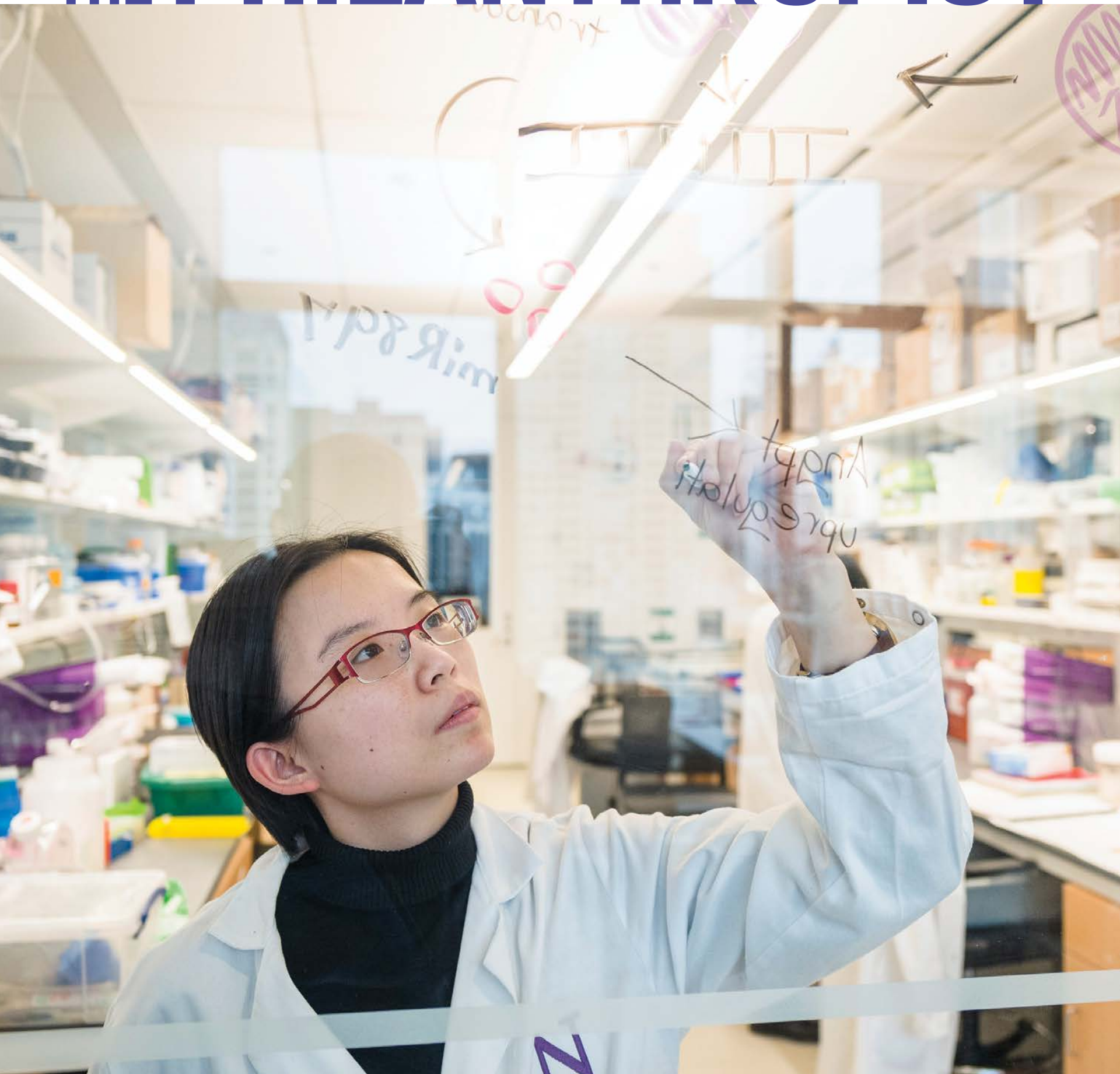


# THE PHILANTHROPIST



## Thank You for Helping Us Make an Impact

With your vital support, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine is able to make a positive difference in the lives of current and future patients through education and research. In our classrooms and clinics, Feinberg faculty are training the next generation of physicians and other healthcare providers to treat the globe's aging and diversifying populations with skill, compassion, and innovation. In our laboratories and communities throughout Chicago and the world, Feinberg teams are making discoveries and building systems to improve health and healthcare across boundaries. We are grateful for every gift we receive from you — patients, families, alumni, faculty, staff, foundations, corporations, and friends — and we are honored to share some of your inspiring stories in these pages.



# Donor Seed Funding Catalyzes Major Grants and Discoveries

**T**here's a mantra that motivates Feinberg scientists each day: Every treatment ever offered to a patient was once an experiment in a lab. But the route from bench to bedside is a long one, with many challenges along the way, including the expense of getting research off the ground. Initiating a study requires funding for personnel, specialized equipment and supplies, protected time, and space. Fortunately, generous donors to the medical school have been willing to take chances on new ideas, helping Feinberg scientists successfully compete for large federal grants and, ultimately, make discoveries that will lead to better outcomes for patients.

"Medical research is expensive but well worth the investment when lives are at stake," said Eric G. Neilson, MD, vice president for Medical Affairs and Lewis Landsberg Dean at Feinberg. "We are incredibly thankful for the individual donors and foundations that take our mission to heart by supporting investigators who have devoted their careers to answering bold and complex questions about how we can improve human health."



Dr. Alfred George

## A Center for Pediatric Epilepsy

In 2017, The Davee Foundation committed \$500,000 to a Precision Medicine in Epilepsy initiative within Feinberg's Department of Pharmacology. One year later, the department was awarded a \$12 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to establish a research center focused on understanding the genetic underpinnings of childhood-onset epilepsy.

"Applying for the center grant required years of preliminary research to make our case to the NIH," explained Alfred L. George Jr., MD, chair and the Alfred Newton Richards Professor of Pharmacology and principal investigator on the grant. "We could not have obtained that major funding without The Davee Foundation's support, which allowed us to set up important building blocks to vie for this highly competitive award."

Using funding from The Davee Foundation and NIH, the research team has amassed a biobank of stem cells from children with epilepsy who have certain gene mutations to study the unique cellular mechanisms responsible for their disease. They have already published new findings that suggest alternate targets for treating pediatric epilepsy.

"The Davee Foundation is proud of its history funding start-up research through Feinberg," said Craig Grannon, former executive administrator of The Davee Foundation, which closed in 2019. "The Davees knew that the NIH did not fund new research, that it requires external initial funding. They felt that new research was crucial to scientific progress, and therefore made this kind of funding a priority throughout the life of the Foundation."

## Discoveries for Women's Health

Funding from another vital partner to Feinberg, Friends of Prentice, has pushed forward research that has translated to tangible benefits to women's health. Friends of Prentice grant recipients have developed programs to support mothers with perinatal depression, built out technology to connect parents to their babies in intensive care, and uncovered better treatments for patients with uterine fibroids.

"We face a critical and vast knowledge gap in the areas of health, wellness, and disease progression for women," said Kristen Field, executive director of Friends of Prentice. "We are committed to closing that gap through important research that will have a long-lasting and vital impact on women's health across the entire arc of their lives. Playing a small part in funding research has ripple effects for women's health not only in the science itself but what it means for the scientists, patients they will treat, individuals they will mentor, and communities they will change."

Current grant recipient Kara Goldman, MD, '12 GME, is studying the mechanisms underlying ovarian aging. She hopes this work will lead to new drugs to protect ovaries and improve reproductive health.

"As a clinician-scientist, I am first and foremost motivated and inspired by my patients. I am privileged to care for women facing cancer treatments that may impact their fertility and reproductive health, and the patients I care for directly influence the research questions I'm compelled to ask," said Dr. Goldman, associate professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology and a Northwestern Medicine reproductive endocrinologist.

"From my initial investigations in a mouse model, transitioning next to a translational approach in human tissue specimens, Friends of Prentice funding has given me the tools I need to take patient-inspired research questions into the laboratory and, hopefully, eventually back to the clinic to improve the lives of patients."

For more information about supporting pharmacology, please contact [Andrew Christopherson](#) at **312-503-3080** or [andrew.christopherson@northwestern.edu](mailto:andrew.christopherson@northwestern.edu). For information about supporting obstetrics and gynecology, contact [Jordan Sund](#) at **312-503-2706** or [jordan.sund@northwestern.edu](mailto:jordan.sund@northwestern.edu).

## The Power of Philanthropy

"As a grateful recipient of generous funding from Friends of Prentice, I am astounded by the powerful impact that donor funding has on researchers, trainees, and most importantly on patients. Philanthropic support goes far beyond the materials and supplies needed to execute research. At a time when I needed to build my research program, Friends of Prentice gave me encouragement, confidence, and generous support to move forward. Philanthropic funding also holds tremendous meaning for educators and trainees. It provides resources needed to train the next generation of scientists. With my Friends of Prentice funding, I am mentoring four graduate students through Northwestern's Master of Science in Reproductive Science and Medicine. This donor support not only impacts me but also the careers of bright young investigators."

—Dr. Kara Goldman



Dr. Kara Goldman



Dr. Dai Horiuchi, Laura Sage, Cameron Sage, Dr. Marc Mendillo, Halee Sage, and Yale Sage celebrating a reception for the 2017–2018 Lynn Sage Scholars program.

# Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Foundation Invests in Northwestern, Impacts Patients Worldwide

It's a shocking statistic: About one in eight women in the United States will develop breast cancer. Improving diagnosis, treatment, and survival rates for everyone affected by this pervasive and devastating disease requires a multi-pronged approach: investment in both research and education. Embracing this strategy together for more than 30 years, the Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Foundation and Northwestern Medicine have fueled advances in breast cancer care that now help patients in Chicago and far beyond.

"A vital partner to Northwestern, the Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Foundation makes it possible for our scientists and clinicians to pioneer research and provide cutting-edge care to patients going through a very difficult experience. We are so grateful for the foundation's insightful and impactful fundraising and generosity," said Leon Platanias, MD, PhD, director of the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University and the Jesse, Sara, Andrew, Abigail, Benjamin and Elizabeth Lurie Professor of Oncology at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.

While the Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Foundation touches nearly every aspect of Northwestern Medicine's breast cancer endeavor, one of its top priorities is creating opportunities for burgeoning scientists and clinicians to innovate and train to become future leaders in the breast cancer field.

## Spurring Scientific Discovery

Through the Lynn Sage Scholars program, the foundation awards early career investigators with \$200,000 grants over two years to explore new research projects. With that seed funding, the scientists can test ideas and generate data to apply for larger grants from government agencies like the National Institutes of Health and, ultimately, work to translate basic science into better prevention and therapies for patients.

Both 2017–2018 scholars, Marc Mendillo, PhD, assistant professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics, and Dai Horiuchi, PhD, assistant professor of Pharmacology, delivered on the program's premise.

"The awards from Lynn Sage encouraged both of our labs to initiate high-risk, high-reward research — the type of research that could not have been funded by traditional federal sources, especially at earlier stages of development," explained Dr. Horiuchi.

Since receiving support from the foundation, the two former scholars have been able to secure nearly \$4 million in federal grants for their laboratories.

"It is nearly impossible to obtain funding to develop a new idea. The foundation was absolutely critical in our efforts to develop QMAP-Seq technology," shared Dr. Mendillo, referring to a new tool to test how drugs interact with genetically modified cells. The technology could drastically increase the speed and volume at which scientists can test targeted treatments for cancers and other diseases.

The scientists — who became collaborators after fortuitously meeting at a Lynn Sage event — are now working together to develop a novel therapy for patients with triple-negative breast cancer, one of the most aggressive forms of breast cancer.

"The Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Foundation believes that ambitious research is the key to changing the trajectory of breast cancer, so we will remain committed to funding talented young researchers investigating potentially groundbreaking theories," said Laura Sage, co-chair and founder of the Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Foundation. "We are so proud to report that our Scholars Program has driven additional funding worth six times our initial investment."

## A Titan at Northwestern

To date, the Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Foundation has raised more than \$40 million for breast cancer research and education. Its philanthropy helped establish the Lynn Sage Comprehensive Breast Center at Northwestern Memorial Hospital — today the largest program of its kind in the Midwest — and enables physicians and trainees from around the world to collaborate at the Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Symposium hosted by Lurie Cancer Center the last 23 years running. The foundation is named for Lynn Sage, a beloved mother, daughter, and wife who tragically died in 1984 at age 39 as a result of her battle with breast cancer.

## Equipping Breast Cancer Experts Nationwide

The foundation also supports a competitive clinical fellowship program to train future experts in breast cancer care. The modern management of breast disease requires an in-depth knowledge of not only surgery, but also imaging, biopsy techniques, pathology, radiation oncology, and medical oncology. Such specialized training is only available at prestigious academic health systems like Northwestern, and only with donor support.

"The Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Foundation's support for fellowships at Northwestern is incredibly important — the government funds some fellowships but not breast fellowships, so we rely on philanthropic sources for our program to continue," said Nora Hansen, MD, chief of Breast Surgery and director of Northwestern's breast surgery fellowship. "We feel so fortunate to be able to train future breast surgeons since so many women and some men will need these highly trained surgeons to manage their breast cancer in the future."

Former fellow Melissa Kaptanian, MD, '09 GME, moved to Montana after her training at Northwestern. For many years, she was the only fellowship-trained breast surgeon in the state, and today she leads the Logan Health Breast Center in Kalispell, Montana.

"It was important to me to get a broad range of training in high-risk benign disease, pre-malignant disease, and cancer, and that has served me well in my career," Dr. Kaptanian said. "I hope the Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Foundation is proud of the really great doctors that come out of their program at Northwestern, who go on to not only urban and academic hospitals but also rural and community settings and get involved in everything from screening and outreach to taking care of people — I'm grateful to be able to do that."

Today, a network of former Lynn Sage fellows is ensuring that patients across the United States have access to the specialized care they need.

"While we can say our funding stays in Chicago, we are so proud to know the positive effects will be felt nationwide for years to come," Ms. Sage said.

For more information about supporting breast cancer research and education, please contact [Nicole Langert](mailto:Nicole.Langert@northwestern.edu) at 312-503-1656 or [nicole.langert@northwestern.edu](mailto:nicole.langert@northwestern.edu) or [Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Foundation](mailto:info@lynnsage.org) at 312-252-2502 or [info@lynnsage.org](mailto:info@lynnsage.org).



# New Potocsnak Longevity Institute Hopes to Lengthen Human ‘Healthspan’



In the not-too-distant future, you’ll be able to check into the Human Longevity Laboratory to find out how old you really are, physiologically speaking. If the news is less than optimal, clinicians will determine why and check a litany of body systems as well as your neurological and orthopaedic health. Then, you’ll be prescribed an intervention to stave off further decline or — better yet — restore your vitality.

Sounds sci-fi, but it’s actually the mission of the new Potocsnak Longevity Institute, which launched this January at Feinberg thanks to a very generous gift from Chicago industrialist John Potocsnak and family.



John Potocsnak joined Feinberg leadership and faculty at a retreat last October to brainstorm and plan for the future of the Potocsnak Longevity Institute.

“We are grateful for the opportunity to support the vision put forth by Northwestern’s leaders, scientists, and physicians to help people live their longest, healthiest lives possible,” said Mr. Potocsnak. “The promise of the amazing work being done by this team holds the potential to profoundly impact quality of life for millions. My wife, Laura, myself, and my family are proud to support this important work as we strive to make the world a better place than when we got here.”

The Human Longevity Laboratory is just one part of the ambitious multi-center institute, whose goal is to foster new discoveries and build on Northwestern’s ongoing research in the rapidly advancing science of aging.

“The biological processes that drive aging may be malleable,” said Douglas Vaughan, MD, director of the new institute and chair of Medicine at Northwestern. “We think we can slow that process down, delay it, even theoretically reverse it. The curtain is being pulled back on what drives aging. We want to contribute to that larger discovery process.”

The goal of the institute is to extend what Dr. Vaughan terms the human “healthspan.” Scientists and clinicians will address the period of life when people are at the greatest risk for aging-related comorbidities — arthritis, dementia, heart disease, diabetes, aging-related cancer, and hypertension and frailty.

“We want to make it possible to live healthily for a longer period of time, not just live longer,” said Dr. Vaughan, also the Irving S. Cutter Professor of Medicine. “Aging is the most important risk factor for every disease we care for in adult medicine. If we can push that process back, we can push back the onset of disease.”

The new institute builds on the decades of work by Dr. Vaughan and scientists across Northwestern, unifying programs studying populations that seem resistant to some of the negative consequences of aging. These include certain members of an Amish community in Berne, Indiana or a group of cognitively young octogenarians called “SuperAgers.” Other projects will continue to seek biological levers that drive aging and investigate approaches — including new drugs — to minimize the impact of aging and extend the healthy lifespan of older adults.

“The Potocsnak Longevity Institute is a momentous step forward for the science of aging and lifespan,” said Eric G. Neilson, MD, vice president for Medical Affairs and Lewis Landsberg Dean. “The potential impact of this institute’s advancements can’t be overstated; the time is now right to push the field forward.”

For more information about supporting the Potocsnak Longevity Institute, please contact [Tiffany Scaparotti](mailto:Tiffany.Scaparotti@northwestern.edu) at 312-503-3088 or [tiffany.scaparotti@northwestern.edu](mailto:tiffany.scaparotti@northwestern.edu).

## AN INTERDISCIPLINARY AGENDA

### BRINGING TOGETHER SCIENTISTS AND EDUCATORS ACROSS DISCIPLINES, THE POTOCSNAK LONGEVITY INSTITUTE INCLUDES:

- Human Longevity Laboratory
- Potocsnak Center for Aging & HIV
- Center for Basic & Translational Biology
- Center for Nanoscience & Aging
- Center for Population Science & Aging
- Geroscience Academy (a base for training clinicians, students, and scientists about the rapidly progressing science of aging)

# Bunning Partnership Improves Life for Children with Allergies

Denise and Dave Bunning raised two sons with life-threatening food allergies to milk, eggs, tree nuts, sesame, seafood, and beef. As a result, they intimately understand how allergies can consume a child—and a family. “Food is a part of nearly everything we do,” wrote Ruchi Gupta, MD, MPH, in the introduction of her book *The Food Allergy Experience*, which she coauthored with Mrs. Bunning.

Working with Dr. Gupta and other experts and families across the United States, the Bunnings are leaders in the food allergy community. As advocates and philanthropists, they have dedicated decades of time and millions of dollars to finding more effective treatments and cures for children who suffer from food allergies and other food-related illnesses such as eosinophilic esophagitis. Though their sons are now grown, the Bunnings continue to fight for the families going through what they did.

Several years ago, the Bunnings’ support helped lay the groundwork for the Center for Food Allergy and Asthma Research (CFAAR), a partnership between the Feinberg School of Medicine and Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago. And now, a generous new gift from the Bunnings made through their family foundation, the Sunshine Charitable Foundation, ensures that the center will have resources to grow and innovate in perpetuity.

“Meeting Denise and Dave in 2003 changed my life and my career forever. I am eternally grateful for their passion and support, which not only inspires me personally, but also supports millions of children and families with food allergy through research and educational initiatives,” said Dr. Gupta, director of CFAAR, professor of Pediatrics, Medicine, and Preventive Medicine at Feinberg, and a physician at Lurie Children’s Hospital. Her newest book, *Food Without Fear*, was just published in August 2021.

With the Bunnings’ partnership, Dr. Gupta and her colleagues in the center will be able to invest in research programs, recruit additional faculty and staff, and, through a new Bunning Fellowship, train future leaders in allergy and asthma research.

Mr. Bunning is CEO and chief investment officer of The TLP Group LLC, which he established in 2004. Mrs. Bunning is co-founder of Mothers of Children Having Allergies (MOCHA). They have each served on boards for Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE), the nation’s leading food allergy advocacy organization, and Lurie Children’s Hospital. These entities have become vital collaborators with the Northwestern team.



Dr. Ruchi Gupta

## Why They Give: A Q&A with Denise and Dave Bunning

### *Why have you chosen to support the Center for Food Allergy and Asthma Research?*

Dr. Ruchi Gupta is the most widely recognized epidemiologist doing population-based research into life-threatening food allergies in the United States and is highly respected in her field. Backed by numerous grants from the National Institutes of Health, she has been a leader in publishing data to help everyone understand who is affected, how they are affected, and how to quantify the cost of life-threatening food allergies across the country. As data is more widely utilized to understand and solve medical issues, Northwestern is an ideal place for Ruchi to continue to move the field forward and help pharma companies understand how best to solve issues related to life-threatening food allergies. Ruchi and her team have a very collaborative approach with other research institutions and organizations, not only in the US but globally as well. We are thrilled to be able to help Ruchi continue to move her groundbreaking research forward.



### *In 2012, Mrs. Bunning wrote in The Food Allergy Experience, “if we all work together... we can create a better life for food-allergic children and their families.” How has the allergy field progressed toward this goal in the last 10 years? What work still needs to be done?*

A lot of progress has been made in the area of life-threatening food allergies. There are now treatments and medications in clinical trials that help the food-allergic individual. Most schools are now accommodating students appropriately. Restaurants now not only ask if the diner has food allergies but also are able to adapt to a variety of meal option requests: vegan, food allergies, celiac, etc. However, there is still A LOT to do. Ensuring that ALL families dealing with life-threatening food allergies, regardless of where they live or the color of their skin, have access to quality care, treatment plans, and safe food is the goal.

### *What would you like to say to other donors thinking about contributing to food allergy research at Northwestern?*

Dr. Gupta, the center, and Northwestern are world leaders in answering questions that will improve the day-to-day lives for those suffering from life-threatening food allergies. Their widely recognized national leadership for over a decade has demonstrated the ability to utilize donor funds to maximize impact on the patient. We are excited to help support their efforts and hope others will commit to providing support to fund answers to the many questions created by this relatively recent bizarre interaction between the immune system and common foods that affects an estimated 32 million people in the US alone.

For more information about supporting allergy research, please contact **MaryPat Mauro** at [marypat.mauro@northwestern.edu](mailto:marypat.mauro@northwestern.edu) or **312-503-1090**.



# Alumni Unite to Create Class Scholarships for Future Physicians

Working together, hundreds of Northwestern’s medical school alumni have generously contributed to class scholarships to support the physicians who will follow in their footsteps.

“Our alumni know better than anyone the challenges and rewards of a superb medical education. It is humbling to see them enthusiastically give back to scholarships so that exceptional aspiring physicians get the same opportunities to serve patients and advance the field of medicine,” said Alan M. Krensky, MD, executive for Development at Northwestern Medicine and vice dean for Development and Alumni Relations at Feinberg.

Fundraising for scholarships remains a priority for Feinberg. Scholarships are a competitive necessity today, helping the medical school attract the very best applicants. They also ensure that students of all backgrounds have a chance to pursue careers in medicine, in any specialty they choose, without the burden of extreme debt (*read one of our student’s stories on page 9*).

Currently, 67 percent of Feinberg students receive some financial aid, while the average debt for members of the Class of 2021 was over \$200,000. This is progress, thanks to the remarkable generosity of many donors, but the medical school still has a long way to go to provide financial aid to all of its students.

Thank you to all of the alumni and friends who are helping Feinberg students pursue their passions for medicine. To date, gifts of all sizes have collectively endowed 19 class scholarships, which require an initial investment of \$100,000 (a percentage of the interest earned on the endowment is awarded to students each year). These funds—and the legacies of our alumni—will live on in perpetuity, helping future physicians and physician-scientists for generations to come.

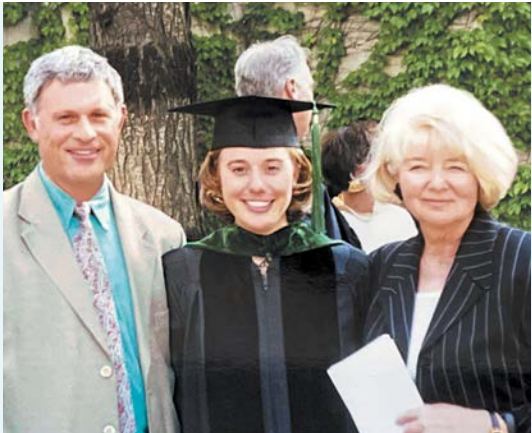
## Class of 1964: Building a Family Legacy

Michael Herrell, ‘64 MD, has supported his alma mater since he was a young physician just starting a career as a pathologist in his hometown of Evansville, Indiana. He began with \$100 gifts every year to the annual fund, a resource for the medical school’s areas of greatest need at any given point in time.

In 2013, when his peers — spearheaded by Howard Schuele, ‘64 MD, ‘71 GME; Tim Sullivan, ‘64 MD, Howard Kidd, ‘64 MD, and the late Richard “Dick” Dedo, ‘64 MD, ‘69 GME — set up the **Class of 1964 Scholarship**, Dr. Herrell enthusiastically contributed to that, too.

“My experience at Northwestern University Medical School had a really huge influence on my life,” Dr. Herrell said. “The faculty opened doors for me. They encouraged my interest in pathology and arranged the elective rotation that ended up establishing it as my choice of a career.”

Northwestern also played a major role in Dr. Herrell’s personal life: During a rotation at Passavant Hospital, he met his future wife, Helen, an administrator in medical records at the time. Dr. Herrell requested a chart and a date, and the rest is history.



Like father, like daughter: Dr. Michael Herrell, Dr. Jennifer Herrell, and Helen Herrell at Jennifer’s graduation from Northwestern’s medical school in 1999.

“Helen and I have a lot of fond memories of Chicago,” Dr. Herrell shared. Decades later, their youngest daughter, Jennifer Herrell, ‘99 MD, attended Northwestern for medical school, too, and joined the same medical fraternity as her dad.

After visiting campus for Dr. Herrell’s 50th reunion, the couple realized they could do more to help students. They decided to create the **Herrell Family Scholarship** through a charitable gift annuity, in addition to donating to the class scholarship.

“It’s not cheap to go to any kind of graduate school these days,” Dr. Herrell said. “Most students have to work many years to pay off their borrowing. It would be nice if we had scholarships for every incoming medical student.”

Through their scholarship support, the Herrells will empower new physicians who will pave the future of medicine, much like Dr. Herrell and his classmates did over the last five decades.

“When I went to medical school, we had a one-day lecture about cytogenetics,” he remembered, referencing a branch of genetics involving the analysis of chromosomes in individual cells. It plays an important role in diagnosing and treating diseases today.

“I set up a cytogenetics lab in the army in Germany during Vietnam after learning the procedures at the University of Michigan during my residency. Then I did it again when I moved back to my hometown’s hospital. I had a fulfilling career in medicine and am now happy to help others contribute to the field in their own ways.”

## GENEROSITY ACROSS GENERATIONS

A big thank you to all of the alumni and friends who have given to class scholarships to date, including the classes noted below.



Please note: The // symbol indicates a break in the timeline



Class of 1972:  
Paying Generosity Forward

Jay Perman, '72 MD, chancellor of the University System of Maryland and a pediatric gastroenterologist, is a longtime donor to Feinberg's medical school scholarship fund. Here, Dr. Perman reflects on how his Northwestern education prepared him for a successful career and explains why he wants to work with his former classmates to establish a Class of 1972 scholarship.

“Someone made my entire career possible for me, and now I've got to do the same thing for someone who's coming behind me.” —Dr. Jay Perman

“The road from physician to chancellor of a major university system isn't one that's traveled often. But here is something else that's unusual: I still practice medicine. Each week, I treat young children and work with their families in my clinic at the University of Maryland Medical Center. I also teach team-based healthcare to students in six professional schools at the University of Maryland, Baltimore.

It's certainly a pull on my time, but I do it because I love it. I think it's vitally important that health professionals learn how to work and communicate with one another in a team setting. It also helps me understand what is on students' minds and what we need to do better — as educators, universities, and organizations rooted in communities that need our engagement and service.

I also do it because I feel that I'm well-equipped to continue running the clinic and teaching students. I credit that to the medical education I received at Feinberg. So many years later, I still have confidence to stand in front of today's medical students and residents and be part of their training because of the strong foundation I got from Northwestern and the scholarship that made it possible.

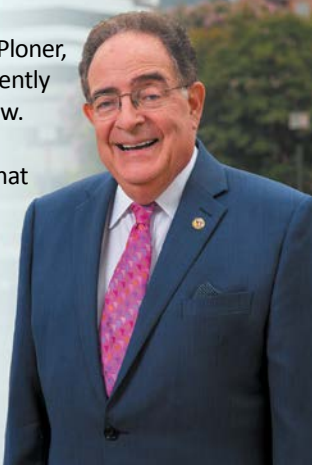
Growing up, I was the only child of immigrant parents who fled persecution in Ukraine to settle in Chicago. They opened a hand laundry on the city's West Side. I was 14 years old when my father passed away from esophageal cancer. My mother took a second job as a seamstress to make ends meet.

From a very young age, I knew I wanted to be a physician. I was fortunate to be accepted to Northwestern for my undergraduate education — and to get scholarships and work-study and a modest student loan to be able to pay the tuition.

I was accepted to the school of medicine, but that didn't seem to matter much, because I knew there was no way I'd ever be able to afford it. Then I got a letter in the mail from Northwestern telling me I was the **Ploner Scholar** and that my medical education would be paid for.

I went to medical school for nothing — not a penny out of my pocket or my mother's pocket. I graduated with no student debt. That's what I want to do for someone else. Someone made my entire career possible for me, and now I've got to do the same thing for someone who's coming behind me. I think there are classmates of mine who have a similar story to tell, and if they do, I think they'll want to do the very same thing.

I never got to meet Mrs. Louise Ploner, my benefactor, but I did just recently connect with her grand-nephew. I thanked him for his family's long-ago kindness. I told him what that gift had made possible for me. It was so gratifying to be able to show my appreciation. But I believe it will be even more gratifying to pay the family's generosity forward. That's what I plan to do.”



Dr. Jay Perman

Class of 1991:  
Remembering a Beloved Classmate

During their third year of medical school, members of the Class of 1991 experienced the unthinkable: the murder of their classmate, Lynda Singshinsuk. Years later, they have not forgotten her. To honor Lynda and the lost promise of all that she would have given to medicine, her peers established the **Lynda Singshinsuk Class of 1991 Scholarship**.



Members of the Class of 1991 at their 25-year reunion, including Dr. Farah Fakouri (right), who named the class's scholarship to remember Lynda Singshinsuk.

“Lynda was so smart. She was the teacher's assistant in our histology class, enrolled in the course while simultaneously teaching the rest of us,” remembered Farah Hashemi Fakouri, '91 MD, '92 GME, a specialist in vascular medicine and infectious disease in Chicago. She came up with the idea to name the scholarship after Lynda. “This scholarship reminds us of her. It reminds us that we survived what Lynda did not. It reminds us that it is our honor and privilege to be able to be physicians. Lynda would have made such a fine one.”

“Lynda always wanted to become a doctor so she could help people,” said Rapeepam Singshinsuk, Lynda's mother. She and her husband, Sompong Singshinsuk, MD, have planned an estate gift to support the scholarship. “We want to help future students so that they can go on to help people like Lynda would have. We want her name to carry on.”

Greg Kastner, MD, who lives in Lynda's hometown — Robinson, Illinois — also contributes to the scholarship fund. Lynda used to shadow him at his medical practice. “In addition to being very bright, with a promising career ahead of her, Lynda was the embodiment of kindness and compassion,” he shared.

Working together, 34 alumni and friends have made the Lynda Singshinsuk Scholarship one of the most successful endowed scholarships at the medical school. So far they have pledged more than \$250,000 in outright gifts and \$1.5 million in planned gifts to fund medical students who go on to serve patients in Lynda's name in perpetuity.

“We hope these dollars raised help pave the way for yet another promising young mind, like our talented classmate,” Dr. Fakouri added. “May God bless Lynda, her memory, her family, and the generosity of the doctors from the Class of 1991. This scholarship is the least we can do to pay tribute.”

For more information about supporting scholarships through outright or estate gifts, please contact **Larry Kuhn** at 312-503-1717 or [larry-kuhn@northwestern.edu](mailto:larry-kuhn@northwestern.edu).

Northwestern  
honors woman  
with scholarship

Endowment recognizes Singshinsuk, murdered in 1990.

By RANDY HARRISON  
Daily News

Almost 29 years after her death, the classmates of a Robinson woman are helping others achieve their dreams of becoming doctors in her memory.

Members of the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine class of 1991 have endowed a scholarship fund for the school's medical students in honor of Lynda Singshinsuk. The first recipient of the four-year scholarship received \$12,000 to help with her education costs in the fall.

“We all remember her fondly and have never recovered from her shocking and sudden loss,” Dr. Diane B. Wayne, vice dean for education at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, wrote in a letter to Lynda's parents, Dr. Sompong and Rapeepam Singshinsuk, Robinson.

“After all these years, we want you to know that Lynda's memory is alive and well in the minds and hearts of her medical school classmates.”

Singshinsuk was 24 when she was killed by her former boyfriend, Donald “Dusty” Weber, April 17, 1990. Weber pleaded guilty to murder and was sentenced to 75 years in prison in February 1992.

In 2016, at the class of 1991's 25th reunion, the members decided to create the Class of 1991/Lynda Singshinsuk Scholarship.

“Everyone knew Lynda. She was so uniformly well-liked and respected. She was a smart, compassionate, outgoing and wonderful person with fabulous energy and a great smile,” Wayne told the Daily News. “We were thinking about how she couldn't be there, about how she never had the chance to achieve her personal and professional goals.

“We wanted to keep her name alive at the school,” she explained. “Because the scholarship is permanently endowed, there will always be a student at Northwestern's medical school who will receive tuition support from this fund.”

The first-year student who received the first scholarship is a young Illinois woman who was an honor student at her university. “She has some of the same characteristics as Lynda,” Wayne said. “She's a worthy recipient of the scholarship.”

Establishing a scholarship at Northwestern requires a minimum of \$250,000. An anonymous donor told the class members if they raised half the amount, he would provide the remainder, Wayne said.

The scholarship is funded through interest accrued by the endowment fund. It will grow over time and it is hoped it will eventually become a full scholarship.

To date, there 51 people have contributed to scholarship fund. Of those 51 donors, 43 were from class of 1991.

Additional donations can be made to the fund. Anyone interested in contributing can go to <https://secure.ard.northwestern.edu/s/1479/282-giving/basic-page-nonav-campaign.aspx?sid=1479&gid=282&pgid=7572&crid=13043>.



Singshinsuk

An article about the class's scholarship in **Daily News**, a newspaper in Lynda's hometown, Robinson, Illinois.



# Donors Give Students of All Backgrounds a Chance to Pursue Medicine



Dr. Javier Suarez; Drs. Leonard and Barbara Gosink; current Promise Scholar Kai Brady; Dr. Bruce Peters and Mrs. Aulana Peters; Dr. Berkley Davis.

## Feinberg Promise Scholarship Encourages Students from Groups Underrepresented in Medicine

Medical school is challenging for anyone, with its rigorous curriculum and hectic schedule. But for many considering this path, it comes with even more worries: Will I belong? Will I have classmates and mentors who understand my background and experiences to help me succeed? Add in the potential of a daunting debt load, and some decide it's not feasible to pursue their dream of a career in medicine.

To help alleviate these worries and encourage students from groups traditionally underrepresented in medicine to apply to Feinberg, former medical students Javier Suarez, '19 MD, and Berkley Davis, '20 MD, established the Feinberg Promise Scholarship (originally called the Diversity in Medicine Scholarship) in 2019. Since then, 75 donors have contributed more than \$200,000 in outright gifts and \$2 million in estate gifts to support this important cause. The medical school's ultimate goal is to build an endowment of \$10 million for the Promise Scholarship so as many students as possible have access to the high-quality medical education offered at Feinberg.

The medical school strives to train a student body that mirrors local communities, with students representing a wide variety of racial, ethnic, religious, gender, and sexual identities, persons with disabilities, and socioeconomic diversity.

"Scholarship funding helps relieve students of financial stress and, at the same time, will help Feinberg attract awesome applicants who may not otherwise have applied," explained Dr. Suarez, who is now a neurology resident at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

"Scholarships make the seemingly impossible possible for many students," added Dr. Davis, a resident in obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Virginia. He grew up in a rural part of that state where friends and family didn't consider careers as physicians. "The transition to Feinberg was tough."

Donors Bruce Peters, '64 MD, and Aulana Peters believe that educational opportunities are the best tools for helping young people of all backgrounds realize their potential.

"We both came from modest circumstances and were the first in our immediate families to attend college," shared Dr. Peters. After earning his medical degree at Northwestern, he worked at the Center for Communicable Disease Control, the US Public Health Service in Latin America and Africa, and, ultimately, as a pediatric nephrologist in Los Angeles. Mrs. Peters, a retired lawyer, was the first Black person and the third woman appointed to the US Securities and Exchange Commission.

About **22%** of Feinberg's MD Class of 2025 is from racial and ethnic groups traditionally underrepresented in medicine.

As mentors and philanthropists, the couple hopes to empower students of color to succeed.

"While earning a college degree—or a medical degree—is not the only route to personal development and achievement, it is certainly one that has been proven over time and generations to be a path to meaningful change in the social and economic circumstances of the underserved and underrepresented," Mrs. Peters said. "This belief drove our decision to make a substantial donation to Feinberg's Promise Scholarship."

Leonard Gosink, '65 MD, '71 GME, and Barbara Gosink, '66 MD, experienced their own financial struggles as young medical students, but they made it through thanks to scholarship support.

"Barbara and I were given considerable assistance from Northwestern and are very grateful for that—we couldn't pay much," said Dr. Leonard Gosink, who went on to practice neurology while his wife practiced radiology, both in the San Diego area. "I envision the possibility that Northwestern would select the class need blind: based on quality and grades and not consider whether students can pay or not. Those who can afford to pay do so and those who cannot get scholarships."

The Gosinks have documented a large planned gift through their trust to support the Promise Scholarship that will assist Feinberg students for years to come.

The current Promise Scholar, Kai Brady, is a first-year medical student who grew up in the south suburbs of Chicago before attending a historically black college and then graduate school in Atlanta. She decided to become a doctor after witnessing the compassionate and evidence-based care her mother received at Northwestern Memorial Hospital years ago.

"I felt like my dreams had come true when I received my acceptance at Feinberg, but I only celebrated for a moment before I became anxious about how I would pay. Your gift has made my dream a reality," Ms. Brady wrote to all the alumni and friends who supported her scholarship. "I am incredibly thankful for the opportunity to explore my interests at an amazing institution like Northwestern without a tremendous financial burden guiding my decisions."

Already Ms. Brady is giving back—through her time—to carry on the mission of the Promise Scholarship. She is volunteering on a student admissions committee to increase diversity within the medical school.



# What My Scholarship Means to Me—and My Future Patients

A first-year medical student explains to the alumni and friends who have funded her Class of 1960 Scholarship why their support is so important to her—and the future patients she will serve.

“I was thrilled to receive my acceptance to Northwestern. I wanted to attend an institution with a diverse patient population, early clinical exposure, great research opportunities, and an innovative curriculum. Northwestern excels in all of these areas. But as someone from a low-income family, paying full tuition in medical school would result in overwhelming debt that could prevent me from serving lower-resourced patients.

Your generous gift makes it possible for me to reduce my future debt so I can choose a specialty and practice setting that help underserved patients without fear that I will be unable to pay off my student loans. I believe it is essential that the physician population represent the diversity of our country, so I intend to help other students from low-income backgrounds afford medical school. I will advocate for these changes and donate like you as soon as I am able.

I am so grateful to begin my medical career at Northwestern. I cannot thank you enough for your generosity and this amazing opportunity.”

*“Your generous gift makes it possible for me to reduce my future debt so I can choose a specialty and practice setting that help underserved patients without fear that I will be unable to pay off my student loans.”*

## More Ways to Support Our Students

In addition to medical student scholarships, there are many other areas through which donors can assist aspiring clinicians and scientists training at Feinberg:

**Physical Therapy Scholarships:** Help students who will become healthcare providers and leaders in another important branch of medicine.

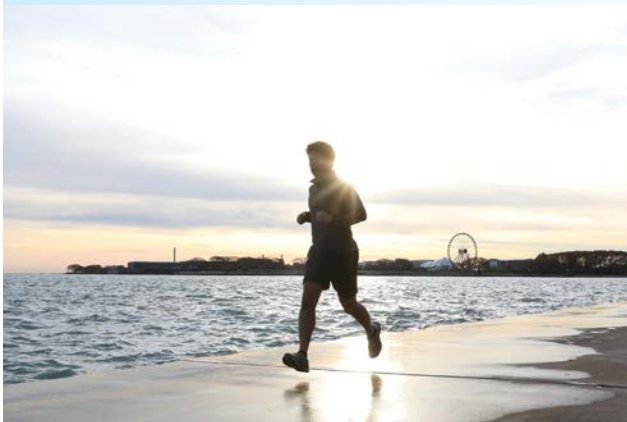
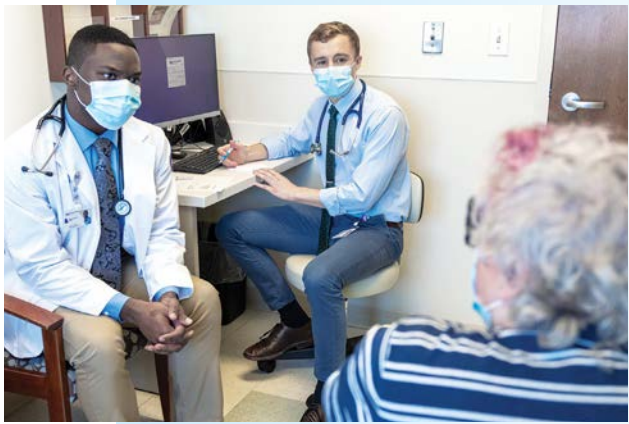
**Student Wellness:** Understanding that self-care is an essential ingredient for success, Feinberg is working hard to expand support services focused on students’ mental and physical health.

**Northwestern Simulation:** This important resource allows students to practice skills and procedures on responsive mannequins and 3D-printed models in fully equipped hospital and surgical rooms prior to entering the clinical setting.

**Northwestern Medicine Orchestra:** Our orchestra is a social and creative outlet for students that enables them to build connections with alumni, faculty, and staff—and our broader Chicago community through performances.

**Stethoscopes:** Gifts of all sizes can make an impact on our incoming students, allowing them to focus on their education instead of its costs.

For more information about supporting the Feinberg Promise Scholarship or Feinberg students in other ways, please contact [Larry Kuhn](#) at [312-503-1717](tel:312-503-1717) or [larry-kuhn@northwestern.edu](mailto:larry-kuhn@northwestern.edu).





# Feinberg Foundation Helps Combat Cancer Disparities in Chicago

hope

FEINBERG FOUNDATION

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Photo: Elizabeth Sisson

Rhonda Feinberg and Yolonda Ross at an event in October celebrating The Joseph & Bessie Feinberg Foundation's generous gift and the impact it will have on Black women in Chicago.

Last fall a string of fortuitous connections led to a special gift from one of the medical school's legendary donors to help equalize healthcare for Black women in Chicago.

It all started when Yolonda Ross, an actress in the television series *The Chi*, learned that her character, a single Black mother living on Chicago's South Side, was going to be diagnosed with breast cancer. To prepare, Ms. Ross wanted to understand what that experience was like for real women.

Ms. Ross's agent suggested she talk to Melissa Simon, MD, MPH, '06 GME, director of Northwestern's Center for Health Equity Transformation. Dr. Simon helped connect Ms. Ross to breast cancer survivors in Chicago's Black communities and local non-profits working hard to support them. Ms. Ross learned that Black women with breast cancer face a myriad of disparities in their healthcare and outcomes. In fact, they are up to twice as likely to die of the disease than white women.

When the show aired, Rhonda Feinberg, a breast cancer survivor herself and a leader of The Joseph & Bessie Feinberg Foundation, was moved by Ms. Ross's performance, which included getting her real hair shaved off onscreen. Mrs. Feinberg called Ms. Ross to ask how she could help drive change.

When Ms. Ross mentioned Dr. Simon and Northwestern's Center for Health Equity Transformation, the situation came full circle

for Mrs. Feinberg: She was already well aware of the innovative work being done by faculty at Northwestern's Feinberg School of Medicine, which is named after her family's foundation (see below).

Ms. Ross encouraged Mrs. Feinberg to give again: "Invest in these grassroots not-for-profits, on the frontlines, doing the real work that's making a major impact in Black women's lives. They are providing urgently needed support to transform their immediate experience, particularly individuals lacking the very basic resources needed as they are forced to face a life and death situation with breast cancer," Ms. Ross said.

With Mrs. Feinberg's recommendation, the Feinberg Foundation decided to make a generous donation to the Center for Health Equity Transformation and two other Chicago non-profits, Equal Hope and the Tatisa C. Joiner Foundation.

"I understand firsthand many of the challenges of breast cancer treatment," said Mrs. Feinberg. "But Yolonda's performance on *The Chi* showed me how women of color very often have enormous obstacles accessing vital treatment. I'm so proud to team with Yolonda not only to shine a light on the wonderful organizations helping with this cause, but also to support them with critical funding for the tremendous work they do."

Breast cancer disparities are caused by a myriad of factors, spanning from lack of access to mammograms for early diagnosis to institutional racism that affects women's treatments after

diagnosis. Through research, education, workforce development, and community engagement, Dr. Simon and her colleagues are fighting the systemic and institutional barriers that perpetuate inequities in health and healthcare for marginalized and disenfranchised groups.

"Working with Ms. Ross and her team in partnership with the Feinberg family was a phenomenal once-in-a-lifetime experience," said Dr. Simon, who is also the George H. Gardner, MD Professor of Clinical Gynecology at Feinberg. "I am deeply grateful for Ms. Ross's visionary approach to her art, which merges her gift for acting with advocacy. Through the Feinberg's amazing generosity, we are able to substantially help these organizations continue to provide essential services so Black women who face breast cancer inequities in Chicago not just survive but thrive."

The Center for Health Equity Transformation is a joint center between the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University and the Institute for Public Health and Medicine. Community engagement is a key pillar of the medical school's mission to improve human health, and the center is just one example of the many ways Feinberg's trainees and faculty are working to better meet the needs of the diverse neighborhoods and populations Northwestern Medicine serves.

For more information about supporting community health initiatives, please contact [David McCreery](mailto:david.mccreery@northwestern.edu) at [david.mccreery@northwestern.edu](mailto:david.mccreery@northwestern.edu) or 312-503-6099.



Siblings Joe and Janice Feinberg honor the Feinberg brothers, Reuben (seated in the painting), Sam, Bernard, and Louis (inset), at the unveiling of their portrait on the medical school's campus in 2003.

## Celebrating Two Decades as Feinberg

This February marked the 20-year anniversary of the naming of Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in honor of The Joseph & Bessie Feinberg Foundation. The name recognized the foundation's generous gifts to the medical school totaling more than \$100 million — including a \$75 million commitment to support medical education and research that was the largest single donation to a Chicago-area university at the time.

The foundation has contributed to many areas across the Feinberg School of Medicine, including cardiology, ophthalmology, neurology, nephrology and hypertension, cancer, obesity, and women's health.

The Joseph & Bessie Feinberg Foundation was established in 1969 by brothers Bernard, Louis, Reuben, and Samuel Feinberg in memory of their parents. Reuben, a Chicago businessman, was president of the foundation and a generous supporter of the Feinberg School of Medicine at the time of his death in late 2002. Since then, Janice, Joe, and Rhonda Feinberg have expanded the scope of the foundation's philanthropy, prioritizing social impact and investments in under-resourced communities in Chicago and Los Angeles.



# INNOVATION SPOTLIGHT

## Empowering Feinberg's Unsung Heroes

Each day, our faculty, students, and trainees at Feinberg dedicate time to innovative new ideas and programs that will move the needle in medicine and science. Here, we spotlight some of the exciting work that often happens behind the scenes and beyond daily clinical care.

Thank you to all of the donors who contribute to these efforts, now and in the future. Your philanthropy fuels these projects and programs — enabling their very existence and empowering them to grow for the benefit of patients today and tomorrow.



Dr. Linda Teplin

### Addressing Health Disparities Through Public Policy

Led by **Linda A. Teplin, PhD**, Feinberg's Health Disparities & Public Policy Program studies the mental health needs of traditionally underserved populations such as racial and ethnic minority groups, and persons who are impoverished, homeless, and incarcerated. The program houses two groundbreaking studies, including the Northwestern Juvenile Project, which is the only large-scale, longitudinal study of the health needs and outcomes of youth in the juvenile justice system. The team has published their research findings in widely read journals that effect change in public health policy. Dr. Teplin is the Owen L. Coon Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and a professor of Infectious Diseases, in addition to serving as vice chair for Research in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences.



Dr. Lifang Hou

### Advancing Global Equity in Cervical Cancer Screening

Ninety percent of deaths caused by cervical cancer occur in low- and middle-income countries and are often due to limited access to screenings, vaccinations, and treatment. **Lifang Hou, MD, PhD**, director of the Center for Global Oncology, with **Matthew Glucksberg, PhD**, and **Sally McFall, PhD**, co-directors of the Center for Innovation in Global Health Technologies, all in the Robert J. Havey, MD Institute for Global Health, are leading efforts to increase global equity in cervical cancer screening. The team aims to develop a cost-effective self-sampling device and testing structure for widespread accurate HPV testing and cervical cancer screenings.

For more information about supporting the efforts above, contact **Jenn Burke** at **312-503-4635** or **jennifer.burke@northwestern.edu**.



Dr. David Walega

### Exploring Promising Avenues for Pain Management

Pain is the most common reason that Americans visit a doctor. **David Walega, MD, MSCI '13, '97 '98 GME**, is focused on making a positive impact on the quality of care for patients with chronic pain disorders. He has been studying the effects of nerve ablation procedures on knee pain from osteoarthritis, a leading cause of disability in the US, as well as the novel application of sympathetic nerve blocks for women with intractable hot flashes. Dr. Walega is vice chair for Research, chief of Pain Medicine, and a professor of Anesthesiology.

For more information about supporting the efforts above, contact **Angela Mota** at **312-503-0742** or **angela.mota@northwestern.edu**.



Dr. Gregory Smith

### Studying Viruses' Impact on the Nervous System

Viral infection can have a wide range of outcomes — and in the worst cases cause significant brain damage. **Gregory Smith, PhD**, professor of Microbiology and Immunology, aims to better understand herpesviruses and their neuroinvasive properties. His lab uses a combination of live-cell fluorescence microscopy, molecular genetics, and neuronal cell biology to study the route these viruses take to spread within the nervous system. By obtaining a working understanding of these viruses, the team can strive to translate knowledge into tools to develop vaccines and new therapies.

For more information about supporting the efforts above, contact **MaryPat Mauro** at **312-503-1090** or **marypat.mauro@northwestern.edu**.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Alumni Weekend 2022

**April 29–30**, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine  
Info: **312-503-0855**, **babette.henderson@northwestern.edu**

### Commitment to Scholarships Luncheon

**April 30**, The Ritz-Carlton, Chicago  
Info: **312-503-0754**, **olympia1@northwestern.edu**

### The Founders Society Cocktail Reception

**April 30**, The Arts Club of Chicago  
Info: **312-503-3459**, **s-kalsbeek@northwestern.edu**

### Malnati Brain Tumor Institute Minds Matter Gala

**May 20**, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago  
Info: **312-503-0759**, **ashleymay@northwestern.edu**

### Les Turner ALS Foundation Hope Through Caring Gala

**May 21**, Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel, Chicago  
Info: **312-503-3080**, **andrew.christopherson@northwestern.edu**

### Cancer Survivors' Celebration Walk & 5K

**June 5**, Upper Hutchinson Field at Grant Park  
Info: **312-503-0759**, **ashleymay@northwestern.edu**

### A Grand Garden Party & Bocce Ball Tournament to Benefit Lurie Cancer Center

**June 11**, Wilmette Harbor Club  
Info: **312-503-0759**, **ashleymay@northwestern.edu**

### Associate Board of Lurie Cancer Center Cocktail Reception

**July 14**, Woodwind, Chicago  
Info: **312-503-1656**, **nicole.langert@northwestern.edu**

### The H Foundation Goombay Bash

**July 23**, Aon Grand Ballroom at Navy Pier  
Info: **312-503-1656**, **nicole.langert@northwestern.edu**

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If you would like to receive future issues of this publication electronically, or if you would like more information about any of the stories in this issue, please email Nora Dunne at [nora.dunne@northwestern.edu](mailto:nora.dunne@northwestern.edu).

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[feinberg.northwestern.edu/giving](https://feinberg.northwestern.edu/giving)

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Volume 9, Issue 1 (March 2022)

# THE PHILANTHROPIST

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