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“The Jesuit tradition is the heart of the School of Medicine. You can have the mechanics and all the operations, but if you don't have heart, you're not going to be successful. The heart is why we are all here.”

— **Christine K. Jacobs, M.D., FAAFP**

Vice President for Medical Affairs and  
Dean Saint Louis University School of Medicine



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**3** Medicine for Others: Honoring the Saint Louis University Jesuit Tradition



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# A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



## Dear Friends,

In recent issues of Grand Rounds, we've shared our vision for the future, our innovative curriculum, and exciting research developments. Reflecting on our past helps us shape our future. I am thrilled to present this legacy issue, which highlights our rich history of accomplishments and our Jesuit mission and identity.

We will visit where we've been, our impact over the past 200 years, and the contributions of our alumni in medicine, science, our community, and beyond.

We have a storied history and

much to be proud of, from our long-standing partnership with SSM Health to one of our most notable accomplishments, the Nobel Prize awarded to Edward Doisy, Ph.D., for his discovery of the structure and chemical nature of Vitamin K, to our recent growth and refinement of our educational programs.

We have a rich tradition of excellence in teaching, research, and patient care. Our students, faculty, and staff embody our mission, just as they did 200 years ago.

In this issue, you will see this legacy through the personal accounts of our students and residents, who are dedicated to caring for the whole person.

I hope you enjoy this issue and encourage you to complete the brief readership survey on the last page. We'd love to hear your thoughts on what you enjoy about Grand Rounds, as well as future topics and stories you'd like us to cover.

Best Regards,

**Christine K. Jacobs, M.D., FAAFP**

Vice President of Medical Affairs and Dean of the SLU School of Medicine



# Medicine for Others

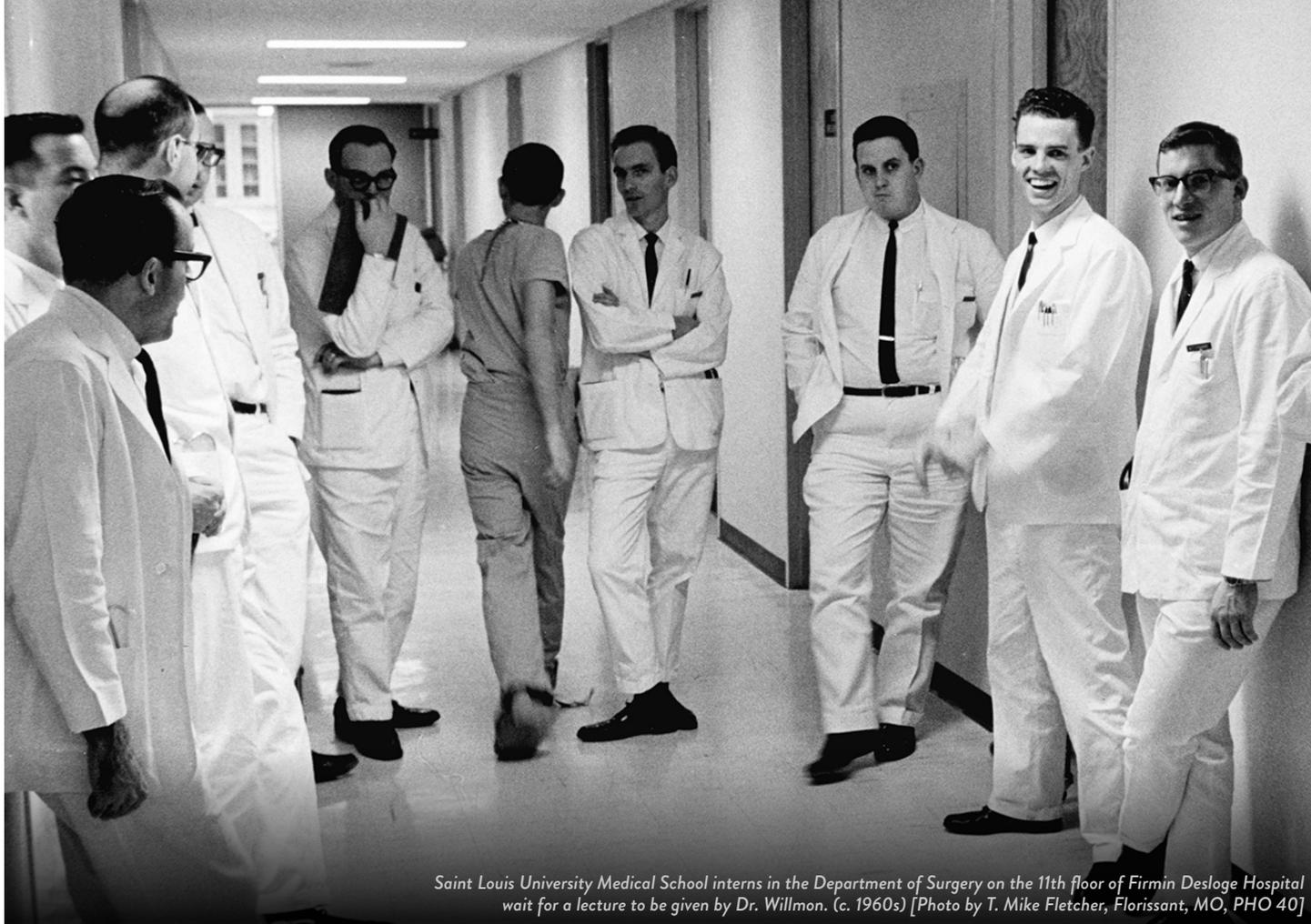
HONORING THE  
SAINT LOUIS  
UNIVERSITY  
JESUIT TRADITION

Since 1836,

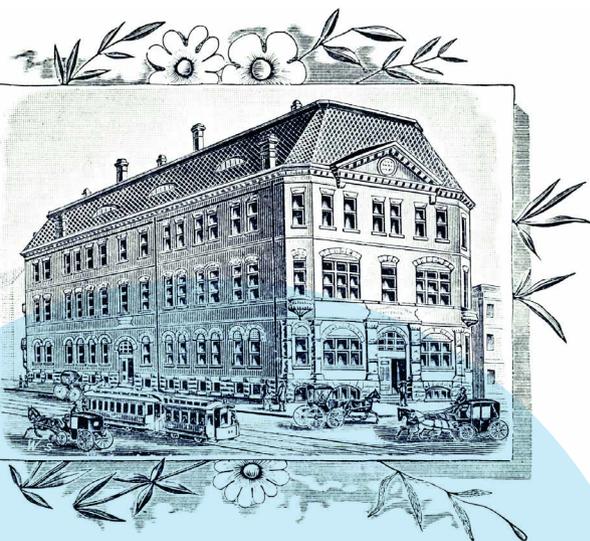
Saint Louis University School of Medicine has answered the call to train physicians who serve with compassion and a commitment to excellence. Driven by its Jesuit mission, the School provides an education rooted in service, scholarship, and human dignity.

As the School continues to attract aspiring and ambitious physicians, it remains dedicated to a diverse student body whose backgrounds and perspectives strengthen their connection for the community in which they live and work.

*Medical students practice using a pump-oxygenator, a life-saving device used during surgery.*



*Saint Louis University Medical School interns in the Department of Surgery on the 11th floor of Firmin Desloge Hospital wait for a lecture to be given by Dr. Willmon. (c. 1960s) [Photo by T. Mike Fletcher, Florissant, MO, PHO 40]*



## THE PURSUIT OF MEDICAL EXCELLENCE

SLU medical students are encouraged to pursue medical excellence through evidence-based practices integrated into their basic science studies, clinical training, research, and community outreach initiatives. The School's updated curriculum emphasizes clinical decision-making and the importance of patient values in medical care, guiding students to adopt a humanistic approach alongside scholarly achievement.

Christine Jacobs, M.D., vice president for medical affairs and dean of the School of Medicine, shared that the School's updated curriculum is structured around three aspects of medical education — basic science, clinical science, and health systems science.

“Our education has become more patient-care centered,” Jacobs said. “Historically, our education focused on classroom-based instruction in a large amphitheater. Now, we emphasize patient-based and problem-based learning because we have a commitment from the very beginning for students to focus on the patient.”

The School also has new research efforts to enhance community health, staying true to the Jesuit commitment to social justice, service, and medical excellence. Over the past year, it has partnered with the All of Us Research Program, from the National Institutes of Health, to

**“The Jesuit tradition is the heart of the School of Medicine.”**

# cura personalis

accelerate community health research, drive medical breakthroughs, and serve the community at large.

## A HOLISTIC APPROACH

With nearly 190 years of educating medical students, SLU remains steadfast in preparing well-rounded clinicians equipped to make a significant impact. This commitment starts with exceptional medical educators who champion a holistic approach and set high standards for both education and patient care.

“What students see in the senior faculty is what inspires them to become like them,” Jacobs said. “We place a high premium on professionalism in our faculty, which is a distinguishing factor of SLU School of Medicine. We value humanism from our faculty in addition to raw intellectual ability.”

SLU emphasizes a humanistic approach to education — engaging students through traditional studies, early clinical experiences, and personal development. Personal and professional development is further supported by the integration of the health systems science curriculum, which enhances critical thinking in areas such as social determinants of health, medical business, and health care ethics.

Faculty provide an education that challenges students to think critically and empowers them to become agents of change.

“We don't want them to take [medicine] at face value,” she said. “We always want them to be cognizant of what is

behind and around the patient, not just what is presenting right in front of them.”

## CARING BEYOND A DIAGNOSIS

The Jesuit value of *cura personalis* is woven into every facet of a SLU education. From the first encounter as a first-year medical student or observed in practice during clinical rotations, this principle shapes all aspects of medical care, community impact, and personal well-being.



Medical student performs an intubation during a clinical simulation lab.

Jacobs explained that historically, the medical profession focused more on treating the disease than treating the patient. SLU strives to educate its students to care for the patient, not just their diagnosis.

“If [our physicians] come from an understanding about the context of people's lives, it helps them to put their medical care, diagnosis, and treatment into perspective,” she said. “It translates into better patient care because they will be able to help them with a plan that fits their lives better.”

## LEADING THE WAY FOR THE GREATER GOOD

Medicine has the power to change lives for the better. Grounded in Jesuit tradition, SLU School of Medicine calls its students, educators, and leaders to serve the greater good, preparing them to make a lasting impact in patient care, research, and community service.

The St. Louis region faces numerous challenges, including poor health indicators, disparities in access to

care, and health concerns such as drug abuse and mental health concerns. SLU encourages its students to apply their academic studies toward addressing these community health care problems, ensuring they can provide the highest quality of care.

“The Jesuit tradition is the heart of the School of Medicine,” Jacobs said. “You can have the mechanics and all the operations, but if you don't have heart, you're not going to be successful. The heart is why we are all here.”

By Sameer Siddiqui, M.D.  
Professor and Department Chair,  
C. Rollins Hanlon Endowed Chair of Surgery

## THE SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, FOUNDED IN 1836, IS THE OLDEST MEDICAL SCHOOL WEST OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER.

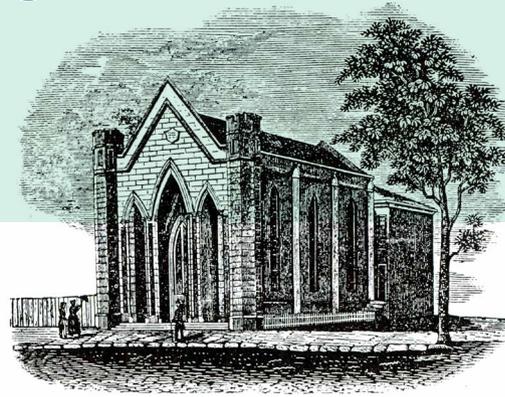
It was established by Jesuit priests and local St. Louis physicians, reflecting the University's Catholic roots and its commitment to education that integrates faith and reason. Initially, the School served as a response to the growing demand for physicians in the expanding frontier regions of the United States.

Throughout its history, the School of Medicine has been at the forefront of medical education and research. In 1928, the institution became part of the American Association of Medical Colleges, solidifying its reputation for high academic standards. The school also made significant contributions to public health, particularly in the field of vaccination. In 1943, Dr. Edward A. Doisy, a professor at the medical school, was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his groundbreaking work in identifying Vitamin K.

Over the years, SLU School of Medicine has evolved, embracing advances in technology and medical practices while maintaining its mission of serving humanity with compassion and skill. Today, it is known for its focus on both research and patient centered care, as well as its emphasis on the ethical practice of medicine.

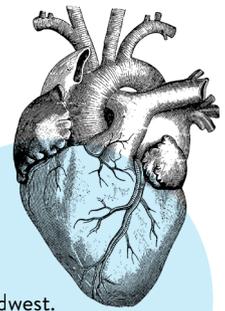
# 1836

Saint Louis University establishes a Medical Department in collaboration with the St. Louis Medical Society. It is the first medical school established west of the Allegheny Mountains.



## 1839

The first medical degree awarded west of the Mississippi River.



## 1972

SLU surgeons conduct the first heart transplant at an academic center in the Midwest. Members of the heart transplant team include:

Russell Kraeger, M.D.; John Schweiss, M.D.; Vallee Willman, M.D.; George Kaiser, M.D.; Hendrick Barner, M.D.; J. Gerard Mudd, M.D.; Richard Whiting, M.D.; John Codd, M.D.; Kenneth Nachtnebel, M.D.

## 1989

SLU founded the Center for Vaccine Development. The center has been instrumental in developing numerous vaccines that protect public health.



## 2007

Saint Louis University opens the doors to the \$82 million Edward A. Doisy Research Center, which is designed to further scientific progress and inspire creativity and collaboration.



## 1995

SLUCare Physician Group is formed as the academic medical practice of Saint Louis University.



## 1903

SLU acquires Marion Sims-Beaumont College of Medicine and renames it Saint Louis University School of Medicine. Tuition in 1903 is \$85.



## 1924

Formal relationship established with the **Sisters of St. Mary (SSM)** to provide clinical and educational services at St. Mary's Infirmary.



## 1933

Firmin Desloge Hospital, later renamed SLU Hospital, opens.



## 1954

First full-time academic chair hired, Rollins Hanlon, M.D. as Chair of Surgery.



## 1964

Establishment of the Institute of Molecular Virology. Maurice Green, Ph.D., coined the term: "Molecular Virology."



## 1943

Edward Adelbert Doisy, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Biochemistry, is **awarded the Nobel Prize** for his discovery of the structure and chemical nature of Vitamin K.

## 2015

SSM Health and Saint Louis University acquire Saint Louis University Hospital from Tenet Healthcare Corporation.

## 2020

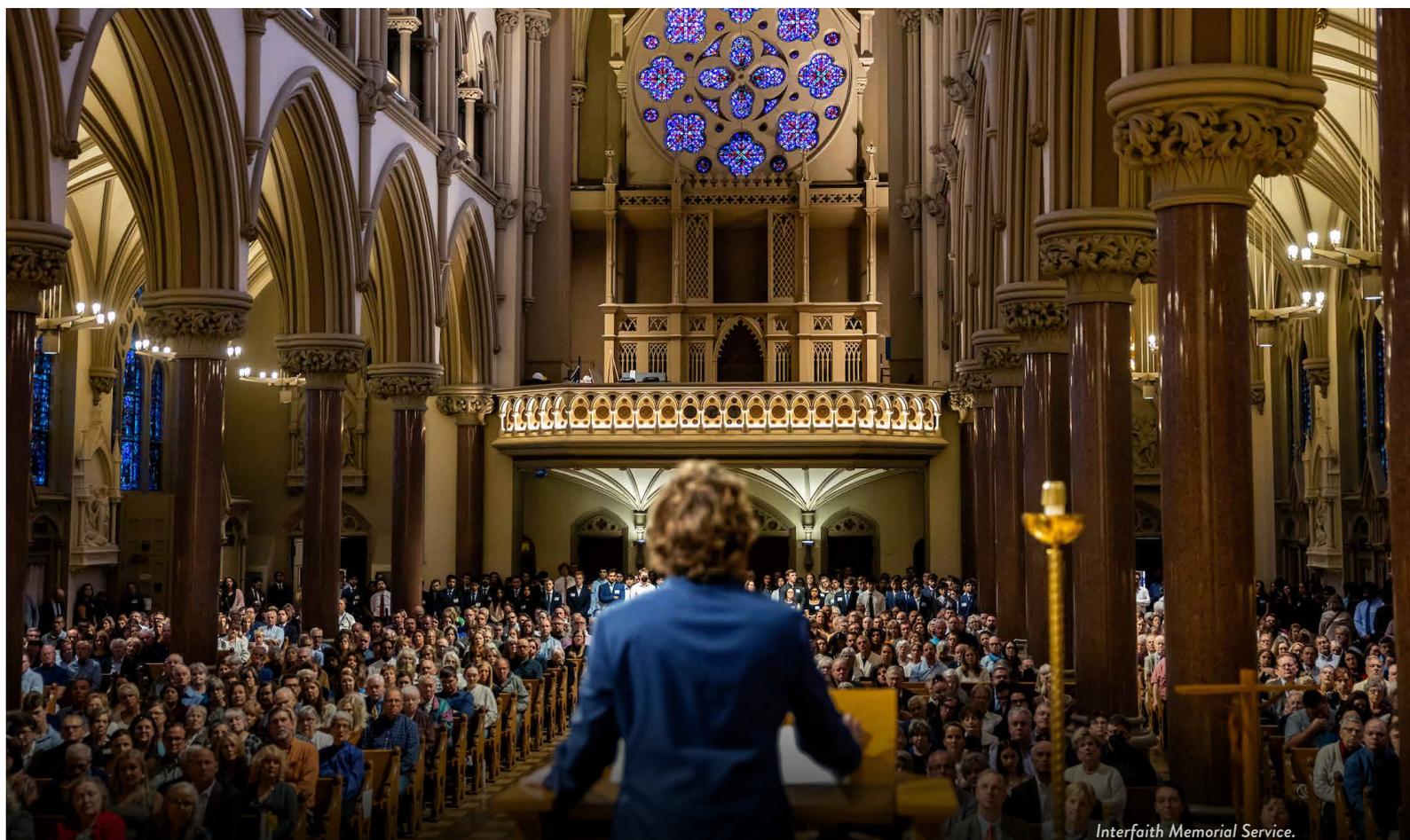
Completion of **\$550 million** SSM Health Saint Louis University Hospital and ambulatory care center.

# 2022

SSM Health and Saint Louis University collaborate to form the region's leading fully integrated health care delivery network.



# Learning from Life's Greatest Gift: Advancing Anatomy Education



*Interfaith Memorial Service.*

**A comprehensive study of human anatomy is vital to the education of clinicians, researchers, and other allied health science professionals. With a strong commitment to excellence, Saint Louis University's Gift Body Program, administered through the Center for Anatomical Science and Education (CASE), provides students with invaluable experiences in anatomical study. The generous donors of human bodies help students gain insights far beyond what textbooks or computer simulations will offer.**

John Martin, III, Ph.D., director for CASE and the Gift Body Program,

explains that learning from the bodies in gross anatomy plays a pivotal role in developing SLU students' foundational knowledge of anatomy while enhancing their understanding of the uniqueness of each human body.

"Just like our fingerprints are unique, so too is each cadaver," Martin said. "We're all a bit different inside, and it's important that we expose students to these differences. It also provides a unique opportunity to study anatomical variations that are routinely observed.

**"We're all a bit different inside, and it's important that we expose students to these differences."**

**— John Martin, III, Ph.D.**



Students know [gross anatomy] is going to be a challenging course, but they appreciate the challenge and the gift of the donor’s body to the University.”

Over the past year, SLU has welcomed over 360 gifted bodies. Each donation is critical in the education of the next generation of excellent clinicians, medical professionals, and scientists. The impact of each gift extends beyond clinical training — capturing the hearts and minds of the students who have the privilege of learning from the bodies.

“Not only is [each gift] used for educational purposes, but we also study cadavers for various congenital malformations and anatomic variations, and practice new techniques with surgical devices,” he said.

Each November, the School of Medicine, in collaboration with SLU Campus Ministry, hosts an interfaith memorial service to honor the donors of the Gift Body Program. First-year medical students participate in planning prayers, musical performances, and sharing reflections on behalf of the class about their experiences.

“We’ve held this service for at least 15 years at St. Francis Xavier College Church to honor the donors, thank their families, and celebrate their lives,” he said. “The celebration also invites students to share their [talents] in a way that is healthy for them while they’re immersed in a very challenging course.”

As many universities are shifting toward digital approaches for anatomy courses, SLU remains committed to providing experiential learning and has much gratitude for the generous donors who give their bodies to the study of science.



Medical student places a flower into the offertory basket.



Medical student carries a flower to the offertory basket.



Medical student carries a flower to the offertory basket.

## Psychiatry Residency: Five Students Continue Journey at SLU

On Match Day, students anxiously await the announcement of their residency placements. This year, five members of the SLU School of Medicine Class of 2024 were excited to learn that they would continue their journey as SSM-SLU residents in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience.

Under the leadership of Erick Messias, M.D., M.P.H., Ph.D., department chair and professor of psychiatry and behavioral neuroscience, the program expanded to admit 10 residents annually. The program’s popularity and competitiveness have grown steadily in response to increasing interest in psychiatry. Notably, 50 percent of the new class of residents come from the University itself, demonstrating SLU’s commitment to retaining its physicians in the St. Louis region.

“We strive in our department to give our residents in psychiatry opportunities in teaching and research within a strong and busy clinical service,” Messias said. “We don’t want to be known purely as a research, psychiatric department – we want to be known as a place that teaches our residents excellent clinical skills, gives an opportunity to do research and that they enjoy spending time with one another.”

- Neil Chen, M.D.
- Zachary Grese, M.D., Ph.D.
- Ritika Jain, M.D.
- Bret Silverglate, M.D.
- Samantha To, M.D.

# An Impactful Return on Medical Research Investments

**Saint Louis University School of Medicine has secured several grants for cutting-edge technologies, accelerating its growth in basic, translational, and clinical research. These strategic investments allow SLU to conduct transformative research, attract and retain exceptional research leaders, and fulfill its mission to improve patient care and community health.**

Among its most impactful investments is the 10x Genomics Chromium Controller for single-cell RNA sequencing (scRNA-seq) which enables precise classification, characterization, and differentiation of gene expression by individual cells. This advanced technology has significantly elevated SLU's research capabilities, and was critical to new projects that received over \$9 million in additional grant funding and produced more than 15 high-impact publications.

Richard DiPaolo, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Molecular Microbiology & Immunology, who played a central role in bringing scRNA-seq technology to SLU, emphasized its considerable impact on both scholarly productivity and student training. He noted that this technology offers invaluable experience in bioinformatics and data analysis, equipping students with essential skills for their future careers.

“The School of Medicine was one of the first to use [the controller] and apply it into our research programs,” DiPaolo said. “We [are] ahead of the curve because we had the resources and the foresight to know that it’s a game-changing technology.”

“The School of Medicine was one of the first to use [the controller] and apply it into our research programs.”

— Richard DiPaolo, Ph.D.



Other instrumentation grants have created opportunities for two associate professors in biochemistry and molecular biology. Reza Dastvan, Ph.D., received a \$1.7 million NIH grant for a high-sensitivity pulse EPR spectrometer, while Sergey Korolev, Ph.D., secured a \$743,852 NSF grant for a Xta LAB Synergy-R single crystal diffractometer, which allows researchers to quickly collect high-quality data with minimal downtime and user intervention. Both mark significant achievements for SLU's footprint in structural biology.

SLU's commitment to medical research, combined with its success in securing substantial grant funding, establishes its labs as leaders in their fields. Adriana M. Montañó, Ph.D., vice dean of research, professor of pediatrics, biochemistry, and

# Celebrating 100 Years of Scientific Excellence



molecular biology, emphasized that access to cutting-edge equipment is a crucial investment for the future.

“We aim to continue strategically investing in our School to achieve high-impact publications, secure a substantial number of grants, enhance SLU’s reputation, and foster new collaborations,” Montañó stated. “Our community will benefit from discoveries that contribute to the development of new treatments.”

The School submits millions of dollars in grant applications annually, has numerous publications in the pipeline, and is actively advancing its technology to support investigators and students.



Give to the future of medical research with your contribution to the School of Medicine Dean’s Education and Research Fund.  
[giving.slu.edu/GR25](https://giving.slu.edu/GR25)



*Front row (left to right): Sergey Korolev, Ph.D., Oleg Kisselev, Ph.D., Silviya Zustiak, Ph.D., Carmine Coscia, Ph.D., Abdul Waheed, Ph.D., Yuna Ayala, Ph.D., Michelle Brennan, Ph.D., Joel Eissenberg, Ph.D. Back row (left to right): David Ford, Ph.D., Tomasz Heyduk, Ph.D., Enrico Di Cera, M.D., Gucan “Gabriel” Dai, Ph.D., Reza Dastvan, Ph.D., Nicola Pozzi, Ph.D. (slightly behind), Susana Gonzalo, Ph.D., Dorota Skowryra, Ph.D., Kyle McCommis, Ph.D., Ángel Baldán, Ph.D. Tinghai Xu, Ph.D.*

**Since 1924, the Edward A. Doisy Department of Biochemistry and Microbiology has achieved great success in scientific research. From the accomplishments of a Nobel Prize laureate to the dedication of aspiring student researchers, the Department proudly honors its rich legacy as it celebrates 100 years in 2024.**

May 2024 marked the beginning of a new chapter with the Centennial Celebration Dinner, where esteemed alumni, faculty, University leaders, and researchers gathered to celebrate the past, highlight the present, and envision the future.

Enrico Di Cera, M.D., Alice A. Doisy professor and chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at SLU, emphasized the extraordinary accomplishments in the past 100 years through the visionary leadership of just four chairs.

“Our legacy of excellence is matched by only a few biochemistry departments in the entire world and gives SLU pre-eminence among Catholic universities,” Di Cera said. “We started with Edward Doisy’s Nobel Prize for the synthesis of Vitamin K and continued with the outstanding contributions of Robert Olson to nutritional biochemistry and of National Academy Member William Sly to lysosomal storage diseases.”

The excellence continues with the current emphasis of the Department on the molecular basis of human diseases being pursued with state-of-the-art biophysical instrumentation.

“Being able to impact the direction of the Department, by promoting outstanding research and developing young scientists into world-class leaders, has been extremely rewarding for me,” Di Cera said. “It makes my job as a department chair truly special.”

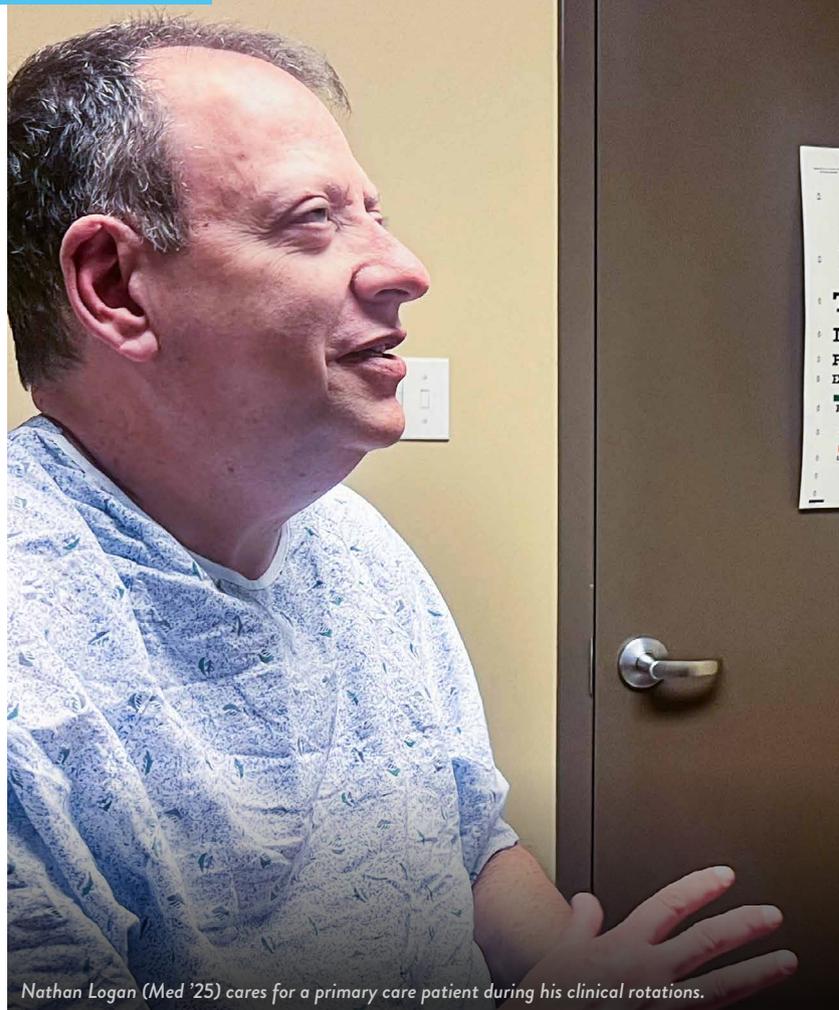
## Building a Brighter Future for Primary Care Physicians

Since 1836, Saint Louis University School of Medicine has placed patient care at the center of its medical education. Recently acknowledged by **U.S. News & World Report** as a top-ranked, Tier 1 medical school in primary care, SLU takes pride in teaching students and residents to practice evidence-based, patient-centered medicine. However, in recent years, the rising costs of medical education have led many students to choose specialty careers over primary care for their higher earning potential.

Recognizing the growing need for primary care physicians, Anne Stewart, M.D., (Med '80) and Eldon Trame, M.D., (Med '78) established the EAST Primary Care Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded to a fourth-year medical student from the St. Louis region who has expressed an interest in a primary care residency.

“We saw a need for general practice doctors because there were a plethora of specialists, but not as many taking care of the general needs of patients,” Eldon Trame said. We had the perception that students toward the end of their medical school training were guided to go to specialties [instead of primary care] because they had so much debt. We thought if we could reduce their debt load in their fourth year, students might be more inclined to consider a primary care residency.”

Nathan Logan (Med '25) received this year's EAST Scholarship for his interest in pediatric primary care and passion for building long-term relationships with his patients. He shared that the scholarship has greatly relieved financial pressure, allowing him to focus on the next phase of his medical career — applying to residency programs.



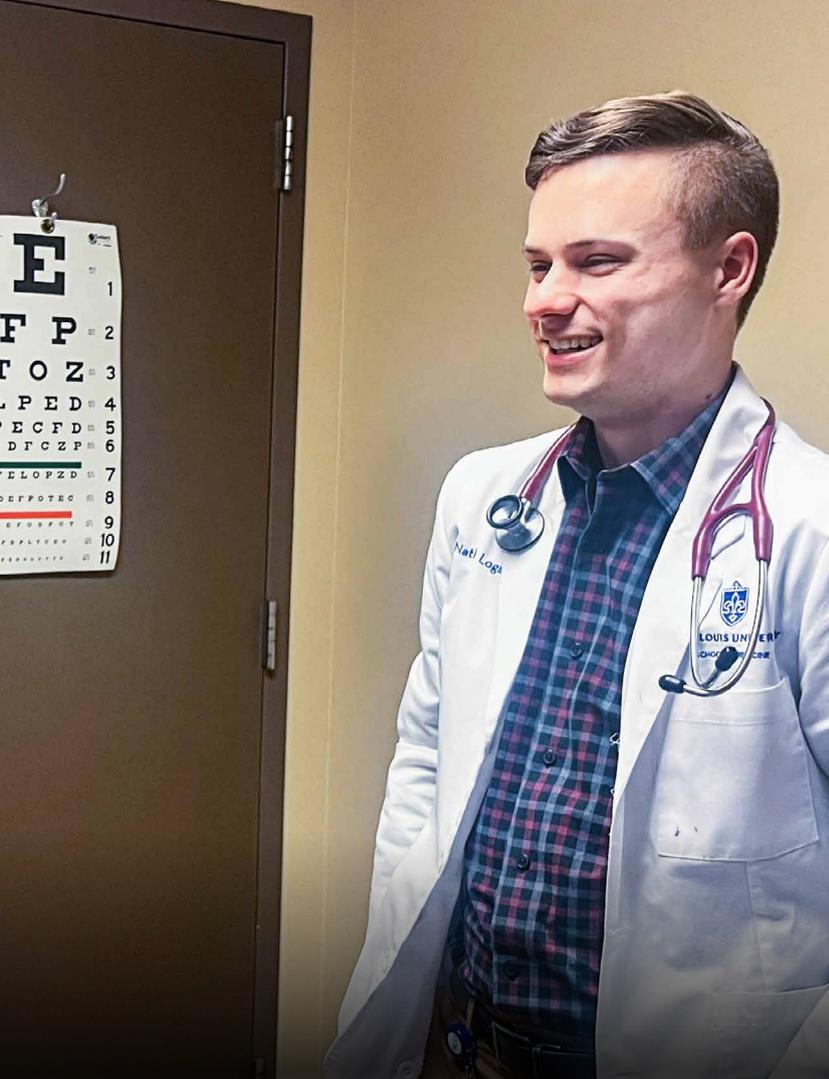
*Nathan Logan (Med '25) cares for a primary care patient during his clinical rotations.*

“Medical school is stressful in a million ways, and the financial aspect of medical school takes a pretty big toll,” Nathan Logan said. “This scholarship has allowed me to focus on what is in front of me right now. Without worrying about paying for school, I am able to focus more of my energy on learning the most I can and being present for my patients.”

From Logan's time as an undergraduate medical scholar at SLU to now, his commitment to caring for patients has deepened throughout his years at the School of Medicine. He credits the School with having a profound impact on his growth as a medical professional.

“Medical school brings a lot out of you, and I have become more of an empathetic person because I've been with patients on the worst and the best days of their lives.”

— Nathan Logan, Med '25



## SSM Cardinal Glennon Children’s Medical Center Pediatric Programs Achieve Top National Rankings

We are proud to share that SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children’s Hospital has once again been recognized as one of the Best Children’s Hospitals by U.S. News & World Report. Seven specialized areas were ranked among the top 50, highlighting excellence in clinical outcomes, efficacy of care, patient safety, and staffing. This recognition reflects SSM and SLU’s exceptional pediatric care, the dedication of its staff and faculty, and the exceptional care they provide to the children in our community.

### Cardinal Glennon National Rankings

**No. 19** Gastroenterology & GI Surgery  
*#1 in Missouri*

**No. 27** Nephrology

**No. 27** Pulmonology & Lung Surgery

**No. 32** Cardiology & Heart Surgery  
*#1 in Missouri*

**No. 46** Neonatology

**No. 48** Cancer Care

**No. 48** Urology



“I’ve been impressed by the way I’ve grown and matured professionally and as a person over the last four years,” he said. “Medical school brings a lot out of you, and I have become a more empathetic person because I’ve been with patients on the worst and the best days of their lives.”

As Logan submits his residency applications, he expresses immense gratitude for the EAST Scholarship, which has given him freedom to explore a wider range of residency programs.

“Because of this scholarship, I am able to apply to more [primary care] residency programs,” he said. “I was able to cast a broader net, which I think will serve me well because I may have more options for residency. I don’t know where I am going next year, but this scholarship might play a role in where I end up.”

# Moving Forward Together: The SLU/SSM Health Partnership



**In 2022, a long-standing collaboration between SSM Health and SLUCare Physician Group evolved into a formal partnership — further advancing health equity and broadening access to quality community health care. Together, they combine world-class academic medical expertise and a high-quality, community-based care model to create one of the most comprehensive academic and community-driven physician groups in the region.**

The relationship between SLU and SSM dates back to 1903, when Franciscan Sisters of Mary welcomed SLU medical students into their hospital for training. Today, this alliance continues to thrive, driven by a shared commitment to delivering comprehensive patient care while also providing opportunities for students, faculty, and researchers from the School of Medicine.

“The partnership between SSM Health and Saint Louis University is a storied history, bringing the best of academic medicine that dates back over 100 years,” said Bob Pendleton, M.D., regional chief clinical officer, SSM Health STL and Southern Illinois regions. “This is an evolution on how we continue to meet the needs of the community in new ways. The integration has allowed us to continue on that journey



*Dean Christine Jacobs, M.D., FAAFP, and Bob Pendleton, M.D., at a recent SLU/SSM meeting.*

and get our SLUCare providers ever more [connected] into the further reaches of our health system.”

SLU and SSM combine excellent medical education with industry expertise, offering students and residents the opportunity to flourish in SSM facilities including its hospitals, general practice offices, and specialty clinics. These opportunities support the School of Medicine’s updated curriculum, which prioritizes early clinical education experiences for its students.

By working closely with SSM, SLU has deepened students’ understanding of the social determinants of health that



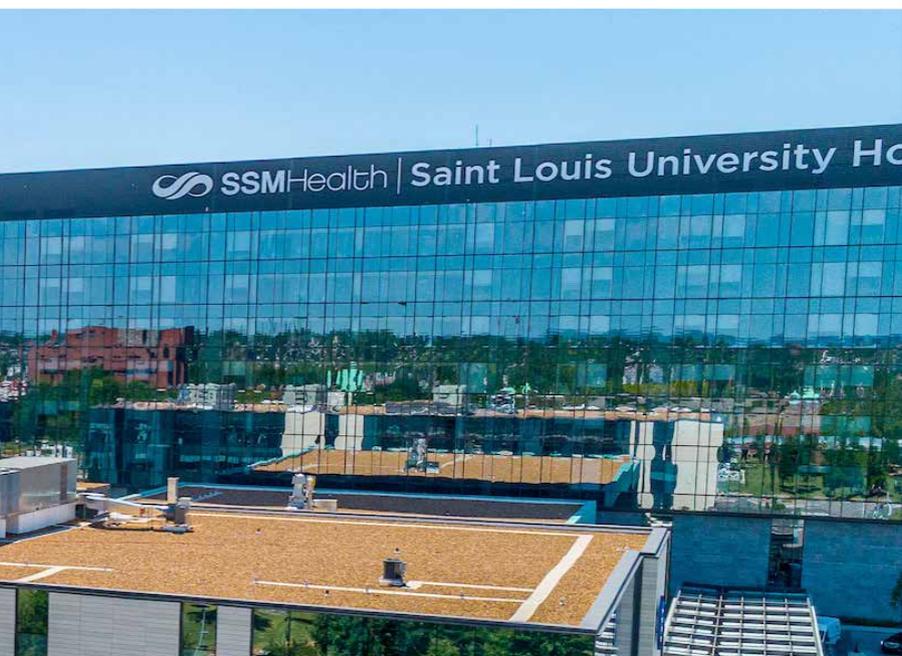


impact the St. Louis region. This connection resonates with students drawn to SLU and motivated to make a change within the local community.

“We’ve been at this for two years, and we’ve made a tremendous amount of progress,” Christine Jacobs said. “One of the things we’ve been doing is admitting more students with regional connections to our medical school. Our hope is that when we provide them with community experiences, after graduation they will stay as physicians in our region to take care of the health of the community.”

As the partnership continues to develop, SLU and SSM take pride in their shared progress. They are eager to create more opportunities for students with the guidance of visionary leaders to shape the future of health care in our region.

“Students are of the generation that want to be change agents,” Bob Pendleton said. “In the world around us, there is conflict and divisiveness, and students are at the age of being optimists and want to see the world be a better place. Both SLU and SSM’s history gives a place really committed to being part of that change in an environment where they can.”



## Leading with Impact: The 2024 SLU School of Medicine Dean’s Advisory Board

To deliver an exceptional medical education and contribute to the broader health care community, the School of Medicine collaborates with a distinguished group of medical professionals, academic physicians, researchers, and business leaders. This Advisory Board shapes the School’s strategic direction, academic success, and clinical performance.

**Mr. James Brophy**  
Retired Senior Executive  
Officer, Saint Lukes Hospital

**Ms. Mitch Meyers**  
Founder, Beleaf Medical

**Mr. Doug Brown**  
Retired Executive,  
Enterprise Rent-a-Car

**C. David Minifie**  
Former Chief Experience  
Officer & Executive Vice  
President, Corporate Strategy  
at Centene; Consultant

**Dr. Edmond B. Cabbabe**  
Adjunct Professor of Surgery,  
Saint Louis University,  
President, Cabbabe  
Plastic Surgery

**Dr. Vasu Pandrangi**  
Pandrangi Plastic Surgery

**Dr. Sophia Chung, Chair**  
Ophthalmology Specialist,  
Saint Louis University; Clinical  
Professor of Ophthalmology  
and Visual Sciences, Iowa  
Carver College of Medicine

**Dr. Stephen Peiper**  
Retired Peter A. Herbut  
Professor and Chair, Thomas  
Jefferson University

**Dr. Jim Coates**  
Retired Senior Medical  
Director, Aetna

**Mr. David N. Rahija**  
President, Skokie Hospital  
& NorthShore University  
HealthSystem

**Dr. Barbara M. Detjen**  
Retired Vaccine Development  
Management; Former  
Senior Director & Project  
Management, Pfizer

**Dr. Angela Sharkey**  
Former Senior Associate  
Dean for Undergraduate  
Medical Education, Wake  
Forest University School of  
Medicine and Atrium Health,  
Special Advisor to the Dean for  
Medical Education

**Dr. Jerome V. Dwyer**  
Owner/Cardiologist,  
St. Louis Cardiology Center

**Dr. Jay Tureen**  
Professor of Pediatrics and  
Infectious Diseases, University  
of California San Francisco

**Mr. Bob Fox**  
Founder, NewSpace, Inc.

**Dr. Mark A. Varvares**  
Professor of Otolaryngology,  
Harvard University; Chief  
of Otolaryngology Head &  
Neck Surgery, Mass Eye & Ear  
Harvard Medical School

**Dr. Gerald Maguire**  
Professor and Chair of  
Psychiatry and Neuroscience,  
University of  
California Riverside

**Ms. Bo (Marian) Mehan**  
Partner and Estate Planning  
and Probate Department  
Co-chair, Lewis Rice LLC

“The biggest lesson I learned at SLU was to persevere, go for the big challenges, and believe you can make a difference.”

— Shaden Marzouk, M.D., MBA

ALUMNI

## In the Business of Medicine



For Shaden Marzouk, M.D., MBA, (Med '98), her career journey led her into an area of business that benefits from a surgical approach. After graduating from Saint Louis University School of Medicine, she completed her neurosurgery residency at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, Michigan, followed by a fellowship in spinal deformity surgery at

Northwestern Memorial Hospital. She also served as a neurosurgeon for the U.S. Army.

After her experience as a neurosurgeon, she discovered a new calling — blending her love of medicine with her passion for business. Marzouk graduated from the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University in 2011, which set her on a path to her current role as GenesisCare U.S.'s chief executive officer.

Marzouk credits her SLU medical education for inspiring her to take on new challenges in business that make a difference in others' lives.

“The biggest lesson I learned at SLU was to persevere, go for the big challenges, and believe you can make a difference,” Marzouk said. “That’s one of the reasons I am attracted to [working for] businesses that are undergoing periods of difficulty. There’s always a solution and even if the solution is not always a popular choice, it’s a path forward.”

Now, as a proud graduate and member of the White Coat Society, she hopes to share her gratitude toward other ambitious students hoping to attend the School.

“I’m grateful for the education I received and I want others to have the same opportunities,” she said. “Being a doctor is a noble profession, and I know that students who go through SLU will go out and do good in the world.”

## From Engineering to Patient Care



Unlike many first-year medical students, Jenny Pennycook, M.D., (Med '09), took a non-traditional path, by first earning her bachelor's degree in engineering from Missouri University of Science and Technology. Ultimately, her deep curiosity about science and the human body led her to apply to medical school.

"I was always fascinated by science and chose chemical/biochemical engineering as a practical application of this interest," Pennycook said. "While I found [engineering] interesting, it did not fulfill my desire to serve people directly, so that led me to explore medicine as a career."

Pennycook graduated from SLU School of Medicine in 2009 and continued her education at SLU for her obstetrics and gynecology residency. While in medical school, she actively participated on the curriculum management committee, engaged in community service opportunities, and volunteered at a local domestic violence shelter.

Today, her desire to serve has translated into her work as an obstetrician/gynecologist in Rolla, Missouri, with Phelps Health. She also works as a physician representative on the employee wellness and artificial intelligence committees in addition to her care for patients.

"Disparities in maternal health care are quite apparent coming to a rural location from my prior practice in St. Louis," she said. "It is rewarding to take care of medically challenging patients who may otherwise be without any care. In a rural location, you have to be ready for anything and everything, so I really get to use all the skills I learned in training."

Reflecting on her time at SLU, she shared that her mentors instilled in her a profound dedication to providing exceptional care and kindness to all patients.

"SLU is unique in its emphasis on justice and ethics, which I believe allows me to better navigate some of the more difficult situations I encounter as a physician," she said.

## Inspiring a Family of Clinicians



For Dana M. Kageyama, M.D., (Med '96), Saint Louis University School of Medicine has been a family tradition, inspired by the positive influence of his father, Hideo Paul Kageyama, M.D., (Med '61), who had a distinguished career in orthopedic surgery for over 30 years.

"My Dad and my pre-med freshman biology teaching assistant served as role models and mentors," Kageyama said. "I enjoyed the scientific process and was committed to pursuing an altruistic career path."

The SLU School of Medicine provided Kageyama with a strong foundation to care for the whole person — shaping his practice as an internal medicine physician and his role as a former clinical professor at the University of Arizona School of Medicine. He credits the teaching methods of his SLU professors for equipping him to be an effective clinical sciences educator. This eventually helped him earn the title of Clinical Sciences Educator of the Year twice during his three-year tenure at University of Arizona.

"The education I received at SLU prepared me to be a clinician educator," he said. "I have spent time as an academic clinician, as a hospitalist, as a primary care physician, as a physician advisor and as a medical director. Each position presented me with unique challenges that my training has prepared me for."

Today, he is proud that his son, Vincent Kageyama, (Med '28), is receiving the same extraordinary medical education that he and his father experienced as a member of the current first-year class.

"I am grateful for the outstanding education I received at SLU School of Medicine," he said. "I was proud to attend the same medical school as my dad, and I am even prouder that my son matriculated. It is an honor to share our collective experience with him."

# Charting the Journey

# STUDENT

# NARRATIVES

## Shivika Ahuja

Med '25



“I was surprised and touched that one of this boy’s first thoughts was to ask me about my day.”

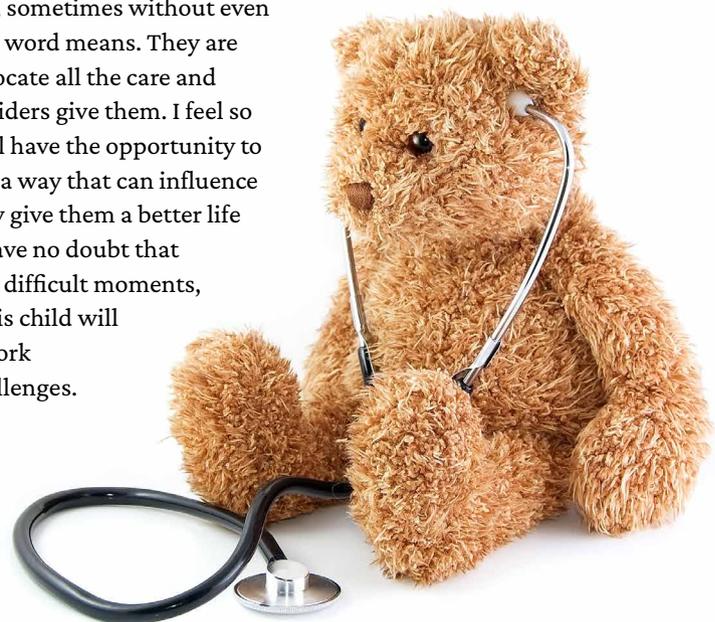
— Shivika Ahuja, Med '25

The transfer came during the night shift in the Glennon ER. EMS rolled the patient – a blurry-eyed, bed-headed young child who was sitting up and holding his right forearm to his chest – into a room, with his mom following. The transfer paperwork showed a fractured arm, and the child was transferred for an orthopedic surgery evaluation.

I went to the patient’s room, introduced myself, and was about to ask a few questions when the child interrupted me and asked, “Have you been working the whole day?!” I couldn’t help but laugh, and my first thought was “I really hope I don’t look like I’ve been working the whole day.”

Despite being transferred from one hospital to another in the middle of the night, this patient exhibited more resilience than most adults I know. He very proudly described how he had climbed his bedroom door frame (“ninja warrior style!”) earlier that night and had fallen, resulting in his injury.

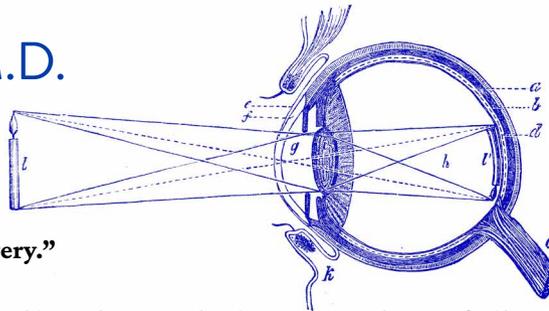
I was surprised and touched that one of this child’s first thoughts was to ask me about my day. I am pursuing a pediatrics residency as I love working with children. Kids are incredibly resilient, sometimes without even knowing what that word means. They are positive and reciprocate all the care and attention that providers give them. I feel so fortunate that I will have the opportunity to care for children in a way that can influence them and hopefully give them a better life for many years. I have no doubt that residency will have difficult moments, but patients like this child will encourage me to work through future challenges.



Discover the experiences of a SLU School of Medicine student and resident. In this series, they share stories about moments in their work that touched their lives and changed their perspectives.

## Ji Hyae Lee, M.D.

Resident



“Doctor, I really want cataract surgery.”

**The voice was soft but firm. I stepped into the consultation room and saw a frail man sitting in the exam chair, leaning forward with anticipation as his caregiver sat next to him. As the patient expressed his wish, I glanced at his chart and paused. Frequent hospital visits, oncology notes, and the unmistakable reality of his stage IV cancer stared back at me. This wasn’t a typical cataract consultation. His prognosis was poor, and the question of whether to perform elective surgery hung heavy in the air.**

Cataract surgery is elective, but could it be more than that? Should I be thinking of this surgery as palliative care? Could it offer not just clearer vision, but also a better quality of life, even in the face of terminal illness? The request made me pause, not just as a clinician, but as a person. Before I could gather my thoughts, his caregiver jumped in, passionately advocating for the surgery. His brother said, “He doesn’t have much time left, and I want him to be able to see clearly, to enjoy what little time he has left.” His words caught me off guard.

The brother was clearly suffering as well. I could not imagine the helplessness he might feel watching his loved one fade. He was trying desperately to do anything to make his life better. But what did the patient want? Was he simply trying to ease his heartache? I needed to ensure that the patient’s own desires were heard and respected.

The patient underwent cataract surgery. With restored vision, he was able to resume his favorite activity of reading to his grand nieces and nephews once again in the last few months of his life.

I thought back to my earlier days in medical school. I had always wanted to see patients through a holistic lens. Yet somewhere along the way, I had become so focused on the biomedical aspects that I sometimes found myself missing the broader picture. This experience taught me that sometimes, being a doctor means helping patients live, not just longer, but better. Even in the face of terminal illness, improving someone’s quality of life can be the most meaningful treatment we provide.



“This experience reminded me of the importance of empathy and understanding as much as medical expertise.”

— Ji Hyae Lee, M.D.



Alex Piening, Ph.D., (Med '26), examining a vial alongside his mentor, Ryan Teague, Ph.D.

## A Family Tradition of Excellence

For many years, Saint Louis University has played a significant role in the lives of Alexander Piening, Ph.D., and his family. Their legacy began in 1984, when his Uncle Ralph Piening, M.D., graduated from the School of Medicine, followed by his father, Kurt Piening, M.D., in 1989, and his mother, Mary, who graduated from the School of Nursing in 1988. The family tradition continued as Alexander, along with his brothers, Kurt Jr. (Med '18), Nicholas (Med '19), and Cole (Med '26), were accepted into SLU School of Medicine, each pursuing their unique paths in medicine.

“The community within the School is wonderful, and I think that is why we’ve all ended up here because of all the good experiences we have each had.” — Alex Piening, Ph.D.

“My dad and his family are from Cincinnati,” Alex Piening said. “When my Uncle Ralph was accepted into SLU, he said that my grandfather encouraged him to go there because he said in medicine my uncle would be dealing with a lot of moral and ethical questions, and my grandfather wanted to make sure he made decisions based on a Catholic foundation.”

Piening continues to build on that legacy as a current student of the SLU M.D./Ph.D. program, which he began in the fall of 2018. Now, more than halfway through the program, he has earned a Ph.D. in molecular microbiology and immunology for his research on cancer immunology and the influence of obesity on tumor immunity through his work with Ryan Teague, Ph.D. He is on track to receive his M.D. in 2026.

He has written four first-author publications, and contributed to numerous co-authored publications and presentations. Additionally, he had the opportunity to present a poster on his research in collaboration with the radiation oncology department in Madrid, Spain, alongside SLU faculty member Jeevin Shahi, M.D., (Med ’14). Currently, he is entering his third year of medical school and participating in clinical rotations at the same time as his brother, Cole.

His mentor Ryan Teague, Ph.D., professor of molecular microbiology and immunology shared that Piening approaches challenges with energy and persistence that has influenced his success in the program.

“Even as a young scientist, Alex has approached his research with complete professionalism,” Teague said. “He is also admired and respected by his peers because he invests his time in helping others and has trained numerous students in the lab. I expect that he will become a wonderful mentor for trainees in his own independent research lab.”



*Piening Family gathered together at a recent family wedding. From left to right, Alex, Kurt Jr., Mary, Nicholas, Kurt Sr., Cole, and Eric Piening.*

Piening shared that as he follows his family’s SLU medicine legacy, his commitment to SLU reflects the quality of training and supportive community he and his family have experienced.

“[SLU] supports its medical students in such a great way,” Piening said. “It is something that you would want for one of your family members or someone you love to experience. The community within the School is wonderful, and I think that is why we’ve all ended up here because of all the good experiences we have each had.”



Learn more about the SLU M.D./Ph.D. Program.  
[slu.edu/medicine/medical-education/md-phd/index.php](http://slu.edu/medicine/medical-education/md-phd/index.php)

# Welcoming the Class of 2028

Saint Louis University School of Medicine welcomed its next generation of exceptional clinicians at the 2024 White Coat Ceremony, held this past July, at the St. Francis Xavier College Church.

During this annual event, first-year students are cloaked in their white coats by a physician either affiliated with the School or a loved one, symbolizing the start of their path in the medical profession.

The Class of 2028 comprises 176 students who embody SLU's values and possess a strong commitment to making a meaningful impact in medicine. We are proud to welcome this new class to our historic institution and look forward to observing their growth throughout their four years of study.

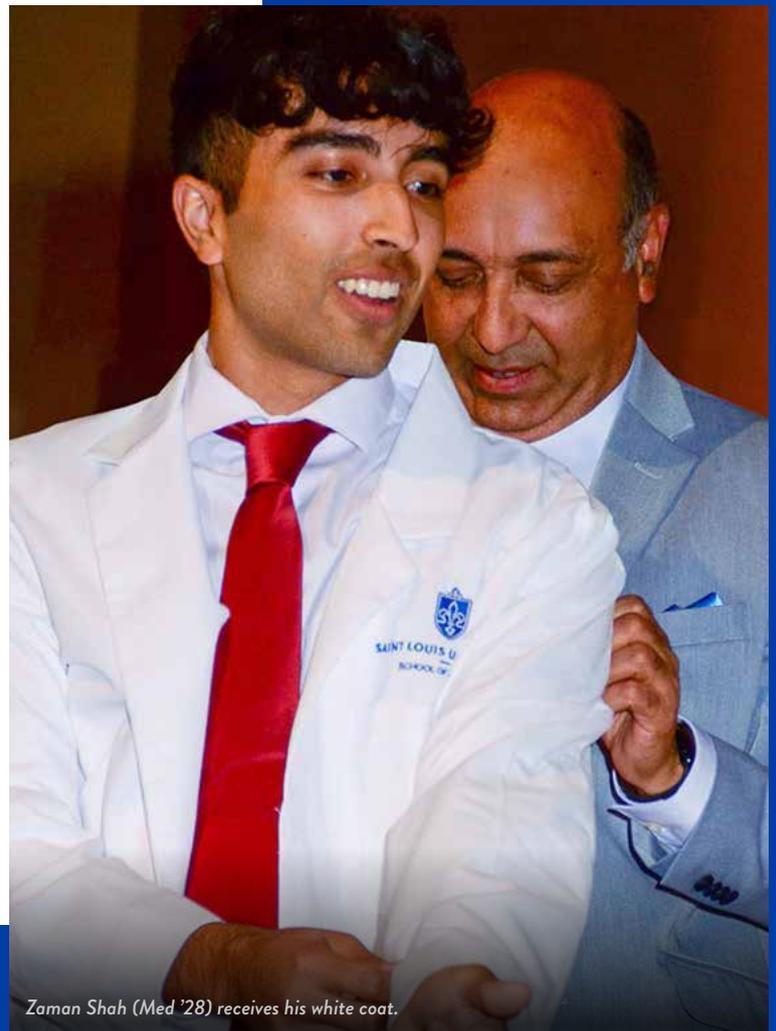
80 Women in the Class of 2028

83 Students From Missouri and Illinois

513 Average MCAT Score

15 First-Generation Students

19% of Students Have Relatives who are School of Medicine Graduates or Current and Former Residents, Fellows, Faculty or Staff at SLU or SSM Health



Zaman Shah (Med '28) receives his white coat.



Aarti (bottom left) and Arjun (bottom right) posing with their parents, Animesh, M.D., (top right) and Madhu, M.D. (left middle), alongside Austin Dalrymple M.D., School of Medicine faculty (top middle).



Meet Aarti and Arjun Sahai who are siblings in a triplet set and members of the Class of 2028. Read their story about why they chose to study medicine at SLU.

[www.slu.edu/news/2024/july/aarti-and-arjun-sahai.php](http://www.slu.edu/news/2024/july/aarti-and-arjun-sahai.php)

**726** Interviews Extended  
to Applicants

**176** Students in the  
Class of 2028

**5,800+**

Applications Submitted  
to SLU School of Medicine



*SLU School of Medicine Class of 2028 celebrates receiving their white coats.*



*Dean Christine Jacobs, M.D., speaks to the newly coated class.*



*Students celebrate following the ceremony with photos on the SLU campus.*

# A Memorable 2024 Med Reunion

In October 2024, over 140 alumni and guests gathered for Saint Louis University's School of Medicine Reunion — a weekend to reconnect with friends, classmates, and the campus that shaped their medical careers.

The weekend celebrated milestone reunions for the classes of 1964, 1969, 1974, 1979, 1984, 1989, 1994, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014, and 2019, with special recognition given to the Class of 1974, which celebrated its 50th reunion with 29 alumni in attendance.

Alumni rediscovered familiar spaces through exclusive tours of the campus, offering a glimpse into the ongoing evolution of the institution, while maintaining its legacy of commitment to excellence. The "Meet the Dean" lunch, hosted by Dean Christine Jacobs, M.D., provided updates on the School's recent achievements and ambitious future plans. Alumni asked questions, shared their experiences, and reflected on how medicine—and their alma mater—had progressed.

Daniela Salvemini, Ph.D., chair of the department of pharmacology and physiology, spoke about "Novel Therapeutic Approaches to Target Neuropathic Pain States" and Jamil Neme, M.D., a renowned sports medicine expert spoke about "Mobility for All".

Standout moments were the student-led tours and panel discussion, where alumni engaged with current medical students, learning about the latest curriculum, initiatives, and student experiences.

Stay up to date with future events by visiting [the School of Medicine's alumni page](#).



View additional photos from the weekend here:  
[slualumni.zenfoliosite.com/2024-med-reunion](https://slualumni.zenfoliosite.com/2024-med-reunion)



## Save the Date for Med Reunion 2025

Calling all alumni from the School of Medicine classes with graduation years ending in 5 or 0. The School of Medicine and Dean Christine Jacobs invite you to a special reunion weekend on **October 17-18, 2025**.

For more information and to become involved with planning your class's reunion, please visit [slu.edu/medreunion](http://slu.edu/medreunion).

# White Coat Society

**List of White Coat Society donors who contributed from July 1, 2023-June 31, 2024. Donations made after this date that are not reflected here are appreciated. For a full list of donors to SLU, please visit [giving.slu.edu/honorroll](https://giving.slu.edu/honorroll).**

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Mary (*A&S '83, Med '88*) & Kent Agne

John (*A&S '69, Med '73*) & Colleen Anstey

Justin (*Med '04*) & Jamie Antisdell

Robert (*Med '81*) & Sally Backer

Robert (*Med '63*) & Barbara Balen

Steven (*A&S '75*) & Patricia Bander

Georgia Basinski

Christopher (*Med '04*) & Beth Bauer

Victor (*Med '68*) & Ruth Bazzoli

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Robert (*Med '75*) Blaskiewicz

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Samantha Cutler

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Emily & Patrick Lo

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Rosemary & James\* (*Med '58*) Mackey

Gerald Maguire (*Med '91*)

Maria & Paul Streiff

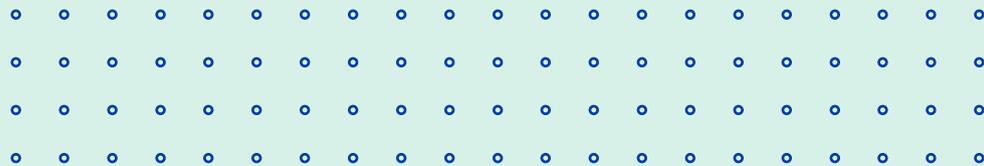
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Ira (*Med '75*) & Beth Rutkow  
Setsuko & Dan Sakamoto  
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Jerome (*Med '55*) & Elaine Schmidt  
James (*Med '85*) & Diane Schneider  
Thomas (*Med '58*) & Joyce Schneider  
Eugene+ (*CSB '57*) & Elaine Schorb  
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Chi Young (*Med '07*)  
Mary Ann Zehnder  
Jinsong Zhang & Chun Guo  
\* denotes the individual is deceased

# In Memoriam

**In remembrance of our colleagues who have passed away. The following notices of deaths were received from May 15, 2024 - November 19, 2024.**

Dr. Remy Rodriguez, *Class of 1944*  
Dr. Paul Northrop, *Class of 1946*  
Dr. Edward Cooper, *Class of 1948*  
Dr. Cesar Gomez, *Class of 1950*  
Dr. John Brunner, *Class of 1953*  
Dr. Leonard Walts, *Class of 1954*  
Dr. Peter Choy, *Class of 1955*  
Dr. Robert McDevitt, *Class of 1955*  
Dr. John Piendak, *Class of 1955*  
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Dr. Wyman Ewing, *Class of 1958*  
Dr. Edward Dewein, *Class of 1959*  
Dr. Henry Soldati, *Class of 1959*  
Dr. J Landry, *Class of 1960*

Dr. Van Polglase, *Class of 1960*  
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Dr. Jerome Basinski, *Class of 1963*  
Dr. Edward Rader, *Class of 1963*  
Dr. Kent Bealmear, *Class of 1964*  
Dr. Peter Barcia, *Class of 1965*  
Dr. William Beaty, *Class of 1965*  
Dr. Marvin Cooper, *Class of 1965*  
Dr. Ali Aboosi, *Class of 1966*  
Dr. Vincent McCormick, *Class of 1966*  
Dr. Carlos Torres, *Class of 1967*  
Dr. Michael Chehval, *Class of 1967*  
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Dr. Martin Gingras, *Class of 1970*  
Dr. Mary Skelton, *Class of 1970*  
Dr. Primitiva Wagan, *Class of 1970*  
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Dr. William Borgsmiller, *Class of 1972*  
Dr. John Lock, *Class of 1972*  
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Dr. Mark Ross, *Class of 1975*  
Dr. Stephen Steska, *Class of 1976*  
Dr. Michael Pord, *Class of 1976*  
Dr. Louis Difrancesco, *Class of 1977*

Dr. Kevin Yakuboff, *Class of 1977*  
Dr. John Maxwell, *Class of 1978*  
Dr. Ralph Johnson, *Class of 1978*  
Dr. Michael Ridge, *Class of 1981*  
Dr. David Nile, *Class of 1981*  
Dr. A Burnham, *Class of 1982*  
Dr. William Sciortino, *Class of 1982*  
Dr. Donel Courtney, *Class of 1989*  
Dr. Steven Baak, *Class of 1989*  
Dr. Brian Smith, *Class of 1991*  
Dr. Elisabeth Kehler, *Class of 1993*  
Dr. Kenneth Foreman, *Class of 1993*  
Dr. Daniel Hurley, *Class of 1996*  
Dr. Susan Minchin, *Class of 1997*  
Dr. Bernard Pegis, *Class of 2002*  
Dr. Stephen Harrison, *Class of 2003*  
Dr. Jeffery Shafer, *Class of 2004*  
Dr. Kui Yang, *Class of 2008*  
Dr. Kiley Ziegler, *Class of 2008*

## D. Graeme Thomas

1937-2024

D. Graeme Thomas, former executive director of Saint Louis University's Research Innovation Group, died on Sunday, August 11, 2024. Thomas joined SLU in 2011 as director of the Office of Technology Management, later transitioning to lead the SLU Research Innovation Group. In addition to his research efforts, he was instrumental in promoting and expanding the University's sponsored research efforts, forming and managing several funded research innovation initiatives, and overseeing MEDLaunch, SLU's student-led, student-driven biomedical incubator.



Born in Melbourne, Australia, Thomas completed his higher education at Melbourne, Macquarie and RMIT Universities. Prior to joining SLU, he held several leadership positions outside of academia at Sherwood Medical, MedAcscnt Group, Akermin, and CardiaLen.

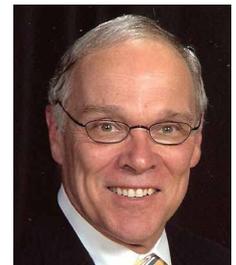
**Read more about Thomas's life and legacy.**

[slu.edu/news/2024/august/d-graeme-thomas-obituary.php](http://slu.edu/news/2024/august/d-graeme-thomas-obituary.php)

## Kenneth William Zehnder, M.D.

1947-2024

Kenneth William Zehnder, M.D., died peacefully on Sunday, October 6, 2024. Optimism, humor, and curiosity carried him through 15 months of pancreatic cancer. Zehnder graduated from the Saint Louis University School of Medicine in 1973, and served the St. Louis community as a physician specializing in sports medicine and orthopedic surgery for 46 years. He also volunteered with the immigrant and refugee community and served 3 years in the U.S. Navy.



Zehnder is survived by his wife of 52 years, Mary Ann, his four children, and many grandchildren. He met his wife while in medical school when she worked as a secretary for Robert H. Felix, M.D., who served as its dean. The couple attended every SLU Med Reunion weekend since Zehnder's graduation and enjoyed many memories with his fellow classmates and spouses.

# GET ENGAGED



Medical students practice tying knots in a clinical simulation lab.

## Join Us

We hope to see you soon at an upcoming event. Please visit [slu.edu/alumni](https://slu.edu/alumni) for the latest Saint Louis University events and alumni information.

## Stay in Touch

We are interested in our graduates' news and accomplishments, both personal and professional. We encourage you to update your contact information so we may keep you informed about reunions, events in your area, and news from the School of Medicine. If you have news to share or wish to update your address, please email us at [som-deansoffice@health.slu.edu](mailto:som-deansoffice@health.slu.edu).

## Readership Survey

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## Opportunities to Engage with SOM Students

Saint Louis University School of Medicine students are often interested in opportunities to meet with alumni. From mentoring to networking, we would like to hear how you are available to connect with students. **Please complete our brief survey.**



TAKE THE SURVEY

## Visit the SLU School of Medicine Online

There's a lot more to learn about SLU School of Medicine online at [slu.edu/medicine](https://slu.edu/medicine). Read this issue of Grand Rounds online at [slu.edu/medicine/grand-rounds/index.php](https://slu.edu/medicine/grand-rounds/index.php).

### How can we better serve you?

Contact [christine.winter.1@health.slu.edu](mailto:christine.winter.1@health.slu.edu) with your comments and recommendations.



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## Support SLU School of Medicine

Please consider a gift to support the School of Medicine and these **important initiatives**:

**A gift to the School of Medicine Annual Fund** allows us to designate funds as needed, ensuring key priorities receive the funding to succeed.

**A gift to the White Coat Society Scholarship Fund** will help lower the cost barriers for our students who rely on scholarships to achieve their dream of a SLU School of Medicine education.

**A gift to the Health Sciences Building Fund** will help to transform the medical school, providing an excellent learning environment to attract, engage, and challenge learners.



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