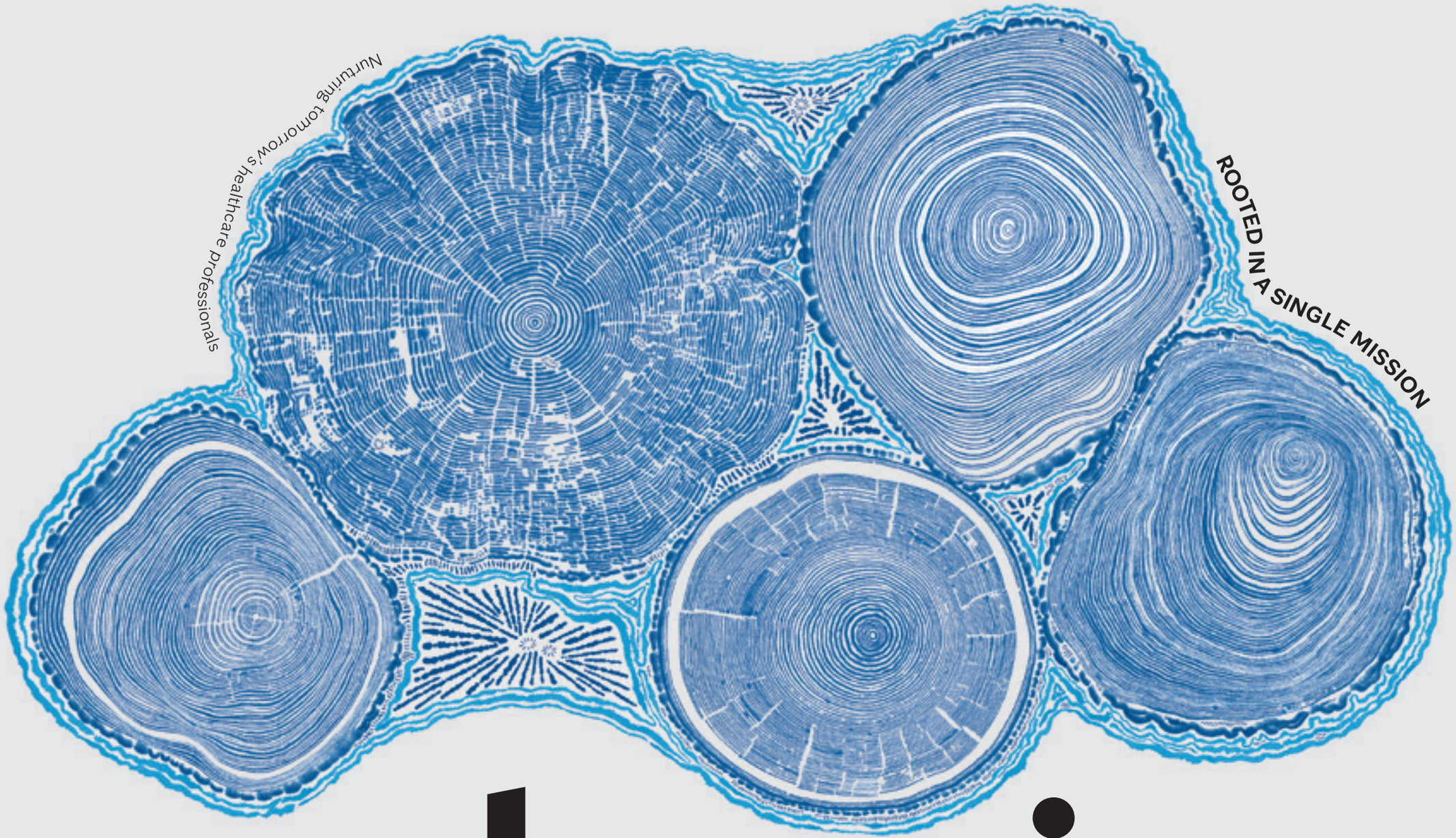

alumni

2026 • Issue 2

MAYO CLINIC

Letter from the **president**

It was a pleasure to see those of you who attended the Mayo Clinic Alumni Association International Program gathering in Sanremo, Italy, and inspiring to see the great work you are all doing. I want to thank all of you for carrying forward Mayo Clinic values into the world.

Part of Mayo's charge is to ensure that the next generation of the healthcare workforce is equipped to handle the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead of them. Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science is doing just that by providing many paths to Mayo's mission.

In this issue, you'll hear from learners and people from the college leading important work to help fulfill that charge.

Nneka I. Comfere, M.D. (MED '01, I1 '02, DERM '05, DPTH '06), the new Juanita Kious Waugh Executive Dean of Education and dean of the Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine, shares her journey from Nigeria to leading the Education shield and her vision for the future.

You'll read about **Christopher Camp, M.D.** (MED '10, OR '15), who has successfully created a program that aims to help people do more of what they love, while avoiding burnout and preserving their mental, physical and emotional health.

You'll also hear about **Kathryn Xu** (MED '27), a third-year student at Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine, who recently received a prestigious award for creating a dermatology clinic for people who are unhoused.

Brandon Trammell talks about his many careers in healthcare before finding his path to becoming a physician assistant through Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences.

Sydney Weaver (MPET '27), is receiving a Ph.D. through Mayo Clinic School of Biomedical Sciences in Arizona, and is focused on learning about therapeutic resistance to glioblastoma with the goal of developing targeted treatments for the disease.

Hamaad Khan, D.O. (I '25, PMR '28), is working on an idea that can significantly improve the quality of life for people like him who need prosthetic devices.

Finally, you'll meet the recipients of the Donald C. Balfour and Edward C. Kendall Alumni Awards, who were recognized for their outstanding research in a clinical area.

Thank you for your continued support of these outstanding educational programs at Mayo Clinic.

Burkhard Wippermann, M.D. (BIOM '87)
President, Mayo Clinic Alumni Association
Department of Orthopaedics and
Trauma Surgery
Helios Albert-Schweitzer-Klinik Northeim
Northeim, Germany

About the cover: This cross-section of a tree suggests many distinct origins and stages of development layered into one unified form. It reflects how diverse educational paths, pivots and disciplines within Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science each contribute to a shared mission of advancing healthcare in new and meaningful ways.

Illustration by Anna Higgie

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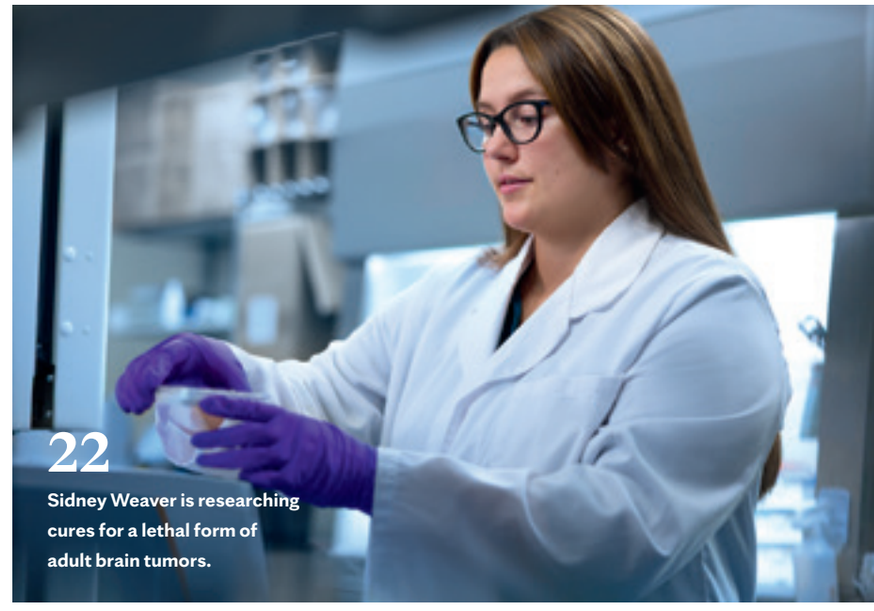

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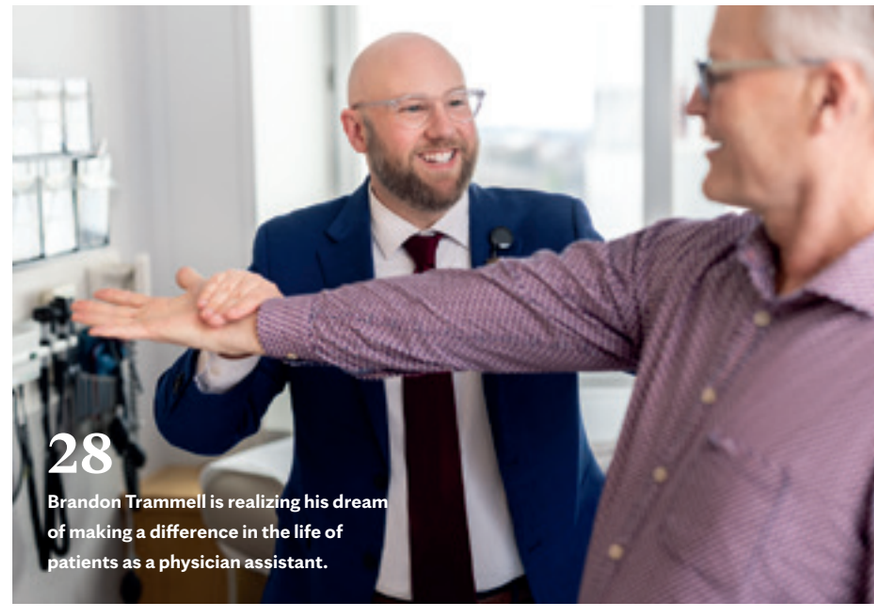
Sidney Weaver is researching cures for a lethal form of adult brain tumors.



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Brandon Trammell is realizing his dream of making a difference in the life of patients as a physician assistant.

PHOTOGRAPHY: (BURKHARD WIPPERMANN, M.D., SIDNEY WEAVER) PETE PALLAGI; (BRANDON TRAMMELL) JEANNA DUERSCHERL

RIGHT AT HOME

Welcoming the new education dean

Meet Nneka I. Comfere, M.D. (MED ’01, I1 ’02, DERM ’05, DPTH ’06), the new Juanita Kious Waugh Executive Dean of Education and dean of the Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine.

When **Nneka I. Comfere, M.D.,** walked into Mayo Clinic in Rochester in 1997 as an incoming medical student, **she immediately felt at home**.

It was a homecoming that echoed the values of her upbringing 6,500 miles away in Zaria, Kaduna State, in northern Nigeria, Africa.

The values that she grew up with and that Dr. Comfere's parents had ingrained in her were the importance of respect, integrity, compassion, healing, teamwork, innovation, empathy and stewardship — the same RICH TIES values of Mayo — though they were articulated differently.

"I walked through the doors, and it felt like home away from home," Dr. Comfere says. "The staff shared similar values, and they were all anchored in the mission — the needs of the patient come first — and shared a sense of purpose. I just knew that this was the place where I wanted to train."

Her expertise, skills and experience have catapulted Dr. Comfere to the highest role in shaping the next generation of healthcare professionals. She was recently appointed as the new Juanita Kious Waugh Executive Dean of Education and dean of the Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine — a service she sees as an opportunity to give back to the institution that has given her so much.

EARLY DAYS

Although Dr. Comfere was born in Tallahassee, Florida, her family moved to Nigeria when she was three years old to help rebuild the country after a recent civil war.

A daughter of a professor of biochemistry (her father) and a

PHOTOGRAPHY, PAGES 4–5: (NNEKA I. COMFERE, M.D.) JEANNA DUERSCHERL; PAGE 7: (PERSONAL PHOTOS) COURTESY OF NNEKA I. COMFERE, M.D.

university administrator (her mother), Dr. Comfere's interest in science blossomed at an early age. She would spend time after school in her father's office examining organic chemistry models of molecules or poring through his hefty medical atlases and textbooks, which contained medical illustrations.

"I was fascinated by the varied presentations of disease," Dr. Comfere says.

After attending St. Louis College secondary school in Jos, Plateau State, she enrolled in Ahmadu Bello University, a six-year medical school in Zaria. However, the political unrest in Nigeria made it impossible for her to complete medical school there.

MAKING IT TO THE PREMIER DESTINATION FOR MEDICINE

After her parents made the difficult decision to leave Nigeria and move back to the U.S., Dr. Comfere enrolled in Florida State University, where she received an undergraduate degree in biochemistry.

Though her medical aspirations developed in Nigeria, Dr. Comfere knew of Mayo Clinic as the "premier destination for medicine," where people from all over the world seek answers to their complex medical conditions.

She applied and was accepted to medical school at Mayo Clinic and, from day 1, her experience far exceeded her expectations.

Following medical school, Dr. Comfere completed her dermatology residency and dermatopathology fellowship at the Mayo Clinic School of Graduate Medical Education. She also is a Kern Scholar alumna of the Robert D. and Patricia E. Kern Center for the Science of Health Care Delivery research program.

Dr. Comfere is a professor of Dermatology and of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology at Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science, a consultant in Dermatology with a joint appointment in the Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology, and chair of the Division of Dermatopathology and Cutaneous Immunopathology in the Department of Dermatology at Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM MANY

Dr. Comfere credits her success to the many faculty and colleagues she has encountered at Mayo Clinic.

"I've been surrounded by inspiring, dedicated, committed mentors, and administrative partners — numerous people who have shaped my professional development," she says. "We are incredibly privileged to have such a collaborative atmosphere that allows us to build deep relationships that transcend hierarchy or type of position."

Of all the lessons she has learned along the way, she is most anchored by the strong sense of purpose behind the work that is consistently geared toward meeting the needs of patients.

Mayo's primary value — the needs of the patient come first — is tangible and evident in the way the staff at Mayo Clinic go about their work, which includes teamwork and collaboration, Dr. Comfere says.

"No one does it better than we do," Dr. Comfere says. "We all come from different backgrounds with different perspectives and have had different sets of experiences, but each of us has something valuable to offer in service to the patient. Collectively, we're stronger than any one of us is individually."

"The staff shared similar values, and they were all anchored in the mission — the needs of the patient come first — and shared a sense of purpose. ***I just knew that this was the place where I wanted to train."***

– Nneka I. Comfere, M.D.

Left to right: Nneka I. Comfere, M.D., feels welcome in Minnesota; at her medical school graduation

Nneka I. Comfere, M.D., is the new Juanita Kious Waugh Executive Dean of Education and dean of the Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine.

BUILDING ON A STRONG FOUNDATION

It's that same spirit of service and teamwork that Dr. Comfere brings to her new roles as the new Juanita Kious Waugh Executive Dean of Education and dean of the Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine.

She succeeds **Fredric Meyer, M.D.** (NS '87), who served with distinguished leadership in the position for 10 years.

Dr. Meyer and John Poe, chair of Education Administration, have set a strong foundation in Education, building teams that are passionate about and dedicated to Mayo's education mission and priorities, Dr. Comfere says. Her goal is to build on that strong foundation.

"There are certain key initiatives that we've identified, including a focus on pathway programs, workforce of the future, innovation and entrepreneurship," Dr. Comfere says. "Our success in delivering on the Bold. Forward. mission will require a coalition of forces with the deans of our schools and institutional leaders to help translate the Education shield's vision into one that reflects the unique strengths of each school and the college at large."

Dr. Comfere aims to create pathway programs in partnership with community schools and organizations so that anyone interested in a healthcare role can see a clear mission-aligned pathway to a long and successful career at Mayo Clinic.

As healthcare undergoes a rapid transformation fueled by advancements in digital health and artificial intelligence technologies,

PHOTOGRAPHY: (NNEKA I. COMFERE, M.D., FREDRIC MEYER, M.D.) JEANNA DUERSCHERL

Dr. Comfere wants people to be equipped with the right skills to match the pace of change. That means not only educating new students but also providing opportunities for Mayo's current workforce to acquire new skills.

New tools and technologies are changing the way learners and faculty interact, Dr. Comfere says.

"A lot of information consumption is happening asynchronously, where learners are acquiring that knowledge on their own," she says. "Faculty are now serving more as coaches and guides to the real-world application of knowledge and to answer questions about edge-case scenarios that may not necessarily be in the textbooks."

Looking ahead, Dr. Comfere sees innovation and entrepreneurship skills as more important now than ever.

"We have a generation of learners who are hungry for opportunities to design and build solutions that can be translated into practice," she says.

Beyond engaging learners in such processes, it will be critical to teach leadership skills to young professionals in training so that they can serve as role models and learn to adapt to change, regardless of their roles. Learners will need critical thinking skills and a continuous learning mindset, as well as the ability to lead through uncertainty.

A LASTING GIFT

Dr. Comfere is grateful for the enduring gifts she has received.

"We've been given the unique gift of the Mayo Model of Care, and we carry that with us wherever we go," she says. "It's a privilege to recognize and share that gift with patients, through the care we provide and to colleagues, within and outside our walls. Our alumni represent an interconnected network that we rely on to support each other and to advance Mayo's mission and values." •

Thanking Fredric Meyer, M.D., for a legacy of leadership

The Mayo Clinic Alumni Association thanks **Fredric Meyer, M.D.** (NS '87), for his leadership in championing academic excellence and innovation to advance Mayo Clinic's educational mission since he was appointed the Juanita Kious Waugh Executive Dean for Education of the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science and dean of Mayo Clinic School of Medicine in 2016.

Under his leadership, Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine was consistently recognized as a Tier 1 Best Medical School for Research by U.S. News & World Report; expanded its national footprint and curriculum through digital health and simulation-based learning; and advanced physician-scientist training. He also helped lead key initiatives, such as redesigning the Mitchell Building and developing the Integrated Education and Research Building to create more student-centered learning environments.

Dr. Meyer has overseen historic Bold. Forward. philanthropic investments during his tenure, including the transformative gift from Jay Alix to name the Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine, a $10 million gift to launch the Mayo Clinic Harper Family Foundation Artificial Intelligence Education in Medicine Program — advancing AI education for staff, students and trainees, and a $5 million gift to accelerate AI education and establish the Richard M. Schulze Innovation Awards in Artificial Intelligence — recognizing excellence in AI-driven innovation.

Dr. Meyer has also been a passionate advocate for belonging and leadership development, championing programs such as:

- Belonging Pathway Programs
- Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine® — a nationally recognized fellowship preparing senior women faculty for leadership roles in academic health sciences
- Executive Leadership in Health Care — a parallel program for senior women leaders in hospitals and health systems, focused on clinical operations and healthcare delivery
- Mentorship of Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine students to attend national leadership conferences like RISE AAMC, helping shape the next generation of medical leaders

A renowned neurosurgeon who specializes in treating complex brain tumors and cerebrovascular disease, Dr. Meyer will continue seeing patients, conducting research and mentoring faculty and students at Mayo Clinic.

Skin in the **game**

Third-year medical student wins prestigious award for creating meaningful change in community

Kathryn Xu (MED '27), a third-year medical student in the Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine, is a recent recipient of the Herbert W. Nickens Award from the Association of American Medical Colleges.

Xu is one of only five third-year medical students nationwide who received the award for their leadership in efforts to promote equal opportunity in medical education and access to quality healthcare for people in underserved communities. She was recognized for her work in creating a free dermatology clinic for people experiencing homelessness and for launching a "Skin of Color" lecture series for medical students.

Her path to receiving the award was not a linear one.

WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

Medical school had not always been on Xu's radar. She first imagined that she'd follow in her mother's footsteps as a researcher.

Born in Beijing, China, Xu immigrated to St. Louis, Missouri, when she was five years old with her mother, who had been a physician in China. Xu's mother left

that life behind to start over in the U.S. as a researcher in pediatrics so that Xu could have greater educational opportunities. Growing up as an immigrant with a single mother and limited financial support shaped Xu's understanding of what it means to navigate inequities within unfamiliar systems.

While in college, Xu realized that the aspect of research she loved the most was the impact that it could have on patient care. Shadowing a physician through one of her labs, she enjoyed the experience of seeing patients, which cemented her interest in medical school.

Xu took a gap year and worked as a medical assistant in a dermatology clinic and saw patients who had delayed medical care because of a lack of access or because they couldn't afford the care. She also witnessed how skin conditions present differently in patients with skin of color and how these differences are often underrecognized or misdiagnosed. In that environment, she identified gaps in dermatologic care, which sparked her interest in dermatology as a career pathway with a goal of serving a diverse patient population.

Kathryn Xu presents the Skin of Color lecture series, which helps students learn that diseases present differently in people of color.

FINDING THE RIGHT SCHOOL

When Xu began exploring medical school and learned of the street medicine selective at Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine, she knew where she was headed. The street medicine selective is relatively new at the Rochester campus and offers students firsthand experience in caring for people who are unhoused. The program is held in conjunction with the Zumbro Valley Medical Society — a nonprofit professional membership organization serving 3,000 physicians and physicians in training in southern Minnesota.

"I thought that it was really amazing for an institution to support that program for medical students," Xu says. "I became involved in the program in my first year. What we learn in medical school classrooms often differs from the kinds of skills we need to provide care to patients in the real world, especially patients from underrepresented or marginalized communities."

ADDRESSING UNMET NEEDS IN THE COMMUNITY

Xu is passionate about bringing care to people who are experiencing homelessness when and where they need it.

"We often expect patients to attend follow-up appointments, pick up their prescriptions on time and take their medications right away," she says. "However, this isn't feasible for all patients."

Xu began to understand that access to care isn't just where a clinic exists. It is whether care makes sense in the real conditions of a person's life.

Xu asked Beth Kangas, executive director of Zumbro Valley Medical Society, what the community needed. The response aligned perfectly with Xu's own interest: dermatology care.

Then, the real work began.

"It took a lot of planning," Xu says.

She gathered input from interested physicians and residents in Dermatology at Mayo Clinic as well as members of the community who had experienced homelessness, whose perspective would be invaluable in planning the clinics.

"Having them there pointed us toward the right direction of resources we would need to tailor our clinics to people who need it," Xu says.

The dermatology clinics were launched at a local church that was already providing free meals on Saturdays that drew people in. The clinics were staffed with physicians, residents, nursing students, social work students and more.

"It was a very multidisciplinary team inspired by Mayo as a whole and the team-based care that it provides," Xu says.

PHOTOGRAPHY, PAGES 10–11, 13: (KATHRYN XU) EASTON GREEN; (PERSONAL PHOTOS) COURTESY OF KATHRYN XU

Kathryn Xu provides needed care for a patient at a free dermatology clinic held at Christ United Methodist Church in Rochester.

The group identified that the most pressing needs of the community were free socks and shoes, and hygiene products. Xu and the team even arranged transportation to get people to the clinics.

"All of those things helped us be more approachable for the patients," she says.

Over time, the care team has built trust with the community and adapted to create resources, such as a list of places that offer free showers and free hygiene products that fit the needs of the patients.

While Xu was initially disappointed at the small turnout when the clinics first started, she has since learned the true meaning of success.

"It doesn't matter how many patients we saw," she says. "The fact that we're able to help even one of them with a problem that they wouldn't have otherwise sought help for is enough."

Xu credits Mayo Clinic's Department of Dermatology and Zumbro Valley Medical Society for their support in keeping the clinics going.

***"What we learn in medical school classrooms often differs from the kind of skills we need to provide care to patients in the real world**, especially patients from underrepresented or marginalized communities."*

– Kathryn Xu

"Mayo has been really generous with institutional support and Zumbro Valley Medical Society helped make these clinics possible through coordination and community grant funding," she says.

CREATING CHANGE THROUGH A CONVERSATION

Xu's second project ran parallel, driven by the same urgency to address a gap — this time, in medical education.

Her mentor in medical school was **Michael Zhang, M.D.** (DERM '25), a resident in dermatology at the time. Dr. Zhang listened as she outlined her concerns that traditional medical education typically did not address caring for diverse patient populations, especially those with skin of color.

Disease doesn't look the same on every skin tone — but students aren't always taught that. Xu knew it from experience, from earlier work in dermatology, and from reading and seeing what standard materials routinely left out.

With Dr. Zhang's help, Xu launched the Skin of Color lecture series to help bridge that gap. The lectures are run by students and residents and funded through medical school grants.

Xu and Dr. Zhang were able to show that these lectures significantly improved medical students' knowledge and confidence in diagnosing and managing skin diseases present in skin of color. The team is working on efforts to integrate the lectures across campuses and through formal curricula.

"I am incredibly proud of Kathryn and the leadership she has demonstrated in advancing meaningful conversations around dermatologic equity," Dr. Zhang says. "Even as a medical student, she distinguishes herself as an independent thinker and thoughtful problem solver, consistently approaching complex issues with a level of maturity and intellectual rigor well beyond her stage of training — qualities rooted in genuine passion and curiosity. She is deeply caring toward her patients and colleagues alike, and

Connecting generations

Medical school alumni help shape the future of aspiring physicians

Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine

For the first time in Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine's history, alumni are playing a role in the medical school admissions process — strengthening ties across generations while helping shape the future of the profession.

The Alumni in Admissions initiative, which was launched this year, connects Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine graduates with applicants during interview season. What began as a simple idea — to engage alumni more meaningfully — has quickly evolved into a dynamic experience: part student recruitment, part evaluation and entirely relationship-driven.

Each year, the medical school receives approximately 6,000 applications across its three campuses in Arizona, Florida and Minnesota. Roughly 680 applicants are invited to interview, with about 160 ultimately receiving initial offers of admission. This year, alongside their traditional faculty interviews, applicants also met virtually with Mayo Clinic medical school alumni.

"Our alumni interviewers bring an extraordinary richness of perspective to the admissions process," says **Megha Tollefson, M.D.** (MED '03, PD '06, DERM '10), senior associate dean for Admissions at Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine. "They understand the values that define a Mayo Clinic physician — putting the needs of the patient first, working collaboratively and leading with integrity. For applicants, meeting alumni across the country who once stood in their shoes is both inspiring and affirming and reflects the enduring strength of the Mayo family."

PHOTOGRAPHY: (ALIX SCHOOL) PAUL FLESSLAND; (KATHRYN XU WITH MICHAEL ZHANG, M.D.) EASTON GREEN

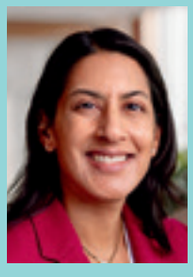
her warmth and generosity of spirit make her a true joy to work with. It has been a privilege to support her vision for the Skin of Color lecture series and to help create space for advancing medical education and dermatologic equity, and I look forward to the lasting impact it will have long after she graduates from Mayo."

VESTED IN THE WORK

Xu sees the lectures and the clinics as important work that she hopes will continue after she has moved on to her residency.

"I'm really grateful because I have received a lot of support from Mayo Clinic," Xu says. "I have been able to present at a lot of amazing conferences. I would never have had these opportunities if it weren't for the people who came before me — especially people who believed in me and my projects. It is so important to keep investing in students." •

Kathryn Xu and her mentor, Michael Zhang, M.D.



Megha Tollefson, M.D.

Nearly 90 alumni volunteered in the program's inaugural year, with about 80 participating actively throughout the fall interview season. Organizers initially hoped to recruit between 100 and 140 volunteers — an ambitious goal for a first-time effort — and were encouraged by the strong response.

Each virtual visit lasted about 20 minutes. Alumni were provided with orientation, expectations and a bank of scenario-based questions tied directly to Mayo Clinic's RICH TIES values, which stand for respect, integrity, compassion, healing, teamwork, innovation, excellence and stewardship. Conversations were designed to explore how applicants might respond to real-world clinical situations while also giving alumni the opportunity to share their own experiences as medical students.

The goal was not only to assess candidates, but to introduce them to the distinctive Mayo Clinic culture — something that can be difficult to describe on a website or during a formal interview.

For alumni, the experience offered something equally meaningful: reconnection.

Many participants now practice across the country and around the world. The conversations allowed them to reflect on their time at Mayo Clinic and contribute to the next generation of physicians.

"I think the interviews were a very good idea as they allowed the applicants to learn more about Mayo and allowed alumni to become more involved with Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine," says **Thomas Smith, M.D.** (MED '83). "What might be even more important is how I was able to show Mayo in a very positive light. I am sure these applicants are the cream of the crop and will be admitted to several good schools. I was able to show them the ways that Mayo stands out and discussed why they should attend Mayo if accepted."

Feedback from both groups was overwhelmingly positive. In post-interview surveys, 98% of applicants said they had not experienced anything similar at another medical school. One applicant described the conversation as "an experience unlike any other" in the admissions process.

"The alumni visit is a unique aspect to Mayo that I have not experienced elsewhere, and I hope Mayo continues to utilize it in future cycles as it was both enjoyable and beneficial," says Miriam Elsawy, who participated in the program and was ultimately accepted into Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine. "**Jennifer Chiang, M.D.** (MED '22), was very kind and took the time to answer all my questions. Speaking with her helped me dig deeper into Mayo's culture, and I was able to truly envision myself as a Mayo student."

Alumni noted how rewarding it was to engage with future physicians and see Mayo Clinic's mission reflected in a new generation.

Evaluations from alumni were reviewed alongside faculty interview scores and application materials when the admissions committee met in January to select the incoming class. While the evaluative component was valuable, program leaders are already considering refinements for next year — including placing even greater emphasis on recruitment and conversation.

"We see tremendous potential in making this even more relationship-centered," says Zach Huston, a program manager in Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine. "The evaluation piece matters, but the connection matters just as much."

As the program moves into its second year, its impact is already clear. Beyond adding a thoughtful layer to the admissions process, the initiative reinforces a broader goal: cultivating physicians who not only train at Mayo Clinic, but choose to build their careers here — advancing patient care, education and leadership for decades to come.

The Alumni in Admissions program reflects a simple but powerful truth: the strength of Mayo Clinic has always been its people and the generations who carry its values forward.

Sensing a need

Resident's prosthetic sensor aims to help others like him

Left: Hamaad Khan, D.O., as a young boy; right: On vacation

Hamaad Khan, D.O. (I '25, PMR '28), has an idea that can significantly improve the quality of life for people who need prosthetic devices.

Dr. Khan didn't set out to be an innovator, but his firsthand experience wearing a prosthetic has propelled him to become one. His goal is to develop sensor technology to help fit amputees to their prosthetic limbs with precision.

PAIRING WITH PROSTHETICS

Dr. Khan is a resident at Mayo Clinic School of Graduate Medical Education in Florida specializing in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. He also is one of 1.7 million people in the U.S. using a prosthetic limb due to limb loss.

He was born in New York with only a partial left arm due to amniotic band syndrome, a condition he experienced while in the womb.

He has worn prosthetics since he was three months old. But that hasn't slowed him down any. Initially, he was fitted with a cosmetic prosthetic, which resembles a hand but does not function like one.

He required a new prosthetic arm every time he outgrew the previous one. By the time he was 17, he had worn nearly 20 prostheses, each one taking several weeks of fitting and sizing before he could use it.

PHOTOGRAPHY: (HAMAAD KHAN, D.O.) S. WADE RAMBO; (PERSONAL PHOTOS) COURTESY OF HAMAAD KHAN, D.O.

It wasn't until Dr. Khan was 17 and interested in becoming an emergency medicine technician (EMT) that he realized that he would need more function in his arm to be able to perform the tasks required in that role.

"I realized very quickly that I was going to need a bit more function to tie knots or open IV bags," he says.

Dr. Khan consulted his prosthetist who fitted him with a body-powered prosthesis, which gave him greater functionality. He can operate the prosthesis by pulling on the cable, which opens and closes a device at the end of his arm, allowing him to grasp objects with a fine motor capability that he hadn't had until then.

He not only completed his EMT training but went on to lead his university's volunteer EMT service while still an undergraduate student.

ANSWERING THE CALL

The joy of taking care of people had taken hold of him.

"It was my first introduction to medicine, and I was surprised that I enjoyed it," Dr. Khan says. "You see people in a pretty bad situation, and you can help them pretty quickly."

A career in medicine seemed like the next logical step, but he wasn't entirely sure which field he wanted to pursue.

Participating in a research study changed all that.

Dr. Khan was part of a national study on evaluating how upper extremity amputees use their prostheses to complete complex tasks. By this time, through trial, failure and practice, he had learned to use his prosthesis well and was part of a standardized evaluation on how patients fare with them.

Hamaad Khan, D.O., Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) resident, is leading the development of a specialized prosthetic device with funding from Mayo Clinic Research Innovation.

Studies show that ill-fitted prosthetics can lead to pressure injuries, skin breakdown, hypersensitivity and other problems that may keep people from using their prosthesis daily.

PHOTOGRAPHY: (PROSTHETIC DEVICE) S. WADE RAMBO; (HAMAAD KHAN, D.O. WITH COLLEAGUES) PAUL NAJLIS

Hamaad Khan, D.O., and colleagues working with an anatomical spine model

He performed several tasks including tying a knot and using a key. Observing him from a corner was **F. Clay Smither, M.D.** (MED '15, PMR '19), who was doing a limb loss fellowship at the Richmond Veterans Association at the time. Dr. Smither is now the chair of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

Dr. Khan talked to Dr. Smither about his medical career aspirations and mentioned that he wanted to help amputees but wasn't sure where to focus. Dr. Smither introduced him to the world of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and encouraged him to pursue that.

Dr. Khan went on to complete his medical school training at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine in Bradenton, Florida, and took a Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation elective at Brooks Rehabilitation in Jacksonville, Florida.

"It confirmed that this is something I really feel a passion for," Dr. Khan says.

From there, he matched into the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation residency program at Mayo Clinic in Florida, making him part of the first class of residents to graduate from the program. While Mayo Clinic in Rochester has one of the longest-standing Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation programs in the country, Mayo Clinic in Florida welcomed its inaugural class of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation residents in 2024.

SEARCHING FOR THE PROPER FIT

When Dr. Khan arrived in Florida for medical school, it was right in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic.

He had been fitted with a myoelectric prosthesis, an externally powered artificial limb that uses electrical signals from his own muscles to control its movements. Sensors detect muscle contractions in the residual limb and translate them into commands providing functionality for tasks such as grasping and holding objects with greater precision and a more lifelike range of motion.

Dr. Khan was having trouble controlling the movement in his hand, but he wasn't sure why.

With the world at a standstill because of COVID-19, Dr. Khan

Hamaad Khan, D.O., and Katie Boniface making adjustments to a prosthetic device

was communicating virtually with his prosthetist in Virgina to figure out what was happening. He later discovered that there was a crack in the limb's socket, and air was leaking in and out.

"Usually, sockets are designed to have an airtight system so there's a good connection between the prosthetic limb and the arm," he says. "Once you get a good fit, you're great, you can do whatever you want, but the process to get there can be painful."

Dr. Khan's experience and conversations with others like him inspired him to find an answer. He also was concerned about those who were lower extremity amputees.

"For lower limb amputees, if you don't have a good fit, you're not walking," he says. "If you're not walking, you don't have the ability to be free in what you're doing."

Dr. Khan wanted to have a way of gaining better insight into what wasn't working so that it could be fixed correctly.

"Right now, patients go to the prosthetist when there's a problem, and say, 'It just doesn't feel right,'" he says. "Objectively, we need some data of what is happening inside that socket so that we can determine where we need to make the fix."

Studies show that ill-fitted prosthetics can lead to pressure injuries, skin breakdown, hypersensitivity and other problems that may keep people from using their prosthesis daily.

Beyond that, Dr. Khan's training had taught him that amputation doesn't always happen in isolation.

PHOTOGRAPHY: (HAMAAD KHAN, D.O., AND KATIE BONIFACE) S. WADE RAMBO; (PERSONAL PHOTO) COURTESY OF HAMAAD KHAN, D.O.

"There's a lot of amazing stuff happening at Mayo, and I think we can learn from each other. ***There are opportunities to mentor or help pitch ideas, which would benefit innovators at any stage of developing new products."***

– Hamaad Khan, D.O.

Hamaad Khan, D.O., with his prosthetist, Ben Koch

It may be a result of a stroke or a brain injury where patients may not always be able to articulate what the problem might be.

"We now have a communication barrier and when someone says it doesn't feel right, the prosthetist has to take a guess at what might be happening," Dr. Khan says.

The innovation Dr. Khan is working on aims to bring sensor technologies into the socket itself and identify areas during the fitting that might lead to discomfort or injury with the continued use of the prosthesis.

"The goal is to catch these problem points early in the socket creation process and provide a comfortable fit for the patient with greater time and cost-effectiveness," he says.

Dr. Khan's idea won Mayo Clinic in Florida's 2024 Alligator Tank healthcare innovation competition, and $50,000 in funding toward making the idea a reality. With additional funding from Mayo Clinic's Clinical Practice Committee grants, he is well on his way to beginning the prototype phase.

While balancing his residency responsibilities with bringing his idea to life can be challenging at times, he says the residency program leaders like **John K. Evans II, D.O.** (PMR '19), residency program director for Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and James Atchison, chair of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Mayo Clinic in Florida, have been incredibly supportive to him.

Dr. Khan also has found great support through Mayo Clinic Ventures, Mayo's Division of Engineering and the Innovation Exchange.

"Hardware and software engineering is something that I don't have training on," Dr. Khan says. "So, a lot of this is relying on other people with that experience. I've met some really intelligent, amazing people in just a year."

He wants anyone with connections to Mayo to share the spirit of innovation around the world.

"There's a lot of amazing stuff happening at Mayo, and I think we can learn from each other," Dr. Khan says. "There are opportunities to mentor or help pitch ideas, which would benefit innovators at any stage of developing new products." •

Driven to **discover**

Graduate student searches for cure for lethal adult primary brain tumor

When **Sidney Weaver** (MPET ’27), packed her bags and moved from Stevensville, Michigan, to Phoenix, Arizona, she had a clear purpose in mind. She wanted to be a part of the process that brings therapeutic treatments for diseases that don’t have a cure yet.

Years earlier, as an undergraduate student at Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Weaver was majoring in biomedical science with an eye toward medicine. She joined a research lab to strengthen her résumé ahead of taking the Medical College Admission Test.

After two years in the lab, Weaver found herself staying up late exploring scientific literature, eagerly heading to lab after classes and spending countless hours discussing ideas with her undergraduate mentor.

But was she ready to pivot to a career in research? She didn’t know yet.

Undecided, Weaver joined a research lab at the University of Michigan, where she worked on projects related to drug discovery.

Around that same time, a pivotal moment for her family helped her firm up her decision. Her grandfather was told he would need a double lung transplant.

There was an option that would significantly increase his chances of getting that transplant. It was a clinical trial that was not yet FDA-approved, and Weaver’s grandparents were ready to sign up for it.

However, the rest of the family needed some convincing.

With her background in biomedical science and her recent experience in the drug discovery research lab, Weaver was able to translate the medical jargon and

"I have the support from my mentors, lab mates and colleagues. ***Through teamwork and collaboration, nothing is impossible to overcome."***

– Sidney Weaver

Top: Sidney Weaver was a competitive swimmer through college.

Bottom: Sidney Weaver with her grandfather at her wedding

explain the process of clinical trials to her family.

He wasn't going to be experimented on, she explained to them. Her grandfather received his transplant and is still here today — present at weddings, meeting his grandchildren and great-grandchild, living in years that once felt uncertain.

"It's definitely helped create a lot more memories," Weaver says. "The idea of being a part of that for someone else is what ultimately motivated me."

Graduate school was no longer a fallback plan. It became the plan.

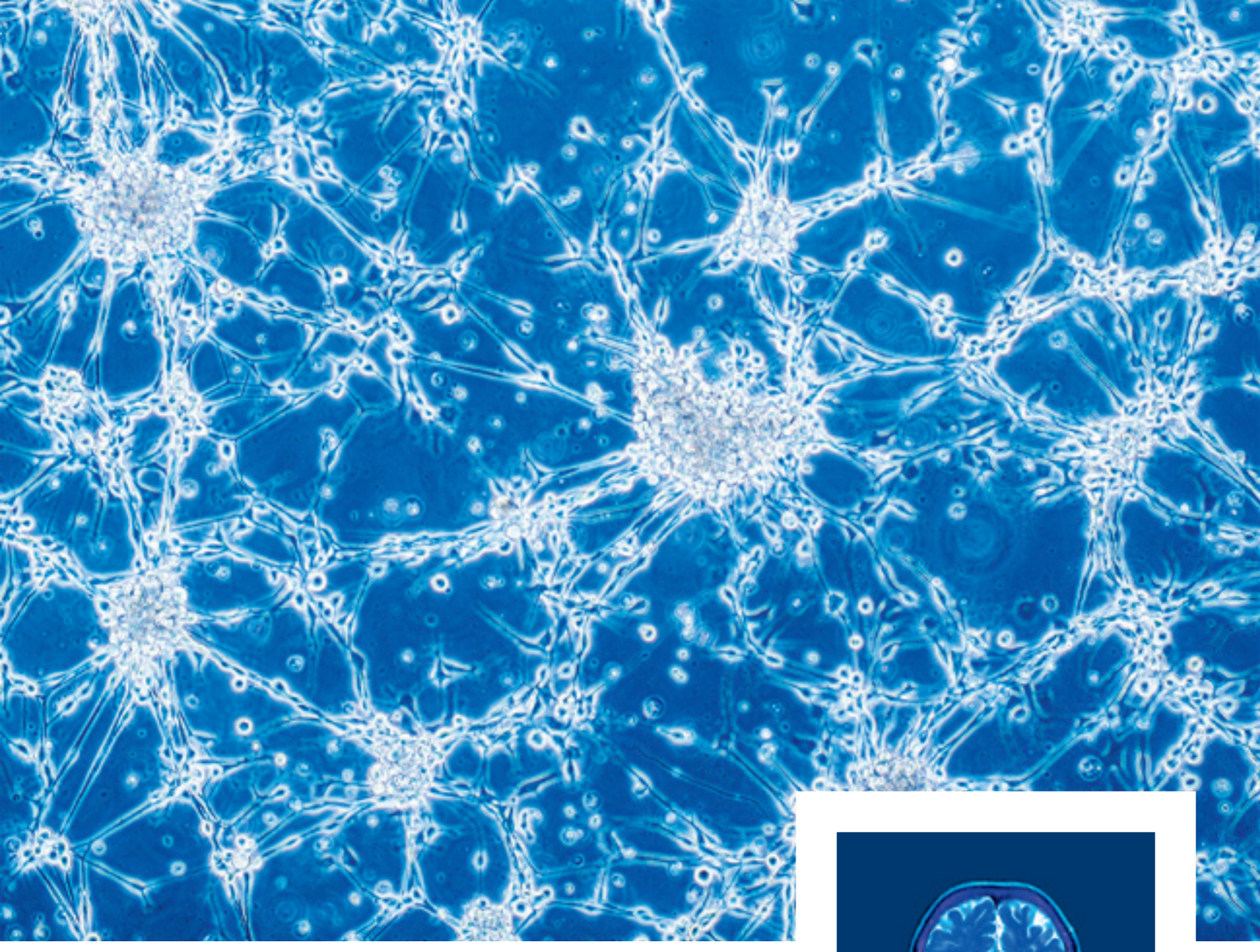
DISCOVERING MAYO CLINIC AS AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

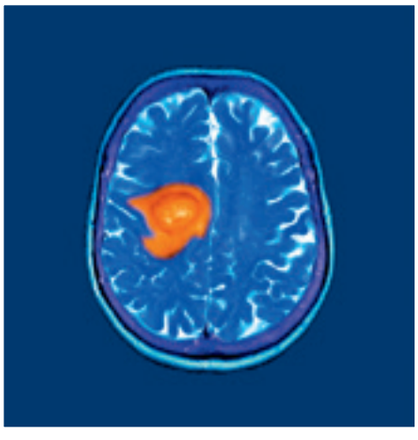
Like many outside the institution, Weaver initially knew of Mayo Clinic as one of the world's top hospitals. When a friend mentioned its graduate programs, Weaver started digging deeper. Information sessions for the Mayo Clinic Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences introduced her to the Molecular Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (MPET) Ph.D. track — an ideal fit for someone drawn to drug discovery and therapeutic development.

The appeal was clear: a nontraditional academic environment embedded within a leading medical center.

"I chose Mayo Clinic because of its opportunities in translational

PHOTOGRAPHY, PAGE 23: (SIDNEY WEAVER) PETE PALLAGI; (PERSONAL PHOTOS) COURTESY OF SIDNEY WEAVER; (GLIOBLASTOMA CELLS) ANNA DURINIKOVA/SHUTTERSTOCK; (GLIOBLASTOMA COMPUTED TOMOGRAPHY) DR. P. MARAZZI/SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY/GETTY





Top: Glioblastoma brain cancer cells under a microscope

Bottom: Glioblastoma brain cancer shown in a colored computed tomography scan of a section of the brain of an 84-year-old female patient

research, its reputation for advancing biomedical sciences and the competitive stipend that supports graduate students," Weaver says. "In addition, the graduate school's tri-site academic structure allows students to prosper from any site they choose."

"It's a unique place to learn and grow," she says. "You're surrounded by people who are directly connected to patient care."

TACKLING ONE OF CANCER'S TOUGHEST DIAGNOSES

As a graduate student in the cancer biology lab of **Nhan Tran, Ph.D.** (CB '16), Weaver focuses on understanding therapeutic resistance in glioblastoma, the most lethal adult primary brain tumor with a five-year survival rate of less than 5%.

Despite advances across oncology, the standard-of-care protocol for glioblastoma traces back to 2005. Average survival remains just 12 to 15 months after diagnosis. Recurrence is almost inevitable.

That reality fuels her work.

Weaver studies molecular signaling pathways that become dysregulated in glioblastoma, investigating how they drive disease progression and whether they can be targeted to open new therapeutic doors. It's meticulous, often unpredictable work. Hypotheses fail. Experiments require redesign.

"That's what's most exciting about being a scientist," she says. "We're not following a textbook. We're part of the discovery process."

That process, she emphasizes, is never solitary.

Left to right, clockwise: Sidney Weaver reviewing data; examining a lab specimen; working with her colleague, Nhan Tran, Ph.D.

"I chose Mayo Clinic because of its opportunities in translational research, its reputation for advancing biomedical sciences and the competitive stipend that supports graduate students. ... ***It's a unique place to learn and grow. You're surrounded by people who are directly connected to patient care."***

– Sidney Weaver

Dr. Tran's lab includes students from multiple graduate tracks — immunology, clinical and translational science, biochemistry and more.

"I have the support from my mentors, lab mates and colleagues," Weaver says. "Through teamwork and collaboration, nothing is impossible to overcome."

The multidisciplinary makeup of the lab allows for different perspectives to co-exist, facilitates interesting conversations and helps troubleshoot new protocols.

"It feels like a second family," she says. "We learn from each other every day."

STEPPING ONTO THE GLOBAL STAGE

Weaver's journey has already taken her far beyond Arizona. After submitting an abstract to a specialized American Association for Cancer Research conference in Spain — focused on molecular targets and cancer therapeutics — she applied for a Young Scientist Grant offered by the conference organizers.

She didn't realize at the time that only five applicants worldwide would receive the award.

The grant funded her travel and allowed her to present her research on an international stage alongside leaders in cancer research. Standing in front of that audience reinforced something important.

"There's always a little imposter syndrome," she says. "But you get to a point where you realize, you know your data better than anyone else."

The conference reassured her that she was on the right path to discovering new therapies.

LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY

Beyond the lab bench, Weaver has invested deeply in graduate student life. She served as the Arizona site representative for the Graduate Student Association and later as co-president of the organization across campuses.

"That involvement is really special because it helps facilitate community amongst students," she says. "It's important for us to feel supported — not just within our lab — but across disciplines and campuses."

LOOKING AHEAD

Five years from now, Weaver sees herself still rooted in science — leading projects, continuing her curiosity in cancer research and drug discovery.

"I'm always thinking, what if?" she said. "What if we looked at it another way?" •

PHOTOGRAPHY: (ALL) PETE PALLAGI

Brandon Trammell consults with a patient in the clinic.

Dreaming big in a small town

Brandon Trammell on nonlinear path to becoming a physician assistant

Growing up in the small town of Merrill, Iowa — with a population of approximately 700 residents — and with the nearest hospital close to an hour away, **Brandon Trammell** did not have much knowledge of careers in healthcare. But it's something he intrinsically knew he wanted to do.

"I've always found happiness in providing for others," he says.

MANY FIRSTS

Trammell — who was the first in his family to go to college — got an undergraduate degree in biology from Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. That degree launched his healthcare career path with subsequent roles as an operating room assistant, patient care technician and clinical research coordinator in thoracic oncology research.

As a clinical research coordinator, Trammell worked one-on-one with patients undergoing treatment for lung cancer and was the point person to help them schedule visits with different specialties. He learned that he really enjoyed being the point person for people to rely on.

"It brings me a lot of joy in being there for patients when they are going through their toughest times or being the middle person to help coordinate their future needs," he says.

Trammell had his sights set on finding a job on the east coast, but he was also interviewing for jobs closer to his family in Iowa. Among the ones he applied for closer to home was an opening for a research protocol associate at Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

He was offered the job at Mayo and gladly accepted it.

POTENTIAL TO SUCCEED

Trammell was eventually promoted to a program coordinator position in neurology, where many of the people he worked closely with recognized that he had the potential to grow his career further. They encouraged him to pursue higher education and suggested that he would make a great physician assistant.

He began by shadowing his colleagues and the more he learned about their jobs, the more he knew he wanted to be a part of it. He met with Shekitta Acker, Ph.D., the program director for the physician assistant program at **Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences**.

Trammell toured other facilities to see if they would be the right fit, but he knew that his mind was already made up and Mayo Clinic was the place for him. He was drawn to the

PHOTOGRAPH: (BRANDON TRAMMELL) JEANNA DUERSCHERL

Left to right: Brandon Trammell at physician assistant program graduation with mentor, Shekitta Acker, Ph.D.; getting hands-on experience during PA school

program's focus on active learning and the evidence-based clinical reasoning needed for high-quality patient care.

"When you're looking for a program, you look for a program that you have similarities with personality-wise, and whether you think you will be supported by that program," he says. "And you look at the kind of experiences that you get with clinicals and who you're learning from as well. We are taught by world-class leaders."

The physician assistant program is one of more than 140 academic programs that the Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences offers to prepare students for rewarding and successful careers in allied health professions.

While Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences does not directly grant associate or bachelor's degrees, students in associate-level or bachelor's-level programs can earn degrees from regional accredited colleges or universities that Mayo affiliates with in offering these programs.

In order to be accepted into the master's level physician assistant program, Trammell had to retake some of his earlier college classes. Being a nontraditional student, his credits for some of those requisite classes had expired.

HARD WORK PAYS OFF

While he was at it, Trammell decided to earn a master's degree in public health as well to boost his graduate-level course credits. His days were spent working full-time in neurosurgery research, working part-time as a server in a restaurant and taking 12 to 18 college credits at the same time.

It was all worth it because he was accepted into the master's level physician assistant program on his first try. It's a feat he credits to the support he received at Mayo.

"I don't think I could be anywhere else without them," Trammell says. "I am very grateful for having my Mayo Clinic leaders and co-workers recognize my potential and help me in achieving my goals."

The two-year program — a year of didactic or classroom learning and a year of clinical learning — showed him the value of a Mayo Clinic education. He was getting different experiences in fields such as cardiology, pulmonology and more. The classroom learning was hands-on where he learned to diagnose patients, and it helped set him up well for the clinical aspect of the role.

With that broader-based education, Trammell was also learning that there were opportunities to be specialized.

Once Trammell completed the physician assistant program, he began working in orthopedic surgery. While the path to getting there wasn't straightforward or easy, he's happy he has arrived.

"I get to work one-on-one with patients, and I hope to start some research projects with the surgeon," he says.

The one-to-one ratio of physician assistant to surgeon is also something he appreciates in his role.

"I like being reliable," Trammell says. "My surgeon trusts me and knows that I will get the job done. I also have the

autonomy to diagnose and treat patients and provide them with resources or education."

Since Mayo Clinic sees a lot of patients with serious or complex conditions, Trammell says he likes being able to provide support alongside the physician.

"I'll first assist the surgeon in surgery but also see the patient progress along the way through the recovery process," he says.

At the end of the day, Trammell has found a way to do what he loves while making time for the people he cares about in his life.

And it's the support from Mayo Clinic that has made his dream come true. •

*"I am very grateful for having my **Mayo Clinic leaders and co-workers recognize my potential** and help me in achieving my goals."*

– Brandon Trammell

PHOTOGRAPHY: (PERSONAL PHOTOS) COURTESY OF BRANDON TRAMMELL; (BRANDON TRAMMELL) JEANNA DUERSCHERL

Helping all humans **be their best**

Christopher Camp, M.D., on a collective mission to help people live intentionally, consistently better

Christopher Camp, M.D. (MED '10, OR '15), wears many hats.

While Dr. Camp's clinical practice is sports medicine surgery, he — like many other Mayo physicians — is involved in teaching, research and administrative roles. He also is the medical director for Content Innovation in the Mayo Clinic School of Continuous Professional Development.

He has had a long tenure at Mayo Clinic — one that started when he arrived as a medical student in 2006. He also completed a residency at Mayo.

Save for the two years he was a Mayo Clinic Scholar at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York, Dr. Camp has spent the better part of the last 20 years at Mayo.

PLANTING A SEED

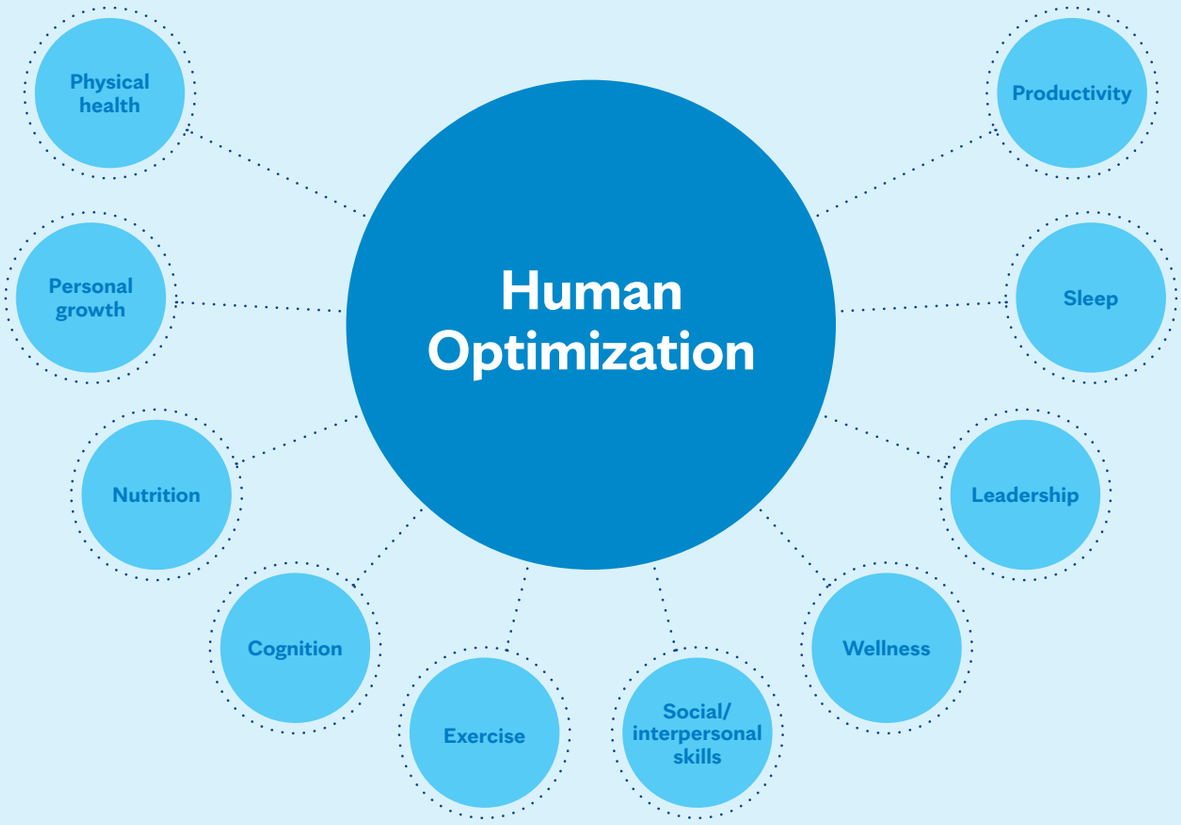
The genesis for a project — which aims to help people do more of what they love, while avoiding burnout and preserving their mental, physical and emotional health — came more recently.

In 2019, Dr. Camp started a leadership curriculum for Mayo residents, which covered cognitive aspects of

Christopher Camp, M.D., documents his research on recurring themes that influence human performance.

Mayo Clinic on Human Optimization project

The Mayo Clinic on Human Optimization project is a forward-thinking approach to helping meet people where they are. The concept is about helping people continue to achieve more — with the definition of more being defined by the individual — while simultaneously improving their well-being. The project focuses on these 10 areas:



"The vision for the project is to ***'help as many people as possible become the best humans they can be so they can give their gifts back to the world.'*** *That's the main driver behind every decision we make."*

– Christopher Camp, M.D.

performance such as productivity, personal growth and leadership. That same year, he became the medical director and director of High Performance for the Minnesota Twins Major League Baseball team, where he oversees medical decisions, performs surgeries and attends the team's games. His role also encompasses the medical needs of the entire Twins organization, including more than 200 Minor League players.

As the director of High Performance, Dr. Camp oversees a whole gamut of professionals who take care of the team, including athletic trainers, physical therapists, strength coaches, nutritionists, sports psychologists, massage therapists, sleep hygienists and many more.

The combination of the cognitive work that Dr. Camp was engaging in to help Mayo residents perform better and the physical work that he was immersed in with the Minnesota Twins confirmed one thing he had known for a long time.

"You can't separate them," he says. "The cognitive and the physical are very much interlinked. The bar for performance is higher than it has ever been, so we feel pressure to do more. We also recognize the value of sleep, recovery and wellness. So, we feel pressure to do less. We have to do more and less at the same time."

Those conflicting messages can be confusing and make heads spin, Dr. Camp says.

PHOTOGRAPH, PAGE 33: (CHRISTOPHER CAMP, M.D.) PAUL FLESSLAND

ADDRESSING A PRESSING CHALLENGE

The challenge before him: How can the cognitive and physical aspects of the human experience be merged to provide a comprehensive approach to better performance all around?

That isn't all.

Dr. Camp has an ambitious goal to develop a curriculum that will not only serve Mayo medical residents and the Minnesota Twins organization, but be scalable so that it can be accessed by anyone anywhere in the world.

Every square inch of a whiteboard that hangs in his office is covered in yellow sticky notes that highlight the in-depth research he has done to help identify recurring themes that influence human performance.

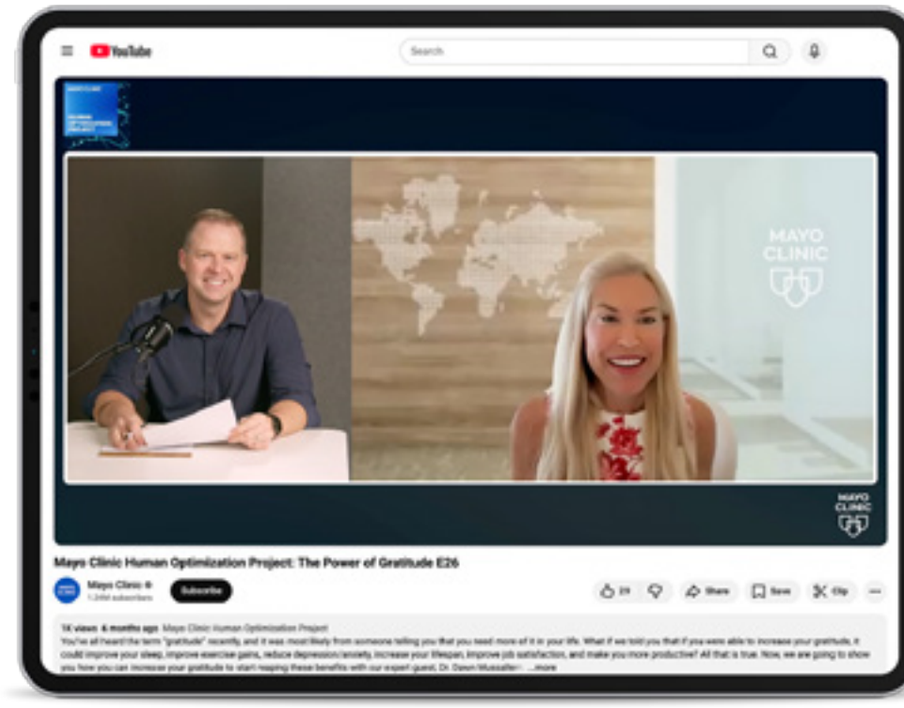
Dr. Camp's research showed that, in order to live intentionally and consistently improve their lives, people needed to feel balanced in these areas (in no particular order):

- Physical health
- Personal growth
- Nutrition
- Cognition
- Exercise
- Social/interpersonal skills
- Wellness
- Leadership
- Sleep
- Productivity

The current approach to improving in these areas is limited because the educational content lives in silos. This leads people to become one-dimensional because they tend to focus solely on one of the domains.

"If you want to improve sleep, you find one set of resources or behaviors," Dr. Camp says. "And if you want to learn about leadership, you put all that down and you do leadership stuff. In real life, all these things are interconnected. So, the educational content needs to be connected as well."

Individuals needed individual paths to optimal lives. One size wouldn't fit all. Flexible learning would be key to success.



Mayo Clinic Human Optimization podcast: The Power of Gratitude E26 with Dawn Mussallem, D.O., DipABLM

With the 10 domains of optimal human performance and the challenges identified, a partnership with Mayo Clinic School of Continuous Professional Development was formed, and the Mayo Clinic on Human Optimization project was born.

HOPPING TO IT

The project is a forward-thinking approach to helping meet people where they are. The concept is about helping people continue to achieve more — with the definition of more being defined by the individual — while simultaneously improving their well-being.

Dr. Camp and the Mayo Clinic School of Continuous Professional Development have created a Mayo Clinic Human Optimization podcast available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and YouTube that covers nearly 50 topics under each of the 10 domains — a staggering 500 in total. This year, they are launching "pod-clubs" — think book clubs, but for podcasts — that offer discussion prompts for individuals or teams to work together toward goals.

These can be done in focused pathways where people can pick or choose topics that are tailored to their needs. Many groups at Mayo and outside of the organization are already using this on a path to become their best selves.

There have been more than 95,000 downloads of the podcasts — and that's just by word of mouth.

Mayo Clinic School of Continuous Professional Development is now partnering with Mayo Clinic Press to further produce and expand the podcasts, going forward.

DOUBLING UP ON PROMISE TO DELIVER

"Our target audience is 'any human looking to improve'," Dr. Camp says. "The vision for the project is to 'help as many people as possible become the best humans they can be so they

PHOTOGRAPH: (CHRISTOPHER CAMP, M.D.) PAUL FLESSLAND

can give their gifts back to the world.' That's the main driver behind every decision we make." Doubling up to deliver on the promise, Dr. Camp and his team have partnered with two companies to create a high-fidelity digital twin in his likeness.

Brahma AI Studio built the digital human itself. Using Brahma's ATMAN platform, they captured Dr. Camp with 3D photogrammetry to replicate his facial identity, voice, emotional nuance and on-screen realism. The technology draws from high-end film production methods, bringing that level of fidelity and control into healthcare and professional settings. The process is repeatable, meaning other Mayo experts can be twinned the same way.

Mayo Clinic is also leading the work with **neuRealities** in building "the brain." Ground, the neuRealities contextual intelligence platform, anchors existing AI models to Mayo Clinic institutional knowledge within a governed, secure environment. That grounding enables reliable, traceable responses aligned to approved sources, and it powers the Mayo Clinic on Human Optimization project behind the scenes.

The goal is to use AI as an agent that helps users decide where to start. The expert digital human is being engineered for conversational, empathetic engagement, meeting users where they are and guiding next steps from prompts like "What are you good at? What do you love? What do you want to work on? What do you want to change?"

The AI agent will serve as a guide to the virtual curriculum to walk users through the content and adapt it based on their specific needs. It will also be able to create content customized specifically to each person.

Eventually, Dr. Camp is planning on using the AI agent to join in pod-club

> *"**It's going to be a lot smarter than I am.** And I think it will be able to help people in ways that are very tailored and specific to their individual needs."*
>
> – Christopher Camp, M.D.

discussions for those who wish to use it. Similarly, there are plans for the AI agent to serve as a virtual co-host of the podcast.

English isn't your native language? No problem. The digital double will be fluent in multiple languages to help navigate questions or concerns.

"It's going to be a lot smarter than I am," Dr. Camp says. "And I think it will be able to help people in ways that are very tailored and specific to their individual needs."

If all of this makes you a tad bit uncomfortable, Dr. Camp gets it. The system is being built with careful guardrails, appropriately limited reach, and the ability to opt in or out of using the digital twin.

COLLABORATING TO CONNECT PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

For many years, Dr. Camp had been working on his own to address the challenges he had identified.

In 2025, the Mayo Clinic School of Continuous Professional Development became involved as the primary partner in the project.

More recently, other groups at Mayo such as Mayo Clinic Press are helping to grow the podcast. The work of the pod-clubs is being funded through a grant from the Mayo Clinic People and Culture Committee with a focus on reaching as much of the Mayo workforce as possible.

Dr. Camp, a Mayo Clinic Richard M. Schulze Scholar in Artificial Intelligence, was selected for a 2025 Individual Scholar Award that is partially funding the creation of his digital twin. The award is made possible by **a generous gift from the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation**.

CAN-DO ATTITUDE

Dr. Camp wants people everywhere to know that if they are struggling to do more and less at the same time, it can be done.

"It's not easy, but it is possible. It's not just possible, it's essential," he says.

"You can continue to achieve at a high level and, simultaneously, improve your well-being," he says.

Dr. Camp encourages everyone to "take time to truly understand yourself."

"Define what you want and what success will look like," he says. "Pick an area to focus on. Get some like-minded people together. Listen to the topics most relevant to you. Work through the discussion questions with a group. And celebrate your progress at every step of the way." •

Scan the QR code to access the podcast:

Direct questions to optimize@mayo.edu.

Teaching the world **to read the signs**

Anthony Kashou, M.D., is transforming how clinicians learn to read the heart's electrical language

Anthony Kashou, M.D. (I '21, CV '25, CVEP '27), knew the power of medicine early on.

Growing up as the son of an interventional cardiologist in Binghamton, New York, Dr. Kashou often witnessed patients stopping his father to say he had saved their lives. The calling to pursue a medical career seemed to come naturally.

As an undergraduate, Dr. Kashou spent summers in the research lab, built a strong academic record and published research. His goal was clear: medical school, then cardiology. But when application season ended, the answer was not what he expected.

"I had done everything I thought I was supposed to do," he says. "Not getting into medical school was very discouraging."

Dr. Kashou stepped away from medicine for several years. Instead, he turned to the technology and business world, exploring how ideas could be transformed into software solutions. The experience broadened his perspective and sharpened his instinct for solving problems.

Still, medicine never truly left him.

"With encouragement from my family and mentors, I decided to try again," Dr. Kashou says. "Looking back, that season strengthened my resilience and gave me perspective. It taught me what it feels like to put everything into something and still fall short."

His persistence paid off.

Dr. Kashou is a fellow in the Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology Fellowship Program at Mayo Clinic in Rochester. He graduated cum laude from SUNY Upstate Medical School with acceptance into the Alpha Omega Alpha National Medical Honor Society — accomplishments he does not take lightly.

Dr. Kashou's work focuses on improving how clinicians interpret one of the most widely used diagnostic tools in medicine: the electrocardiogram, or ECG.

CRACKING A CLINICAL CODE

An ECG records the electrical signals of the heart. It is one of the most common tests performed in cardiovascular medicine and often provides the first clues to serious conditions such as heart attacks or dangerous arrhythmias.

Yet learning to interpret those signals can be surprisingly difficult.

During medical school, Dr. Kashou discovered that many trainees

Anthony Kashou, M.D. (I '21, CV '25, CVEP '27)

Clinical fellow in cardiac electrophysiology
Mayo Clinic in Minnesota

Residency: Internal Medicine, Mayo School of Graduate Medical Education, Rochester, Minnesota

Postgraduate: Cardiovascular Diseases, Mayo School of Graduate Medical Education, Rochester, Minnesota

Medical school: SUNY Upstate Medical School, New York

Fellowship #2: Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology, Mayo School of Graduate Medical Education, Rochester, Minnesota

Postdoctoral research: NIH-T32 Research in Cardiovasology, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota

Fellowship #1: Clinical Cardiovascular Diseases, Mayo School of Graduate Medical Education, Rochester, Minnesota

Undergraduate: Binghamton University, SUNY, New York

Hometown: Binghamton, New York

PHOTOGRAPH: (ANTHONY KASHOU, M.D.) JEANNA DUERSCHERL; ILLUSTRATION: (BACKGROUND) IBRAHIM RAYINTAKATH

Anthony Kashou, M.D., was recently recognized for his work in helping clinicians across disciplines interpret ECGs.

struggled to read ECGs accurately. Instruction was often inconsistent, and much of the learning depended on memorization.

"I remember asking others how they learned it," he says. "The answer was often, 'You just memorize these patterns.'"

Even as Dr. Kashou immersed himself in mastering the skill of reading an ECG, he noticed a broader gap: many students, residents and clinicians lacked structured training in ECG interpretation.

So, he built one.

What began as a teaching effort for medical students quickly grew beyond the classroom. Dr. Kashou started recording educational videos explaining how to interpret ECGs step by step and posted them online. The response surprised him. What started as a handful of lessons expanded into hundreds of videos and a growing online learning platform used by clinicians and trainees worldwide.

"I realized I was probably benefiting the most from teaching," he says. "When you teach something repeatedly, it really reinforces your own understanding."

The experience sparked a larger question that Dr. Kashou would focus on in his research: Could better training improve clinicians' ECG interpretation skills — and ultimately improve patient care?

INTEGRATING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INTO EDUCATION

Dr. Kashou's research now focuses on improving ECG diagnostic accuracy in two ways: strengthening clinician education and integrating artificial intelligence (AI) tools that can assist interpretation.

At Mayo Clinic, AI models are already transforming how ECG data can be used. Some algorithms can detect patterns invisible to the human eye, even predicting conditions such as atrial fibrillation before symptoms appear.

In one ongoing study, researchers are using Apple Watches to collect heart rhythm data from patients at a high risk for atrial fibrillation based on an AI-augmented ECG model prediction. By combining wearable technology with AI analysis, clinicians can identify abnormal rhythms earlier and intervene sooner.

But Dr. Kashou emphasizes that technology alone is not the solution.

"The best outcomes appear to come when the human and the computer work together," he says.

AI models can highlight patterns or risk signals. Clinicians bring experience, clinical context and judgment. When both are combined, accuracy and confidence improve.

His work also explores how targeted education can help clinicians interpret ECGs more effectively alongside these emerging tools.

IDENTIFYING A GLOBAL GAP

One of Dr. Kashou's most ambitious efforts — the international EDUCATE trial — sought to understand how well clinicians across disciplines interpret ECGs and how training could improve those skills.

The randomized trial included more than 1,200 participants worldwide, including nurses, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, medical students, residents and fellows. The findings confirmed what Dr. Kashou had suspected: many healthcare professionals felt underprepared to interpret ECGs confidently.

But the study also delivered encouraging news.

ECG interpretation, the research showed, is a highly trainable skill. With structured instruction and targeted learning tools, clinicians' accuracy and confidence improved significantly.

"That was really exciting," Dr. Kashou says. "It showed that we could identify the problem, measure it and then offer a scalable solution."

The implications extend far beyond academic medicine. Many hospitals around the world lack the resources or specialist support available at large academic centers like Mayo Clinic. Scalable education tools could help clinicians in underserved settings make faster and more accurate diagnoses.

"If we can provide something that helps clinicians in places with fewer resources, it could have a huge impact for patients," Dr. Kashou says.

Left to right: Anthony Kashou, M.D., with his father; at the Cardiovascular Medicine Fellowship graduation

RECOGNITION AND MOMENTUM

Recently, Dr. Kashou received the Donald C. Balfour Award for Meritorious Research recognizing his contributions. The honor caught him off guard.

"My first thought was that they must have the wrong person," he says with a laugh.

He sees the recognition less as an individual achievement than as validation of the collaborative environment around him. Mentors, collaborators and trainees have all contributed to the work.

"It's really a team award," he says. "Mayo creates an environment where curiosity and collaboration can thrive."

The award is also motivation to keep Dr. Kashou pushing forward.

The next frontier, he says, lies in integrating AI-driven decision support with real-time clinical education — allowing clinicians to learn and improve while caring for patients.

"It doesn't take a huge change to make a big difference," Dr. Kashou says. "Sometimes improving one skill — even something as common as interpreting an ECG — can have a meaningful impact on patient care." •

Balfour Award nominees are residents or fellows on any Mayo Clinic campus who have a clinical appointment — or have completed an appointment in the past year — in medical and laboratory specialties, surgery and surgical specialties, or internal medicine and medical specialties.

PHOTOGRAPHY: (ANTHONY KASHOU, M.D.) MICHAEL BURROWS; (PERSONAL PHOTOS) COURTESY OF ANTHONY KASHOU, M.D.

Drawing from **the past**

Ines Sturmlechner, Ph.D., is learning from the past to help people age well

"Mind blown."

That's the reaction **Ines Sturmlechner, Ph.D.** (IMM '24), had when she learned that senescent cells affect the process of aging.

"You can actually study aging — research it — to understand what's happening and maybe even do something about it," Dr. Sturmlechner says.

It was a revelation the young investigator is exploring to figure out how vaccines can be modified to make sure they have the most impact on older adults.

Dr. Sturmlechner has always had a fascination for connecting the past to the present. She initially thought she wanted to be an archeologist.

Growing up in Austria, Dr. Sturmlechner knew of nearly 2,000-year-old Roman settlements all around her. When her parents began excavating land to build a house, the process revealed artifacts from a Roman settlement right underneath Dr. Sturmlechner's feet.

The discovery was electrifying.

"I was so excited about it," she recalls. "I kept wondering, 'Why is it there? What happened here before?'"

That instinct — to understand why things are the way they are — never left her. It simply changed direction.

In high school, Dr. Sturmlechner encountered molecular biology and the intricate systems that keep the human body functioning. The same curiosity that once focused on buried civilizations shifted inward, toward the mysteries inside living cells.

"Learning how cells work and how the body works completely fascinated me," she says.

That fascination eventually brought her to Mayo Clinic, where she pursued her post-doctoral studies in aging research and began studying one of the most universal human experiences: growing older.

A DISCOVERY ABOUT AGING CELLS

A turning point in Dr. Sturmlechner's scientific journey came during her master's research.

While studying cells in the lab, she noticed something unexpected: the cells had developed characteristics associated with aging. Scientists call this phenomenon cellular senescence, a state in which cells stop dividing and begin behaving differently.

At the time, she knew little about the field.

"I started reading the literature and realized these cells are really important in the aging process," she says.

Ines Sturmlechner, Ph.D. (IMM '24)

Associate consultant
Mayo Clinic in Rochester

Postgraduate: M.S., molecular cell biology, Universität Wien, Austria; Ph.D., molecular genetics, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Netherlands

Undergraduate: Universität Wien, Austria

Hometown: Mautern an der Donau, Austria

PHOTOGRAPH: (INES STURMLECHNER, PH.D.) JEANNA DUERSCHERL; ILLUSTRATION: (BACKGROUND) IBRAHIM RAYINTAKATH

*"You can actually study aging — research it — to understand what's happening and maybe even **do something about it**."*

– Ines Sturmlechner, Ph.D.

From that moment, she was hooked.

Dr. Sturmlechner joined Mayo Clinic in 2015 to conduct graduate research work on the biology of aging and cellular senescence in the Department of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine. In parallel, she was enrolled in the University of Groningen, The Netherlands, through which she obtained her Ph.D. in June 2021.

She continued her research career in immune aging in Mayo Clinic's Department of Immunology as a research fellow and research associate and was promoted to associate consultant I in 2025.

VACCINES AND AGING

As people grow older, the immune system gradually becomes less effective. This decline can make older adults more vulnerable to infections — and can also change how well vaccines work.

Dr. Sturmlechner's studies examined immune responses to viruses such as Epstein-Barr virus and varicella-zoster, the virus responsible for chickenpox and shingles. In particular, she explored why some vaccines perform differently in older adults than in younger people.

"We were trying to understand why the same vaccine doesn't work as well in older adults," she says.

But her team also noticed something intriguing. A particular varicella-zoster vaccine designed for older adults appeared to work surprisingly well, even in aging immune systems.

The question became: Why?

To answer it, Dr. Sturmlechner analyzed the types of immune cells activated after vaccination. The research revealed that a specific group of immune cells — called T helper 17 cells, or TH17 cells — played a critical role.

"These are long-lived immune cells that are very specific to their targets," she says. "We found that this particular vaccine generates a strong response from this special subtype of T cells."

Ines Sturmlechner, Ph.D., working on immune studies

Roman site in Austrian hometown photographed by Ines Sturmlechner, Ph.D.'s father

In contrast, vaccines that produced weaker protection in older adults did not generate the same response.

The discovery suggests that TH17 cells may help the aging immune system overcome some of the biological changes that come with age.

IMPLICATIONS FOR MEDICINE

Understanding which immune cells drive protection could shape the design of future vaccines.

"If we know this cell type is protective, the next question becomes, 'Can we generate it in other contexts?'"

Researchers at Mayo Clinic are now exploring whether vaccine designs that stimulate TH17 cells might strengthen immune responses not only against viruses, but also against diseases like cancer.

The findings may also guide the development of more effective vaccines for respiratory illnesses and emerging infectious diseases.

"One possibility is reusing components from these highly effective vaccines," she explains. "If we apply those design principles in other vaccines, we may be able to protect older adults much more effectively."

For an aging population that continues to grow worldwide, the implications are significant.

"I really hope this research helps us better protect older adults," she says.

SCIENCE THAT PEOPLE CARE ABOUT

For Dr. Sturmlechner, the motivation behind her research often comes from everyday conversations.

Friends, strangers, even her own parents frequently ask the same question when they learn that she studies aging.

"People always want to know if there's already a pill," she says, laughing.

While science hasn't solved aging yet, she finds inspiration in those interactions. They remind her that the work happening inside research labs connects directly to people's lives.

"Seeing how interested people are — and how much they care about aging more healthily — that's really motivating," she says.

RECOGNITION AND WHAT'S NEXT

Dr. Sturmlechner's work recently earned the Edward C. Kendall Award for Meritorious Research, which recognizes her contributions to aging and immune system research.

For her, the recognition reflects years of effort.

"It represents four or five years of work," she says. "Knowing other people see it as an important step in research means a lot."

The award also comes at a pivotal moment in her career.

She recently received a prestigious K99/ROO award from the National Institutes of Health, which supports early-career scientists transitioning to independent faculty positions. As she prepares for the next phase of her career, Dr. Sturmlechner is interviewing for academic roles where she can continue studying aging and immunity.

Her goal is to build a long-term research program dedicated to understanding why the immune system weakens with age — and how to strengthen it.

"I hope to continue this work for the next 30 years," she says. •

Kendall Award nominees are M.D.s or Ph.D.s on any Mayo Clinic campus who received a doctoral degree in the past five years and have a postdoctoral research training appointment (includes research fellows and research associates but not fellows eligible for the Balfour Award or visiting scientists) approved by the Mayo Clinic Research Committee or have completed the appointment in the past year.

PHOTOGRAPHY: (INES STURMLECHNER, PH.D.) JEANNA DUERSCHERL; (PERSONAL PHOTO) COURTESY OF INES STURMLECHNER, PH.D.

Mayo Clinic Update

Mayo Clinic in Arizona sets national record for solid organ transplants

Bashar Aqel, M.D.

The Transplant Center at Mayo Clinic in Arizona achieved the highest transplant volume in history in 2025 by performing 917 solid organ transplants in one year, according to data from the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network.

Over the past five consecutive years, Mayo Clinic in Arizona has performed more adult solid organ transplants (heart, lung, kidney, pancreas and liver) than any other transplant center in the U.S. Mayo also previously received national recognition for performing the world's first total larynx transplant on a patient with active cancer.

As a result of this level of experience in Arizona, patients across the state and the Southwest have access to the best in transplant medicine close to home.

"This milestone reflects the power of an integrated approach to transplant care and what's possible when extraordinary teams come together with a singular focus: getting the gift of life to people who need it most," says **Bashar Aqel, M.D.** (GIHL '01, GI '04), director of the Transplant Center at Mayo Clinic in Arizona. "Our teams in Arizona are supported by the depth of expertise across Mayo Clinic, allowing us to care for patients with extraordinary complexity while advancing transplant medicine as a whole."

Mayo Clinic Transplant Center, encompassing Mayo's Arizona, Florida and Rochester locations, is the leader in transplant medicine, delivering more lifesaving transplants than any other healthcare organization. Mayo Clinic's transplant volumes in 2025 show the demand for adult solid organ transplantation continues to grow as innovative techniques are expanding the pool of donors and hope for patients who are waiting.

"We are deeply grateful to the donors and donor families whose generosity makes this work possible and for the patients who trust us with their care," Dr. Aqel says.

Physicians during operation, including Dr. Julie Heimbach and other Transplant Center staff

8 years running: Newsweek names Mayo Clinic ‘World’s Best Hospital’

John Halamka, M.D., President of Mayo Clinic Platform, speaks during the PlatforMed Conference.

Newsweek has named Mayo Clinic the No. 1 hospital in the world for the eighth straight year in its 2026 World’s Best Hospitals list.

“This recognition is a result of the extraordinary expertise, compassion and commitment of our staff, all working together to transform healthcare and find more cures for the benefit of people everywhere,” says **Gianrico Farrugia, M.D.** (I ’91, GI ’94). “Over the past year, we accelerated that transformation by responsibly integrating data, technology and AI into patient care.”

The annual Newsweek rankings are based on patient survey results; an international survey of more than 85,000 healthcare professionals; key performance metrics, such as patient safety and quality of care; and implementation of patient-reported outcomes.

Through its Bold. Forward. strategy, Mayo Clinic is reimagining healthcare to ensure patients everywhere receive better answers and better outcomes. By combining deep clinical expertise with responsible digital innovation, the organization is transforming how care is delivered. Central to this effort is Mayo Clinic Platform, which drives the development, validation and deployment of AI in real-world clinical settings with partners across four continents.

Mayo Clinic in Rochester hosts VIBE Summit to showcase big ideas in AI, automation

With more than 125 exhibitors, the second annual Value, Innovation, Belonging, Empowerment, or VIBE Summit, brought together hundreds of staff to see how artificial intelligence and intelligent automation are improving how work gets done across Mayo Clinic.

The full-day event featured hands-on demonstrations, staff-led innovation, and practical solutions already making a difference for patients and colleagues.

“VIBE is a reminder that innovation starts with our people,” says Biju Samkutty, chief operating officer, Enterprise Automation and International. “When staff use AI and automation to improve workflows, we reduce friction, strengthen connection and help patients get answers sooner.”

Attendees participated in many experiences throughout the day, including:

- Staff-designed intelligent automation tools that reduce administrative burden.
- AI models that support clinical decision-making and surface insights quickly.
- New collaborations that help support teams in their work with patients.
- Demonstrations from internal groups and external partners that show how emerging technology is already supporting care delivery.

Matthew Callstrom, M.D., Ph.D.

“We’re making great progress as an organization,” says **Matthew Callstrom, M.D., Ph.D.** (MED ’97, RD ’02), physician lead for the AI Program. “Innovation at Mayo Clinic has always been driven by collaboration, and the summit showcases not just the technology, but the collective expertise and passion of our teams who are transforming how we deliver the best care for our patients.”

The next VIBE Summit will be held on Dec. 8.

PHOTOGRAPHY: (TRANSPLANT CENTER OPERATION) MICHAEL BURROWS; (JOHN HALAMKA, M.D.) MATTHEW MEYER

Mayo Clinic Health System expands cancer care in New Prague

Mayo Clinic Health System recently marked the completion of its expanded oncology and infusion therapy space in New Prague, Minnesota, celebrating a significant investment in local cancer care.

The $9.8 million expansion brings oncology services and infusion therapies together in one modernized, patient-centered location designed to improve efficiency, enhance the patient experience and better support care teams.

The expansion reinforces Mayo Clinic Health System's commitment to enhancing access to high-quality care to meet the evolving needs of patients and the regional community.

Amrit Singh, M.B.B.S.

Designed with patients and families at the center, the space supports oncology and infusion therapy services, including chemotherapy, immunotherapy and targeted therapies. The single location improves care coordination, streamlines appointments and creates a more seamless experience for patients receiving complex care.

The space also supports care teams with improved workflows and dedicated clinical areas.

Key features of the expansion include:

- An integrated, full-service oncology department providing clinical care, chemotherapy, immunotherapy, targeted therapies and on-site pharmacy services.
- Eight infusion therapy bays and two private rooms with 10 infusion beds for cancer and noncancer infusion therapies.

Expanded oncology and infusion therapy space at Mayo Clinic Health System in New Prague

- Three dedicated exam rooms with shelled space, allowing for future growth to five exam rooms.
- Enhanced patient privacy and quieter surroundings to provide a calm, supportive environment during treatment.
- Dedicated clinician offices, nurses' station and support spaces.
- A planned garden area outside the infusion bays designed to offer patients a calm and peaceful view.

The expansion also reflects Mayo Clinic Health System's commitment to environmental stewardship and long-term sustainability. After extensive research and planning, a closed-loop geothermal heating and cooling system was selected to support organizational sustainability goals and broader energy management strategy.

The system uses stable underground temperatures to efficiently heat and cool the building year-round, reducing energy use and operating costs. The geothermal system is expected to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by an estimated 320 metric tons annually, roughly equivalent to removing 74 cars from the road each year, while supplying approximately 80% of the hospital's cooling needs.

"Providing high-quality Mayo Clinic cancer care for our patients and their families in our local communities is essential," says **Amrit Singh, M.B.B.S.** (HEMO '11), vice chair of Mayo Clinic Health System Hematology and Oncology. "This expansion reflects our commitment to provide patients specialized care delivered in a setting that supports healing, compassion and comfort."

Mayo Clinic in Florida names new dean of Research

Sebastian Fernandez-Bussy, M.D. (PULM '18), has been named the James C. and Sarah K. Kennedy Dean of Research at Mayo Clinic in Florida, effective Feb. 2. He succeeds **Alfredo Quiñones-Hinojosa, M.D.** (NS '16), who continues to oversee Mayo Clinic's Neurosurgery Brain Tumor Stem Cell Laboratory.

As Kennedy Dean of Research, Dr. Fernandez-Bussy will provide strategic and operational leadership for research activities at the Florida campus.

An internationally recognized interventional pulmonologist and academic leader, Dr. Fernandez-Bussy joined Mayo Clinic in Florida in 2018 and is chair of the Division of Pulmonary, Allergy and Sleep Medicine. He leads teams that use advanced medical procedures and technologies, including robotics, to care for patients with severe lung conditions. He is also a professor of medicine at Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science and a visiting professor at Heidelberg University in Germany.

Sebastian Fernandez-Bussy, M.D., new dean of Research

Alfredo Quiñones-Hinojosa, M.D.

Vijay Shah, M.D.

"Dr. Fernandez-Bussy is an innovator with an entrepreneurial mindset and complementary background that expands how we approach research," says **Vijay Shah, M.D.** (GI '98), Kinney Executive Dean of Research and Carol M. Gatton Professor of Digestive Diseases Research, Honoring Peter Carryer, M.D. "His experience across the continuum of innovation and research will lead Research's next phase of growth on the Florida campus. Beyond his role as dean, Dr. Fernandez-Bussy adds breadth to our leadership team and reflects our commitment to balancing proven capabilities with the perspectives needed to lead what comes next."

Dr. Fernandez-Bussy's education and training span multiple disciplines and international settings, including internal medicine, critical care, HIV/AIDS, pulmonary care and interventional pulmonology. This broad expertise informs his transformative research and leadership in developing innovative, patient-centered solutions for serious and complex diseases.

Among his many honors, Dr. Fernandez-Bussy has received Mayo Clinic's Innovation Team Award and the Distinguished Patient Experience Award, recognizing his commitment to advancing discovery and improving patient outcomes through collaboration, creativity and excellence. His work reflects Mayo Clinic's core values and its enterprise priorities to apply bold ideas and next-generation approaches to benefit patients.

Obituaries

J. Keith Campbell, M.D. (N '72), died March 4, 2026

James Chesebro, M.D. (CV '75), died Feb. 26, 2026

Amir Lerman, M.D. (I '89, CV '94), died Feb. 23, 2026

Austin Lynn, M.D., Ph.D. (MED '80), died March 12, 2026

Barbara Westmoreland, M.D. (EEG '71), died March 17, 2026

David Whiteman, M.D. (MGEN '00), died Jan. 27, 2026

PHOTOGRAPHY: (CANCER CENTER) BRENDAN BUSH; (SEBASTIAN FERNANDEZ-BUSSY, M.D.) MATTHEW MEYER

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Mayo Clinic Alumni magazine is published quarterly and mailed free of charge to physicians, scientists and medical educators who studied and/or trained at Mayo Clinic, and to Mayo Clinic consulting staff. The magazine reports on Mayo Clinic alumni, staff and students and informs readers about newsworthy activities at Mayo Clinic.

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MAYO CLINIC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION INTRODUCES

From Mayo **to the world**

This new social media spotlight series will celebrate the global impact of Mayo Clinic alumni and future alumni. The series highlights individuals whose training at Mayo Clinic has shaped careers in **clinical care, research, education, innovation, leadership and service**.

If you are interested in sharing your professional journey and how Mayo's values have influenced your work, please fill out a form by scanning the QR code to the left.

ILLUSTRATION: SARAH HANSON

Oct. 28–30, 2027

Save the date

Mayo Clinic Alumni Association
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MC4409-2602

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