Tryon says. “I was right. I found a collegial environment where educators from different professions work together to provide the best education for all of our students.”

“Our goal is for students to actively participate in all aspects of their education. We don’t want them to be passive learners.”

» JILL TRYON

Over the past six years, Tryon has embraced the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues and enhance not only her own program, but programs across MCSHS via her membership on the school’s Student and Faculty Affairs Committee.

“I appreciate the chance to look at the big picture,” she says. “We look at ways to move the school forward as a whole.”

One way the Radiography Program has moved forward is by putting more emphasis on flipped and blended classroom experiences. Students access online resources that allow them to come to class prepared to discuss materials they’ve already reviewed.

“We’re striving for more discussion and less lecture,” Tryon says. “Our goal is for students to actively participate in all aspects of their education. We don’t want them to be passive learners.”

Tryon’s approach has resulted in student success. Under her leadership, student performance on the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists certification exam has steadily increased. In 2016, the graduating class performed in the top 5 percent among the 700 radiography programs in the United States.

Tryon’s focus isn’t on the numbers, though. It’s on her students.

“The students are so much fun. They have energy and are excited to learn,” she says. “When they have lightbulb moments, and something really clicks for them, it’s great to be part of that. And it’s fun to see their passion grow for the profession as they go through the program. I really enjoy both teaching and learning from them.”



Rochester MCSHS faculty award winners

Annually, MCSHS honors faculty and staff who have excelled in their work. Here are the 2017 honorees from the Rochester campus:

Outstanding Educators

Jill Tryon, MBA, RT(R)(M)(CT)
Radiography Program

Erin Martin, CRNA, DNP
Nurse Anesthesia Program

Philip Kuper, PharmD,
BCPS, BCCP
Pharmacy Residency

Outstanding Physician/ Scientist Educators

Anuradha Luke, MD
*Emergency Medicine
Paramedic Program*

Michael Henry, MD
Cytotechnology Program

Outstanding Service

Deborah Oscarson
*Mayo Alumni Center,
business analyst*

Ronda Willsher, MBA
*Public Affairs, senior
communications specialist;
editor, Connections magazine*

Jill Tryon



Claudia Swanton

Pioneering for nurse practitioners – again

Claudia Swanton, APRN, DNP, CNP, was among the first group of nurse practitioners at Mayo Clinic in Rochester. “We were pioneers in developing the advanced practice role here,” she says.

That was in 1998. Today, there are more than 1,500 nurse practitioners across Mayo Clinic on the Rochester campus providing primary and specialty care, diagnosing patients and prescribing medications. They also collaborate with physicians and the entire care team.

Swanton, who heads the Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences Nurse Practitioner Program, is once again in the pioneer role, educating nurses in advanced practice nursing in Chile, the South American country where she grew up.

The seeds for this international outreach were planted five years ago. A Chilean physician visited the Mayo Clinic Department of Preventive and Aerospace Medicine, where Swanton practices. He invited Swanton and a physician colleague to present at a preventive care symposium at the University of El Desarrollo in Santiago, Chile. Swanton jumped at the opportunity.

“I hadn’t been back in 25 years,” says Swanton, who has family in Chile.

At the symposium, Swanton presented on the role of advanced practice nurses in preventive care. “It was and still is a very new idea there,” she says. Nurses in Chile earn a bachelor’s or master’s degree, but there is no equivalent to nurse practitioner.

Her presentation piqued the interest of the university’s director of nursing. “He saw how advanced practice nurses could expand access to primary care,” Swanton says.

In 2016, Swanton returned to Chile for a two-day presentation on developing advanced practice for nurses. Twenty-five nurses attended. “We talked about taking patient histories and

conducting clinical exams,” she says, tasks that are only done by physicians in Chile. “When I talked about treating my patients, I saw their eyes get big. Nurses treating patients is a foreign concept there.”

At the conclusion of the event, Swanton was invited to join the university’s international faculty. She’ll return once or twice a year to foster advanced practice nursing.

“When I talked about treating my patients, I saw their eyes get big. Nurses treating patients is a foreign concept there.”

» CLAUDIA SWANTON

“It’s not just educating the nurses and other care providers,” she says. “We also need to educate government to make changes to expand the nursing practice.”

The circumstances invoke *déjà vu* for Swanton. “When I started at Mayo Clinic, in my role as a nurse practitioner, our names weren’t even posted as providers in patient care areas,” she says. “Little by little, we created our roles.”

Swanton is grateful for the flexibility and support offered by MCSHS for her long-distance teaching. “Our school is about education. It doesn’t have to be in Rochester. I have the great opportunity to travel about 6,000 miles to teach nurses and doctors and everyone else just what nurse practitioners can do for patients,” she says. ©

Pharmacist's research aims to improve medication safety, effectiveness

Erin Frazee Barreto, PharmD, is the first pharmacist to be awarded entry into the Kern Scholar Program through Mayo Clinic's Robert D. and Patricia E. Kern Center for the Science of Health Care Delivery. The program helps practicing clinicians develop the skills to effectively perform health services research and solve health care delivery problems. In the past, Kern Scholars have been physicians or PhDs.

Barreto is an alumna of Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences Postgraduate Year 1 (PGY-1) Pharmacy Residency and PGY-2 Pharmacy Residency in Critical Care at Mayo Clinic Hospital in Rochester. She has practiced in Rochester for six years and in July 2017, began work as program director for the PGY-2 Pharmacy Residency in Critical Care at Mayo Clinic Hospital.

As a Kern Scholar, Barreto will continue her research on the impact of kidney function on medications used to treat patients in the intensive care unit. She explains that many drugs are removed from the body through the kidney. "For example, a better understanding of kidney function could improve treatment of infections with antibiotics and decrease the risk of toxic drug levels," she says.

"My research has demonstrated that new approaches to the assessment of kidney function


in hospitalized patients could improve the safe and effective use of medications," says Barreto. "But unfortunately those assessments are not typically being used now."

Felicity Enders, PhD, associate director for the Kern Scholar Program, says that Barreto's research is ground breaking. "We look forward to helping her expand upon this research."

Barreto says she plans to learn more about why assessments aren't used and better understand barriers that may exist. "As a Kern Scholar, I hope to develop a more dependable, consistent, sophisticated approach to medication dosing and monitoring in critically ill patients."

And she's pleased to be the trailblazing pharmacist in the Kern Scholar Program advancing this work.

"At Mayo Clinic, the multidisciplinary approach to practice is the only way to do things," she says. "I expect to gain a lot from engaging with others in the program from across the practice."

Enders, from the Kern Scholar Program agrees. "Collaboration and team science are critical for health care delivery research. Dr. Barreto's role as a pharmacist, not only engaging in research but leading pharmaceutical science to impact patient care, is integral to this philosophy." 



Erin Frazee Barreto

They talk education, careers, and interests away from work



JODY ERICKSON, RT(R)(MR)

- Radiology clinical manager, Department of Radiology
- Mayo Clinic in Florida

Education and career path

Bachelor of Science: Health Administration, University of North Florida, Jacksonville

Certificate of Radiology: MCSHS

Employment: 25-year career in radiology at Mayo Clinic — two years in Rochester and 23 years in Florida — in positions including radiologic technologist, assistant radiologic technologist, CT technologist, and MRI technologist, lead technologist and supervisor.

Why did you pursue a career in health care?

My father was diagnosed with breast cancer when I was 8.

I saw him go through an eight-year battle that involved multiple trips to Mayo Clinic for testing, treatment and surgeries. Seeing someone I admired, loved and cared for go through so much and still keep a positive attitude gave me the passion and desire to help others in similar circumstances. He is truly my hero.

How do you contribute to the Alumni Association?

I'm involved in the alumni association to better understand how I can be even more of an influence on others. One way is to be a mentor to others who may need direction or guidance about career choices.

What do you do in your free time?

Free time is limited while I pursue my MBA, but I enjoy spending time with my wife and sons. We play games, swim, boat and travel. I also enjoy home and yard projects and riding my motorcycle.

What would people be surprised to know about you?

I'm a die-hard Minnesota Vikings fan. I'm equally passionate about the history of the Viking people and my Norwegian heritage.



BRITTANY DOWLING, AuD

- Clinical audiologist
- Mayo Clinic in Rochester

Education and career path

Bachelor of Arts:

Communications, The University of Arizona, Tucson

Bachelor of Science: Speech and Hearing Sciences, The University of Arizona

Externship: Audiology, MCSHS, Arizona

Why did you pursue a career in health care?

There's no greater feeling than improving someone's quality of life.

What do you like best about your work?

I enjoy working with patients who receive cochlear implants. So often these patients have



Get involved with your alumni association

More than two dozen Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences alumni volunteer to serve on the Alumni Association Board of Directors.

To volunteer, here's what you need to know:

- Board members provide direction for Alumni Association programming and activities.
- Board terms are three years.
- Board members return to Mayo Clinic in Rochester each spring for an annual meeting.
- To apply, complete the nomination form on the alumni association website and submit a letter indicating your interest to the MCSHS Alumni Association at mshsaa@mayo.edu.
- A nominating committee considers applications to ensure a broad representation of MCSHS programs.

» QUESTIONS?

Call the MCSHS Alumni Association at 507-284-2317 or learn more at <https://mshsalumni.mayo.edu>.

become socially reserved, isolated, withdrawn and reluctant to communicate with others because of the severity of their hearing loss. It's so humbling to be part of their journey back to themselves once their hearing has been restored. In the time we spend together, these individuals become more social, engaged and connected with their family, friends and community.

What's a valuable lesson you learned at Mayo Clinic?

The needs of the patient come first. It's simple and honest. It's not a saying or catch phrase. MCSHS teaches you how to embody this message in your actions every day.

What do you do in your free time?

I enjoy hanging out with friends, napping, watching "Roseanne" reruns on Netflix and looking at Zillow for houses. I also like spending time with my dogs and playing fetch with them at the dog park.



JAIME ENGHOLDT, PA-C, MS

- Physician assistant, Department of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery
- Mayo Clinic in Arizona

Education and career path

Bachelor of Science: Kinesiology, Arizona State University, Tempe

Master of Science: Physician Assistant Studies, A.T. Still University of Health Sciences, Mesa, Arizona

Fellowship: Physician Assistant, Otolaryngology, MCSHS, Arizona

Employment: Joined the Otolaryngology Department at Mayo Clinic in Florida in 2011

Why did you pursue a career in health care?

After high school, I worked as an optician and then as a certified ophthalmic assistant for 10 years. I had direct patient contact, performing eye exams and assisting in surgery. However, there was a limitation to my scope. I knew I wanted to be more involved in helping patients.

While working, I pursued my undergraduate degree and then my master's in physician assistant studies. I always had a passion for surgery. I heard about the postgraduate Physician Assistant Fellowship in otolaryngology on Mayo Clinic's Arizona campus and knew this was where I was meant to be. I spent the next year learning all the ENT subspecialties and loved it.

Why did you choose MCSHS?

I was fortunate to get a rotation with the ENT Department at Mayo Clinic while in physician assistant school. I recall my first day walking into the operating room where head and neck surgeons were removing

a cancerous tumor. The patient's jaw had to be split open to access the tumor. I was in awe of the head and neck anatomy and amazed at the lengths the surgeons went to in order to treat a cancer. I was sold on the fellowship and was ecstatic when I was accepted.

What do you do in your free time?

I'm a first-time mom of a handsome baby boy. My husband and I spend a lot of time with him and can't wait to see him grow. I'm an animal lover and have a very active Boxer and cats. I work out lifting weights and enjoy hiking. I love travel and watching football. I'm also an automobile enthusiast and enjoy making small modifications to my car. 🇨🇪

Updated Hemodialysis Technician Program graduates first students

In 2017, Hilda Falla was among the first graduates of the newly redesigned Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences (MCSHS) Clinical Hemodialysis Technician Program.

Hemodialysis technicians care for people undergoing hemodialysis treatment due to kidney failure. They insert a needle into the patient's blood vessel or attach tubing to a catheter in the patient's chest. They also take blood samples, monitor vital signs, document care and manage dialysis equipment.

New career in new country

A native of Peru, Falla moved to the U.S. with her husband and daughters in 2003. She has a bachelor's degree in human nutrition and a master's degree in nutritional biochemistry. In Peru, she was assistant director of an infant nutrition program for a relief agency.

"We came to the United States for education and better jobs," she says. "Everything we do is for our daughters."


For Falla, it meant starting over with her education and career. She worked as a community health outreach worker and educator for the past 11 years. She completed the certified nursing assistant program at Hawthorne Education Center in Rochester, where she learned about the Clinical Hemodialysis Technician Program.

"I like helping people have the opportunity to be healthy and happy," she says.

Amanda Dunlop can attest to Falla's desire to bring cheer to her surroundings. Dunlop is a clinical hemodialysis technician at Mayo Clinic Health System – Albert Lea (Minnesota), where Falla did her clinical experience.

"Our patients were sad to see her go," she says.

Falla now works as a clinical hemodialysis technician at Mayo Clinic in Rochester. She plans to continue her education to become a registered renal dietitian.

Her hopes for coming to the U.S. are coming to fruition. She has a career in medicine, and her daughters are on their way to careers, too. Briggitte, 21, recently graduated in biomedical science from Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, where Stephanie, 20, is a student. 

A new flexible approach to learning

After a hiatus of more than a year, the 16-week Hemodialysis Technician Program was relaunched in 2017 with a flexible, blended-learning format.

Most of the curriculum is online. Students also have a weekly four-hour lab and a clinical day that can be arranged to fit their schedules.

Program Director Julie Yotter, RN, says many students see this entry-level position as a springboard to other health care careers. "It's a good way to learn if you like hands-on patient care and flexible enough that you can work or attend other classes during the program."

Mayo Clinic and Mayo Clinic Health System have many job opportunities for hemodialysis technicians. Annual salaries for hemodialysis technicians range from \$29,800 to \$46,300.



Hilda Falla



Anita Bissinger and Rachel Mattick

News briefs

Smoothing the way for social work interns in Mayo Clinic Health System

Anita Bissinger, LICSW, loves teaching new social workers — especially those drawn to work in rural communities. Bissinger is a social worker in the inpatient psychiatric unit at Mayo Clinic Health System in Austin. “Austin isn’t exactly rural,” she says, “but it’s darn close.”

Bissinger, who has a degree in education in addition to her social work credentials, sees herself as building the rural social worker practice, one intern at a time. “There aren’t enough social workers in small communities,” she says. “And we wear lots of hats in serving our patients.”

Bissinger almost always has an intern working with her. “I wish you could see my office,” she says of the smallish space designed for one. “I made it into a two-person office. That’s how much I want an intern here all the time.”

Rachel Mattick interned with Bissinger for six months in 2017 through Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences (MCSHS). “Everything Anita did, I was right behind her,” says Mattick. Over the course of her internship, she progressed from shadowing to working directly with patients under Bissinger’s supervision.

Mattick worked on discharge planning, family meetings,

guardianship planning, suicide prevention education and suicide evaluation. It was all done in close collaboration with psychiatrists, nurses and other care providers.

“Being here opened my eyes to how close-knit a team can be,” says Mattick.

In 2016, MCSHS made changes to make it easier for Mayo Clinic Health System hospitals to work with social work interns. The orientation, as well as coordination with the student’s school, is handled on the Rochester campus. The administrative changes were “a huge relief,” says Bissinger, leaving her more time for patient care and teaching.

Mayo Clinic Health System sites in Eau Claire, La Crosse, Mankato and Red Wing also welcome social worker interns who are pursuing a bachelor’s or master’s degree. Internship curriculum is the same at all locations, and students have the opportunity to work on the Rochester campus, too.

Mattick will earn her master’s degree in social work in 2018 from Mankato (Minnesota) State University. She grew up in a small town in southeastern Minnesota, and although she hasn’t decided yet where her ideal job might be, she says it’s likely to be in southeastern Minnesota.

A mentee is waiting for you!

Here’s an opportunity to share some of your career wisdom and experience. Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences Alumni Association is launching a mentor program called Alumni Connect.

Students have asked for more mentorship opportunities. The alumni association is providing the structure to connect mentor and mentee. You and the student take it from there.

- Students self-select a mentor based on profession and geography.
- It’s up to you and the student to arrange to connect electronically, over the phone or in person.
- You and the student define the parameters of your relationship. It could be short-term, offering guidance on landing a first job, or longer term over the student’s early career development.

Once the mentor database has a sizable number of volunteers, students will receive an email about Alumni Connect and how to use the program.

Sign up to be included in the Alumni Connect mentor database:

- Visit <https://mshsalumni.mayo.edu/>.
- If you haven’t yet, activate your account with your 10-digit alumni ID. (Obtain your number by clicking the blue “Request ID” button. You’ll receive your number via email.)
- Complete the mentorship form.
- Wait to hear from your mentee.



See your pharmacist on your cell phone

Alexandra Quinn, PharmD, R Ph, postgraduate year 2 (PGY-2) pharmacy resident, is focused on what kidney transplant candidates think about video visits with pharmacists.

In a research study, Quinn is comparing patient satisfaction for in-person pharmacist consults vs. video consults conducted via smartphone or computer. “I think video is a great option for patients, who can participate from

home or a hotel — wherever it’s convenient,” Quinn says.


In April, the Minnesota Society of Health-System Pharmacists (MSHP) presented Quinn with the PGY-2 Pharmacy Resident Outstanding Research Project Award. Quinn was selected based on the originality, patient care impact and innovation shown in her research. Pharmacists at the MSHP annual conference voted to determine honorees.

Two more MCSHS residents take top spots

Pharmacy residents from Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences claimed three of the four finalist honors for 2017 research awards from the Minnesota Society of Health-System Pharmacists (MSHP).

For its Outstanding Resident Research Project Award, MSHP named two finalists for each year of postgraduate residency. In addition to Alexandra Quinn, PharmD, R Ph, who received the Pharmacy Resident Outstanding Research Project Award for postgraduate year 2 (PGY-2), MCSHS finalists were:

- Logan Olson, PharmD, a PGY-1 pharmacy resident, for his research project “Warfarin Requirements: Heart Valve Replacement vs. Non-Heart Valve Replacement”
- Kristen Knoph, PharmD, BCPS, a PGY-2 pharmacy resident, for her research project “Bleeding Risk Associated with Apixiban Compared with Warfarin in Patients with Severe Chronic Kidney Disease and End-Stage Renal Disease”



Alexandra Quinn,
Logan Olson, and
Kristen Knoph



Mayo Clinic scores workplace honors

Check out these recent workplace recognitions for Mayo Clinic:

- *Forbes* magazine ranked Mayo Clinic No. 8 among 500 large organizations in its list of “America’s Best Employers 2017.”
- *Fortune* named Mayo Clinic to its 2017 list of the “100 Best Companies to Work For,” ranking it No. 84. This is Mayo’s 14th consecutive year on the list, which recognizes companies that rate highly with staff.
- Mayo Clinic was ranked No. 22 by *Fortune* magazine in its 2017 list of the top 30 “Best Workplaces in Health Care.”
- For the sixth consecutive year, Mayo Clinic has been named to DiversityInc’s “Top Hospitals and Health Systems,” a ranking that acknowledges organizations that demonstrate a significant commitment to diversity and inclusion. Mayo Clinic ranked No. 6.

Allied health job opportunities

Mayo Clinic, including Mayo Clinic Health System, is always seeking qualified candidates for allied health positions. Opportunities are especially high for:

- Physician assistants
- Nurse practitioners

As one of the world’s leading research and teaching hospitals, Mayo Clinic offers full support to take your career to the next level.

» LEARN MORE
mayocareers.com/MCSHS



A thank you note to the board of directors

Thank you to the 2016-2017 Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences Alumni Association Board of Directors. These volunteers provide direction for the alumni association and meet in Rochester once a year. See page 21 to learn how you can apply to be a board member.

Front row: Christina Lazer, Ruth Bello, Matthew Curran, Karen Sherk, Jocelyn Moen, Joan Hunziker-Dean, Jody Erickson

Back row: Jane Deering, Danicia Asberry, Judy Anderson, Andrew Walker, Stephanie Nunn, Courtney Grunewald, Karen Shaw, Caren Hughes, Rita Marquardt, Stacey Mroczenski, Brittany Dowling, Chelsey Hoffmann

Not pictured: Kimberly Bishop, Christopher Bleau, Jaime Engholdt, Kerri Hook, Claire Jensen, Erin Morris, Bella Panchmatia, Stacey Rizza, MD, Ruthann (Randy) Roesch



MCSHS open house set for Nov. 20

Know someone who's thinking about an allied health career? Or thinking about a career change?

All are welcome to learn about allied health education opportunities at the Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences (MCSHS) Open House. The free event is open to the public.

Nov. 20, 2017

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Phillips Hall, Siebens Building
Mayo Clinic, Rochester campus

Students and faculty from many MCSHS programs will be on hand. Tours of clinical and classroom areas are available.

» LEARN MORE

<http://www.mayo.edu/mayo-clinic-school-of-health-sciences/careers>

We welcome alumni and student news

Your comments, academic and career news, and story ideas are welcome. Email: connectionsmanager@mayo.edu

About *Connections* and MCSHS

Connections is published three times a year and mailed free of charge to alumni, students and friends of Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences (MCSHS).

MCSHS has a distinguished history of preparing students for successful careers in the health sciences. Mayo Clinic has been training allied health professionals for more than 100 years.

Nearly 1,700 students are enrolled in more than 128 MCSHS programs and rotations representing more than 68 health sciences careers. Programs are available at Mayo Clinic campuses in Arizona, Florida and Rochester.

Enrollment information

www.mayo.edu/mayo-clinic-school-of-health-sciences
507-284-3678 or
1-800-626-9041 (toll-free)
young.jolene@mayo.edu

Alumni information

<https://mshsalumni.mayo.edu>
Deborah Oscarson,
Alumni relations
business analyst
507-284-2317
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Stay in touch

You have three easy ways to update your address:

- Visit MCSHS alumni website <https://mshsalumni.mayo.edu>
- Email: mshsaa@mayo.edu
- Call 507-284-2317



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A mentee is waiting for you!

Register to be a part of Mayo Connect, a new mentor program through MCSHS Alumni Association

Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences Alumni Association is launching a mentor program called Alumni Connect. The alumni association provides the structure to connect mentor and mentee. You and the student take it from there, deciding how to connect and what you want to accomplish.

Share your career wisdom and experience. See page 25 to learn more about Alumni Connect and how to register.



MCSHA alumna Pam Lovett and mentee Jeannie Yen