

WELCOME

28th Annual

Layton F. Rikkers, MD **Education Retreat**

***From Survival to Formation: Reclaiming the Educational
Mission of the Surgical Learning Environment***

MAY 26, 2026 | HEALTH SCIENCES LEARNING CENTER



Welcome to the 2026 University of Wisconsin Department of Surgery Layton F. Rikkers, MD Education Retreat!

The theme of the 28th Annual Rikkers Education Retreat is **“From Survival to Formation: Reclaiming the Educational Mission of the Surgical Learning Environment.”** This theme honors education as a core mission and value of the Department of Surgery, a mission to which we all contribute, and seeks to inspire us to reclaim the simple joy of educating the next generation of exceptional surgeons. In addition, we will spotlight the surgical education research, scholarship, and innovation that is being led by our talented faculty, trainees, and staff.

We are delighted to welcome our visiting professor, Dr. Jessica Fazendin, who will lead today’s professional development workshop and present at Grand Rounds on Wednesday, May 27th. Dr. Fazendin joins us from the University of Oklahoma, where she is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Surgery as well as their Vice Chair of Education and Co-Director for Undergraduate Surgical Education. Her talk this afternoon, titled **“Designing a Clinical Learning Environment that Works Across Generations,”** explores how to design clinical learning environments that effectively engage and support learners from multiple generations, each with distinct values, communication styles, and expectations. Participants will gain practical strategies to foster collaboration, adaptability, and inclusive teaching practices that enhance learning outcomes across a diverse healthcare workforce.

Our Director of Medical Student Education, Dr. Courtney Morgan, will lead our evening session on **“Stories from the OR: Meaning, Memory, and Teaching in Surgery.”** Featuring Department of Surgery Faculty who are UWSMPH Alumni, the session will reflect on the speakers’ personal experiences as UWSMPH medical students and the meaningful moments that supported feelings of belonging and the pursuit of their surgical careers. The Retreat will close with the announcement of the 2026 awardees for Outstanding Resident and Fellow Educators as well as the Layton F. Rikkers Faculty Award for Medical Student Education.

Importantly, this retreat gives us the opportunity to recognize the individuals in our department who are essential to the success of our surgical educational programs. This includes the administrative leaders and staff in our Education Office, who expertly and efficiently run our programs on a day-to-day basis; our faculty and trainees, who are both the back-bone of and the impetus for our mission; and our surgical education researchers, who are continually pushing the field forward with their innovation. Today, we celebrate each of you and we honor your tremendous contributions that make the UW Department of Surgery a stellar program in which to train and practice.

**Thank you for joining us and welcome to the 2026
Layton F. Rikkers Education Retreat!**

agenda

Tuesday, May 26, 2026 | 2:00–6:15 PM

- 2:00** Poster Session, Hors D’oeuvres & Networking
HSLC Atrium
- 3:00** Welcome & Opening Remarks
Brigitte Smith, MD, MHPE
- 3:10** Professional Development Workshop
“Designing a Clinical Learning Environment That Works Across Generations”
Jessica Fazendin, MD
- 4:45** Poster Session, Hors D’oeuvres & Networking
HSLC Atrium
- 5:30** “Stories from the OR: Meaning, Memory and Teaching in Surgery”
Courtney Morgan, MD
- 6:15** Awards & Closing Remarks

Wednesday, May 27, 2026 | 7:30-8:30 AM

- 7:30** *Department of Surgery Grand Rounds*
Jessica Fazendin, MD

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keynote speaker



Jessica Fazendin, MD, FACS

Jessica Fazendin, MD, FACS

Jessica Fazendin, MD, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Surgery at the University of Oklahoma, where she started the Endocrine Surgery Program. She is also the department's Vice Chair of Education and Co-Director for Undergraduate Surgical Education. Her clinical work focuses on benign and malignant thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenal disorders in addition to inherited endocrinopathies, while her research interests lie in clinical outcomes for endocrine surgery as well as the optimization of the clinical learning environment and team dynamics.

Dr. Fazendin serves on the education committees for several surgical associations, including the Association for Surgical Education, the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons, and the Society of University Surgeons, and is an active participant in the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Surgeons as Educators program. She also engages and collaborates with the international surgical community via her involvement in the ACS Health Outreach Program for Equity in Global Surgery program in Zambia and has given talks relating to endocrine surgery and surgical education around the world.

The recipient of several awards for both patient care and teaching throughout her career, Dr. Fazendin is a proud alumnus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, from which she obtained a Bachelor of Science in Biology. After completing her medical degree at the Medical College of Wisconsin, she went on to complete her general surgery residency at Hahnemann Hospital/Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia and a fellowship in endocrine surgery at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Recent Publications

Mainali B, Akhund R, Shao CC, Kennedy GE, Chen H, Fazendin JM. My thoughts: On surgical personalities, stereotypes, and leadership. *Am J Surg*. 2026 Apr;254:116614.

Jones MP, Kasmirski JA, Song Z, McLeod MC, Gillis A, Fazendin J, Corey B, Lindeman B. Does Case Complexity Impact EPA Entrustment? Analysis Across PGY Levels and Phases of Care. *J Surg Educ*. 2026 Mar;83(3):103857.

Kasmirski JA, Harsono AAH, Swaminathan N, Herbey II, Gillis A, Fazendin J, Corey B, Lindeman B. EPAs Have Entered the Room: An Analysis of Residents' and Faculty Members' Perceptions. *J Surg Educ*. 2026 Jan;83(1):103752.

Balachandra S, Swaminathan N, Kasmirski J, Roy R, Song Z, Kennedy G, Chen H, Fazendin J. Shaping Tomorrow's Leaders: Society of Asian Academic Surgeon's Role in Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders Surgeon Leadership. *Ann Surg*. 2025 Nov 13. Epub ahead of print.

Zmijewski P, Kasmirski JA, Balachandra S, McLeod C, Akhund R, Allahwasaya A, Lafrinere T, Fazendin JM, Carty SE, Graham PH, Hughes DT, Lyden M, Miller BS, Finnerty BM, Yip L, Lindeman B. Learner and Teacher Entrustability Concordance in Endocrine Surgery Entrustable Professional Activities. *World J Surg*. 2025 Nov;49(11):3136-3141.

About Dr. Ridders

Dr. Layton F. “Bing” Ridders is a native of Wisconsin and received his undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. After graduating from Stanford University Medical School, he completed a general surgery residency at the University of Utah and two one-year fellowships at the Royal Free Hospital in London and Emory University in Atlanta. He spent seven years on the faculty at the University of Utah before serving as the Musselman Chair of Surgery at the University of Nebraska Medical Center from 1984 to 1996 and then the A.R. Curreri Chair of Surgery at the University of Wisconsin from 1996 to 2008. During his 12-year tenure as surgery chair at UW–Madison, the faculty doubled in size and our NIH ranking rose to 13th in the nation, representing a significant increase in research funding. Dr. Ridders established the annual Resident Research Day and the annual Education Retreat. He is currently Emeritus Professor of Surgery at UW–Madison.



Layton F. “Bing” Ridders, MD

Retreat History

The University of Wisconsin Department of Surgery Education Retreat was initiated in 1998 to offer a venue in which to recognize and support the educational efforts of the Department of Surgery. Initially dedicated to improving education within the department, with a focus on medical student education, the event has evolved over the years. While the information shared during the retreat was likely helpful in improving the teaching abilities of those who attended, more importantly, it was a yearly reminder that education was an essential component of the department’s mission.

In 2008, the event was named the Layton F. Ridders Education Retreat to honor our past Chair of Surgery who held the education of medical students and residents as a high priority. The surgeons who have served as visiting professors to the retreat are a virtual “who’s who” of surgical education in the United States.

Previous Speakers

- 1998 Craig Gjerde, PhD
- 1999 Deb DaRosa, PhD
- 2000 Gary Dunnington, MD
- 2001 Ajit Sachdeva, MD
- 2002 Thomas Krummel, MD
- 2003 Stephen R.T. Evans, MD
- 2004 John Leeman Tarpley, MD
- 2005 Richard K. Reznick, MD
- 2006 Yolanda Becker, MD
- 2007 Jo Shapiro, MD
- 2008 Bruce L. Gewertz, MD
- 2009 Mary E. Klingensmith, MD
- 2010 David Rogers, MD
- 2011 Ajit Sachdeva, MD
- 2012 Carlos Pellegrini, MD
- 2013 Julie Freischlag, MD
- 2014 Frank R. Lewis, MD
- 2015 Gerald M. Fried, MD
- 2016 Leigh A. Neumayer, MD, MS
- 2017 David R. Farley, MD
- 2018 Gurjit Sandhu, PhD
- 2019 Carol-Anne Moulton, MD, PhD, Med
- 2020 Karen Brasel, MD
- 2021 Division of Education Update, no guest speaker
- 2022 Brigitte K. Smith, MD, MHPE
- 2023 Kevin Pei, MD, MHSEd, FACS
- 2024 Stacey Tutt Gray, MD
- 2025 Kyla Terhune, MD, MBA

medical student education

Medical Student Education (UME)

Pre-Med and Phase 1 Medical Student Programs

Shadowing: The department currently offers two tracks of shadowing – UW undergraduate student observers and Phase 1 medical student observers. We offer clinic and OR shadowing, which have different eligibility requirements. Refer to the [Shadowing Homepage](#) for more details and send any questions to shadowing@surgery.wisc.edu.

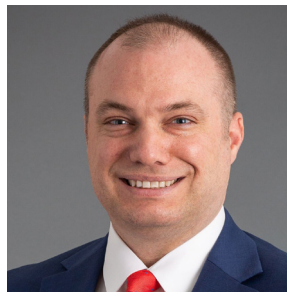
Undergraduate and graduate student observers apply to shadow and are matched with faculty preceptors during certain timeframes (Summer, Fall, or Spring semesters). In 2025, we hosted over 70 undergraduate and graduate student observers in the department. Thank you to all of our preceptors that are able to provide this opportunity. If you are interested in being a faculty preceptor, please sign up by emailing shadowing@surgery.wisc.edu.

Phase 1 medical students are fully eligible to observe in ORs and clinics. They will reach out to faculty individually; please allow them to shadow if and when you are able to accommodate their requests.

Surgery Interest Groups (SIGs): The Department of Surgery has multiple Surgery Interest Groups (SIGs) for Phase 1 medical students. Thank you to everyone who participates in Interest Group sessions and who assists in giving Phase 1 students a glimpse into surgical specialties as a career.

Some highlights from this past academic year of SIG events include the surgical robot presentation and practice event; suture skills and laparoscopic skills simulation; the Department of Surgery Social Mixer; and panels on women in surgery and the different surgical specialties. Additionally, we would like to thank all of the faculty that have hosted students for dinner and

provided a welcoming and open environment to discuss future surgery careers!



Chey Collura, MD
Surgery Interest Group
SIG Faculty Advisor



Suzanne Inchauste, MD
Plastic Surgery Interest Group
PSIG Faculty Advisor



Courtney Morgan, MD
Vascular Surgery
Interest Group
VSIG Faculty Advisor

Phase 2 Surgical and Procedural Care (SPC)

In Phase 2, students are exposed to clinical learning experiences for the first time. The Department of Surgery hosts four blocks of Phase 2 students every year for their Surgical and Procedural Care (SPC) requirement, including a four-week general surgery rotation and multiple two-week surgical specialty rotations. In SPC, students are exposed to clinic-based learning and to services that collaborate on the management and care of surgical patients.

In addition to their scheduled service rotations, students are assigned a continuity clinic preceptor that they longitudinally follow through their entire 12-week block on SPC. This opportunity gives students a chance to spend additional time on a service in which

medical student education

they are interested and to gain a stronger relationship with a faculty member. Thank you to the many faculty members that have served as continuity clinic preceptors! If you are interested in being a continuity clinic preceptor for one or more periods a year, reach out to umesurged@surgery.wisc.edu.

Dr. Morgan and the SPC Leadership team have been working diligently to create a list of shared, agreed-upon expectations that are both challenging and realistic for medical students as they rotate on different services. The collaborative effort between students, residents, faculty, and OR staff has been productive and we are excited for the shared expectations to be met across the department. We would like to give a huge shoutout to the group of residents that served on Dr. Morgan's task force to ensure our medical students are provided a positive learning environment with robust and challenging learning tasks.

Phase 3 Inpatient Acting Internship Mentorship Program

A formalized mentorship program is integrated into the Phase 3 Surgery Inpatient Acting Internship. The goal of the program is to encourage interactions and relationship building between medical students and faculty. Students who participated in the program agreed that their mentor helped them match into a desirable program and they would stay in contact with them in the future. If you are interested in mentoring medical students applying to surgical specialties in the Match, please contact Amber Shada, MD or Kelli Kline.

Phase 3 Public Health & Basic Science Selectives

We would like to formally recognize the effort and dedication of the course directors for the various Phase 3 Selective courses that are offered in the Department of Surgery. Directing and running these courses demands an extensive time commitment and creativity

in providing relevant content to the Phase 3 students enrolled. In 2025, the Department of Surgery added two new courses to our programming, one on Applied Immunology and the other on Transplant Ethics. Thank you to all of our course directors and faculty who are willing to volunteer their time to help provide content-driven lectures and clinic experiences.

- Applied Immunology
Course Directors: David Al-Adra, MD, PhD, FACS, FRCS; David Aufhauser, MD; & Matthew Brown, PhD
- Optimizing Value Quality & Safety in Healthcare
Course Director: Patrick Shahan, MD
- Patient Education as a Strategy for Advocacy
Course Director: Sarah Jung, PhD
- Multidisciplinary Approaches to Colon Cancer Prevention & Treatment
Course Director: Dana Hayden, MD, MPH
- Science of Obesity & Diabetes
Course Directors: Dave Harris, MD & Andrea Galmozzi, PhD
- Common Anorectal Diseases
Course Director: Ray King, MD, PhD, FACS
- Transplant Ethics
Course Directors: Carrie Thiessen, MD, PhD & J. Paul Kelleher, PhD

Underrepresented in Medicine Visiting Student Scholarship

The UW Department of Surgery offered the Underrepresented in Medicine (URiM) [Visiting Student Scholarship](#) for the fifth year in 2025. The goal of this program is to increase awareness of opportunities in academic medicine, encourage students from diverse backgrounds to apply to University of Wisconsin residency programs, and

medical student education

address the underrepresentation of ethnic minorities in surgery. In 2025, we welcomed two awardees, Leah Gudex and Hibo Wehelie, who rotated with Plastic Surgery.



Leah Gudex

*University of Michigan
Medical School*

*Faculty Mentor: Suzie Inchauste
Resident Mentors: Jasmine Craig
& Madeline Chin*



Hibo Wehelie

*University of Virginia
School of Medicine*

*Faculty Mentor: Catey Garland
Resident Mentors: M. Kristine
Carbullido & Jessica Blum*



Alexander Chiu, MD

*Director, URiM
Scholarship Program*

Thank you to the 2025 URiM application committee, including URiM Scholarship Program Director, Alexander Chiu, MD and committee members Courtney Morgan, MD; Catharine Garland, MD; Nabeel Zafar, MD, MPH; Jasmine Craig, MD; M. Kristine Carbullido, MD; Jessica Blum, MD; and Kelli Kline, MA.

If you are interested in joining this committee or acting as a mentor for URiM Scholarship recipients for 2026, please reach out to UMESurgEd@surgery.wisc.edu.

Thank you to the 2025 URiM application committee, including URiM Scholarship Program Director,

Alexander Chiu, MD and committee members Courtney Morgan, MD; Catharine Garland, MD; Nabeel Zafar, MD, MPH; Jasmine Craig, MD; M. Kristine Carbullido, MD; Jessica Blum, MD; and Kelli Kline, MA.

If you are interested in joining this committee or acting as a mentor for URiM Scholarship recipients for 2026, please reach out to umesurged@surgery.wisc.edu.

UME Teaching Hours Allocation

Faculty and residents are essential for the various required teaching and assessment activities within medical student education across all three phases of the UWSMPH's ForWard Curriculum. We have recently transitioned to allocation of a select number of activities to each division within the Department of Surgery. Please work with your Division Chair and colleagues to ensure activities are filled. We appreciate your time and dedication to making learning opportunities valuable for our medical students!



medical student education

2025 Medical Student Education Team Leadership & Updates

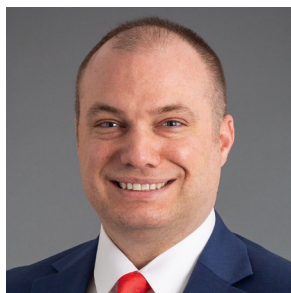
In 2025, we welcomed two new General Surgery Department Block Leaders, Chey Collura, MD and Patrick Lee, MD! Dr. Collura and Dr. Lee have been working with Dr. Morgan to revisit curricula and the case-based learning structure of SPC. We are excited for their continued insight into and initiative on educational outcomes.



Courtney Morgan, MD
*SPC Integrated Block Leader
Medical Student Director*



Patrick Lee, MD, PhD
*Co-Department Block Leader
General Surgery*



Chey Collura, MD
*Co-Department Block Leader
General Surgery*

Dr. Faucher is our Phase 3 Medical Student Mentorship Lead and offers guidance and academic support to medical students interested in applying to surgical specialties. He recently helped our 2026 class navigate a successful match season. Dr. Faucher is focusing on communication with students interested in surgical residency and is developing a Canvas site to curate resources and streamline communication. Dr. Shada, our Inpatient Acting Internship (IAI) and Internship Preparation Course (IPC) lead, directs the educational

curriculum for the IAI, IPC, and clinical electives. She has continued to fine tune valuable, high yield educational sessions in the IAI and IPC courses.



Lee Faucher, MD, FACS
*Phase 3 Medical Student
Mentorship Lead*



Amber Shada, MD, FACS
*Phase 3 IAI & IPC
Courses Lead*

Additionally, thank you to all of our Clinical Faculty Leads (listed below) who take the time to orient our students to their different clinic responsibilities and complete student performance assessments, giving them valuable feedback.

Green Team (General Surgery Rotation) – Patrick Lee, MD, PhD

Orange Team (General Surgery Rotation) – Ana De Roo, MD

Blue Team (General Surgery Rotation) – Ashley Woodfin, MD

Red Team (General Surgery Rotation) – David Melnick, MD, MPH, FACS

Gold Team (General Surgery Rotation) – Victoria Rendell, MD

VA Hospital (General Surgery Rotation) – Cristina Sanger, MD, FACS

Pediatric Surgery (General Surgery Rotation) – Adam Brinkman, MD, FACS, FAAP

Cardiothoracic Surgery (Subspecialty Rotation) – Andrea Axtell, MD, MPH & John Stulak, MD

Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery (Subspecialty Rotation) – Daniel Cho, MD, PhD & Ethan Mackenzie, MD

Transplantation Surgery (Subspecialty Rotation) – David Al-Adra, MD, PhD, FACS, FRCS

Vascular Surgery (Subspecialty Rotation) – Courtney Morgan, MD

Thank you to ALL of the Surgery Medical Student Facilitators and Statewide Site Directors for all you do for medical student education - we couldn't do it without you!

resident education

Ultrasound in Microsurgery Workshop

During the past academic year, the UW Plastic Surgery Residency has continued to expand its educational offerings through innovative technical training and global collaboration. One of the most notable additions was the inaugural Ultrasound in Microsurgery Workshop, designed to introduce residents to the growing role of ultrasound in perforator identification, flap planning, and postoperative monitoring. This hands-on course provides residents with practical experience using ultrasound technology to enhance surgical planning and improve intraoperative decision-making. As microsurgical techniques continue to evolve, incorporating ultrasound training into the curriculum helps equip our residents with valuable skills that can improve operative efficiency and patient outcomes.



Fundamentals of Communication in Surgery Pilot Study

The Fundamentals of Communication in Surgery (FCS) is a 5-year curriculum for residents that was created by a multi-institutional collaborative of surgeon educators led by Dr. Gretchen Schwarze. Designed to prepare surgeons for all types of patient conversations, the FCS curriculum emphasizes essential communication skills such as expressing empathy and supporting informed, values aligned decision making. Delivered as structured, skills based sessions, the program provides trainees with focused practice and feedback using novel frameworks such as Better Conversations for Informed Consent and Best Case/Worst Case for navigating complex decision making.

Currently, the curriculum is being pilot tested by 10 general surgery residency programs across the country. Through our train the trainer model, 60 attending surgeons have been trained to deliver FCS to their own residents and over 250 residents have received an FCS session. Data collection remains ongoing and early implementation data support that residents are gaining critical communication skills that support their everyday work. The FCS team aspires to expand this scalable, impactful curriculum to all surgery residency programs to prepare the next generation of surgeons to communicate effectively with patients and families. For more information, visit the FCS website: <https://fcsprogram.org/>.



resident education

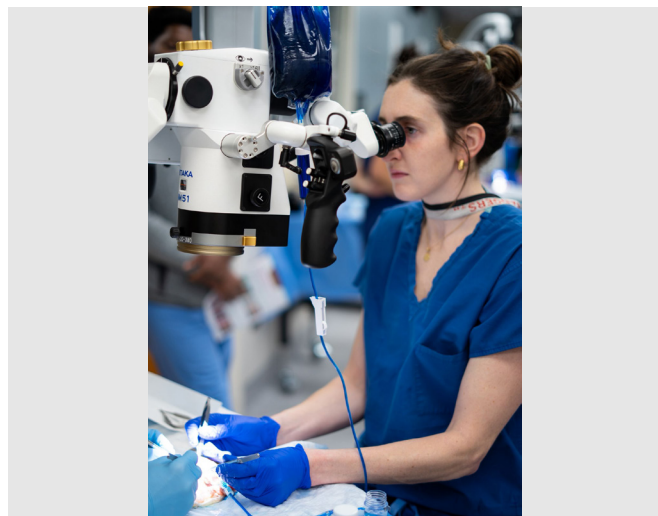
Integrated Vascular Surgery Junior Resident Curriculum

Built to strengthen early operative skill development, the Division of Vascular Surgery's new junior resident curriculum combines deliberate practice with the established Fundamentals of Vascular Surgery (FVS) assessment framework to offer junior residents structured, goal directed skills training supported by real time faculty feedback. Through monthly, simulation centered sessions, residents receive focused guidance in foundational open vascular techniques (e.g., end to side anastomosis, patch angioplasty, and precision suturing) alongside practical "How to" sessions on key tasks (e.g., C arm operation, case preparation, and vascular imaging interpretation). Designed as a low stress, high feedback learning environment tailored to PGY1–3 and research residents, the curriculum aims to accelerate early technical competence, build confidence, and ultimately elevate the quality and safety of patient care throughout vascular surgery training.

11th Annual Microsurgery Course

The Plastic Surgery Residency successfully hosted the 11th Annual Microsurgery Course, which continues to serve as a cornerstone of our resident technical training. This year's course emphasized fresh tissue dissections for a variety of reconstructive flaps, allowing residents to practice detailed anatomical dissections

and refine microsurgical techniques in a highly realistic environment. The course provided an immersive, hands-on experience where residents could work closely with faculty from across the country to review flap anatomy, practice vessel preparation and anastomosis, and develop confidence in complex reconstructive procedures. By continually evolving the curriculum to include high-fidelity training opportunities, the course remains an essential component of our residents' operative education.



Reverse Clinical Competency Committee

Recognizing the difficulties inherent in preserving trainee anonymity during faculty evaluations in small residency programs, the Integrated Vascular Surgery Residency implemented a novel "reverse clinical competency committee" to allow residents and fellows to holistically evaluate faculty as a group. Trainees are given protected time to participate in an evaluation meeting facilitated by our chief resident. Drs. Kate Telma and Carly Sobol performed a preliminary survey of residents, fellows, and faculty, finding that trainees had universally favorable experiences providing feedback via this mechanism, while faculty supported a process that improved anonymity while still providing them valuable feedback.



resident education

Launch of Intern Simulation Rotation

Our General Surgery Residency recently piloted a dedicated Intern Simulation Rotation designed to accelerate early skill development, confidence, and clinical readiness for our newest trainees. This immersive rotation provided protected time for interns to practice essential procedural skills, decision-making, communication, and team leadership in a low-stakes environment before encountering these scenarios in real patient care.



The results exceeded expectations: interns reported increased confidence, improved preparedness for clinical rotations, and a stronger understanding of team dynamics and patient safety principles. They also described feeling more confident teaching medical students the skills they were practicing. Based on the overwhelmingly positive feedback and measurable skill progression, this pilot has demonstrated clear value and will serve as a model for future early training initiatives within our program.

Expanding Microsurgery Education Efforts Globally

In addition to local training initiatives, the Division of Plastic Surgery faculty and residents have continued to expand the program's global microsurgery education efforts. Over the past year, members of our division have participated in and helped support microsurgery

training courses in Burundi, Rwanda, the Dominican Republic, and Vietnam, working alongside international partners to provide hands-on surgical education and mentorship. A unique component of these courses is the use of 3D-printed microscopes developed by our members of Division, which provide an accessible and cost-effective platform for microsurgical training in resource-limited settings. These portable microscopes allow participants to practice delicate microsurgical techniques and vessel anastomoses without the need for expensive operating microscopes, greatly expanding the reach and sustainability of microsurgical education worldwide. Through these international collaborations and technological innovations, our program continues to contribute to the development of microsurgical capacity globally while offering residents meaningful opportunities to participate in global surgical education.

Launch of Procurement Elective

The General Surgery Residency is excited to introduce a Procurement Elective that transforms organ recovery into a high-yield operative anatomy experience for surgery residents. Through guided “warm” and “cold” dissection, residents practice core maneuvers across multiple surgical disciplines while building a deep, three-dimensional understanding of anatomy.

The elective emphasizes exposure of major vascular structures, safe visceral mobilization, and key anatomic relationships. Residents also gain experience with back-table preparation, donor imaging review, and organ preservation. This focused experience builds technical confidence and strengthens skills that translate directly to the operating room.

resident education

Statewide Mock Oral Exam

This month, general surgery residents from programs across Wisconsin came together for a statewide Collaborative Mock Oral Boards event—an innovative initiative aimed at enhancing clinical reasoning, communication skills, and exam preparedness in a supportive setting. Senior residents participated in case-based oral examinations modeled after national board formats, with faculty from multiple institutions serving as examiners and providing targeted feedback.

The collaboration fostered cross-program camaraderie, exposed trainees to a broad spectrum of surgical scenarios, and offered valuable insight into individualized areas for growth prior to their actual board examinations. Participants praised the experience for its realism, constructive feedback, and opportunity to engage with peers and mentors from around the state.

Thank you to Gundersen Health System, the Marshfield Clinic, and the Medical College of Wisconsin for your partnership on this enriching educational experience. This event exemplifies the power of inter-institutional partnership to elevate surgical training statewide.

Collaborative Accountability and Role Engagement for Residents, Fellows, and APPs

A recurring challenge identified across services is the lack of a shared “mental model” regarding roles and responsibilities. This ambiguity leads to confusion about priorities, unclear task ownership, and ultimately causes friction and stress within teams. To better understand the scope of the issue, we engaged 35 stakeholders—including faculty, residents, APPs, fellows, and program managers—to identify what is currently working and where improvements are needed.

Identified key areas for improvement include:

- Unclear expectations and role definitions by service

- Confusing escalation pathways
- Inconsistent coverage expectations during protected education time
- Varied communication practices with no standard use cases
- Limited interprofessional feedback mechanisms

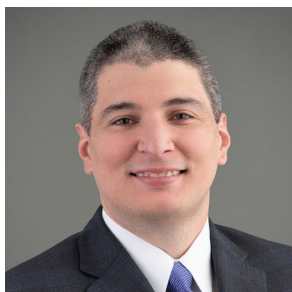
We aim to build on these successes by standardizing onboarding and communication practices across all services by June 2026. The core deliverable for this is a Rotation Onboarding Template for every Department of Surgery training service that includes: 1) rotation-specific schedules and contact info, 2) communication preferences and escalation guidelines, 3) role definitions and responsibilities, and 4) coverage plans during educational activities.

Expansion of Associate Program Director (APD) Roles in General Surgery

This year, the General Surgery Residency Program restructured its leadership team with focused Associate Program Director (APD) roles to better support Program Director Dr. Ann O'Rourke and to enhance key areas of the program. The addition of these focused APD roles strengthens oversight in resident evaluation, simulation training, program operations, and curriculum development. This team-based leadership model also allows for more dedicated attention to each domain, supports accreditation and program quality, and enhances the overall resident experience.

- Dr. Patrick Varley – APD of Resident Assessment
- Dr. Amber Shada – APD of Simulation
- Dr. Toria Rendell – APD of Program Administration and Oversight
- Dr. Alex Chiu – APD of Curriculum and Professional Development

resident education



Patrick Varley, MD, MS
APD of Resident Assessment



Amber Shada, MD, FACS
APD of Simulation



Toria Rendell, MD
*APD of Program
Administration and Oversight*



Alexander Chiu, MD
*APD of Curriculum and
Professional Development*

excellence, foster interdisciplinary alignment, and support the evolving needs of both learners and educators.

WMAA Distinguished Teaching Award for Outstanding Resident Teaching

Congratulations to Madhuri Nishtala, MD , general surgery resident, on winning the 2026 Wisconsin Medical Alumni Association's (WMAA) Distinguished Teaching Award for Outstanding Resident Teaching. The WMAA presents annual teaching awards to individuals who are highly regarded by students for outstanding teaching efforts. Fourth-year medical students nominated and selected the recipients.

[Read more here.](#)



Madhuri Nishtala, MD
General Surgery Resident

Director of Surgical Residency Core Curricula



Ashley Woodfin, MD
*Director of Surgical Residency
Core Curricula*

We are pleased to announce Dr. Ashley Woodfin as the new Director of Surgical Residency Core Curricula. In this role, Dr. Woodfin will collaborate closely with program directors, faculty, and trainees to design, implement, and continuously refine a comprehensive core curriculum that supports general surgery, plastic surgery, and vascular surgery residency programs across the Department of Surgery.

This role is essential in ensuring that all trainees receive consistent, high-quality instruction in the foundational knowledge and skills critical to surgical practice. Through thoughtful curriculum development and ongoing evaluation, Dr. Woodfin will advance educational



Mini Updates from our Fellowship Programs

CARDIOTHORACIC

Engagement with EPAS

The Cardiothoracic Surgery Fellowship Program has successfully integrated the SEPA platform to facilitate Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) for our fellows. Currently, faculty and fellows utilize generic microassessments at a frequency of roughly one per week, ensuring consistent, real-time feedback. Following the announcement of a cardiothoracic-specific EPA pilot at the January 2026 Society of Thoracic Surgeons meeting, we are strategically positioned to adopt these specialized standards as they are officially rolled out by the American Board of Thoracic Surgery.

COLORECTAL

The Division of Colorectal Surgery has launched a comprehensive, modern database capturing more than 14,000 surgical cases across University Hospital, East Madison Hospital, Meriter, Madison Surgery Center, and Swedish American Hospital, managed by Beth Thompson. This tool tracks diagnoses, procedures, outcomes, and key quality indicators, feeding into a dashboard that updates monthly and supports both divisional morbidity and mortality review and quarterly outcomes reporting. The database also serves as a core resource for the colorectal surgery fellow's annual American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons poster project, providing curated datasets to support research on topics such as nasogastric tube use, enhanced recovery medications, and postoperative anticoagulation. Dr. Heise and Beth meet with the fellow during orientation each year to orient them to the database and to plan their projects. Beth's exceptional management of this database has streamlined involving fellows in high-quality research during their short fellowships and enhances publication potential for divisional learners.

ENDOCRINE

Faculty Integration Spotlight: Dr. Louise Davies

The integration of Dr. Louise Davies into our program has significantly enriched the endocrine surgery fellowship experience this year. Her presence has been a catalyst for growth, notably expanding clinical opportunities and broadening operative learning for our trainees.



Louise Davies, MD, MS

Track Designation

In late 2024, the Endocrine Surgery group engaged in a comprehensive strategic planning process to thoughtfully guide the future of the fellowship program following its recent expansion from one to two fellows per year. Through collaborative discussion and careful evaluation of program goals, the division developed two distinct fellowship tracks, a Clinical Practice Track and an Academic Track, which will allow applicants to align their training with their career aspirations. The Clinical Practice Track focuses on developing high-volume surgeons through comprehensive operative experience in thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenal surgery within a multidisciplinary environment. Conversely, the Academic Track provides the same rigorous technical training while integrating formal resources for research and the foundations of academic leadership, including an optional second year focused on independent practice and career development.

fellowships

MINIMALLY INVASIVE SURGERY

Advanced GI Minimally Invasive Surgery (MIS)/Hernia and Abdominal Wall Fellowship

We are thrilled to celebrate the successful launch of our inaugural Advanced GI MIS/Hernia and Abdominal Wall Fellowship! In its very first year, the program attracted an impressive pool of applicants and successfully matched with one of our top-ranked candidates—a testament to the strength of our faculty, training environment, and growing national reputation.

We are also excited to announce an upcoming leadership change for the Advanced GI MIS/Hernia and Abdominal Wall Fellowship. Beginning August 1, 2026, Dr. Ryan Juza will serve as Program Director, with Dr. Toria Rendell stepping into the role of Associate Program Director. Their leadership, expertise, and commitment to surgical education will be instrumental as we continue to grow and strengthen this fellowship program.



Ryan Juza, MD



Toria Rendell, MD

SURGICAL CRITICAL CARE & ACUTE CARE SURGERY

Upcoming Inaugural Year of Acute Care Surgery Fellowship

In August 2026, we will launch our integrated Surgical Critical Care and Acute Care Surgery fellowship, transitioning from an historically independent ACGME-accredited Surgical Critical Care fellowship. This two-year integrated program includes an ACGME-accredited

Surgical Critical Care fellowship in the first year, followed by an American Association for the Surgery of Trauma–accredited Acute Care Surgery program in the second year.



Kassandra Samuel, MD

We are thrilled to welcome our inaugural integrated fellow, Dr. Cassandra Samuel.

Surgical Critical Care Entrustable Professional Activities

This year, we have worked to implement American Board of Surgery Surgical Critical Care EPAs. The program has fostered partnerships with the Anesthesia Critical Care faculty, Pulmonary Critical Care faculty, and Neurosurgery ICU faculty to continue to expand use by faculty across programs.

Curriculum Updates

In partnership with the Anesthesia Critical Care fellowship, we have expanded to two teaching conferences per week, ensuring broad and consistent education in Surgical and Anesthesia Critical Care. Education consists of multidisciplinary lectures from faculty across disciplines, journal clubs, Morbidity and Mortality conferences, and monthly “Meetings with the Experts”.

fellowships

COMPLEX GENERAL SURGICAL ONCOLOGY

Accreditation Status

We have worked diligently over the past year to address ACGME citations from the last accreditation cycle. Fortunately, the program received the status of 'Continued Accreditation' for the current accreditation cycle and the removal of four citations.

Curriculum Updates

This year, we introduced two new curriculum enhancements. Faculty now meet with fellows after each rotation to review a SCORE "Topic of the Month," reinforcing key learning objectives. Additionally, quarterly journal clubs have been established outside of the hospital to encourage deeper discussion and engagement in a more informal setting.

Complex General Surgical Oncology Entrustable Professional Activities

We have also made significant progress this year in implementing the American Board of Surgery Complex General Surgical Oncology EPAs. Faculty at SSM St. Mary's have been successfully onboarded to the SEPA system, enhancing their ability to contribute to EPA assessments and submissions for the surgical oncology fellow.



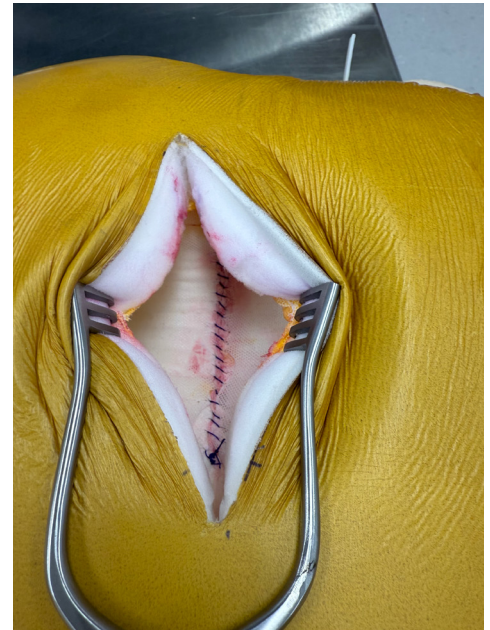
simulation education

Expanding Surgical Olympics: Integrating Residents Post-ADT

The Surgical Olympics program was expanded this year to include residents returning from Academic Development Time (ADT), providing a structured and engaging opportunity for skills refreshment and reintegration. Recognizing that many residents experience decreased confidence in technical skills after time away from clinical duties, this hands on simulation experience is designed to recalibrate core operative abilities.

The curriculum emphasizes moderately complex skills with which residents were previously familiar, but not typically expert, prior to stepping out for their ADT. Stations include stapled small bowel anastomosis, facial closure, chest tube placement, central venous access, laparoscopic running suture (simulating bowel run), laparoscopic intracorporeal knot tying, and communication during a decompensating patient scenario.

To optimize learning, participants receive preparatory videos and readings in advance. Performance at each station is assessed using objective metrics, allowing for targeted feedback and deliberate practice. This expanded Surgical Olympics initiative supports resident confidence, technical proficiency, and readiness for return to operative care.



simulation education

Comprehensive Robotic Surgery Curriculum

As robotic surgery continues to expand at the UW, the General Surgery Residency Curriculum provides early exposure and comprehensive training. We have a structured pathway, including bedside skill development plus concurrent console simulation curriculum, to ensure residents develop robotic surgery skills. All general surgery residents are thus able to gain their robotic equivalency certificate upon graduation from residency training.

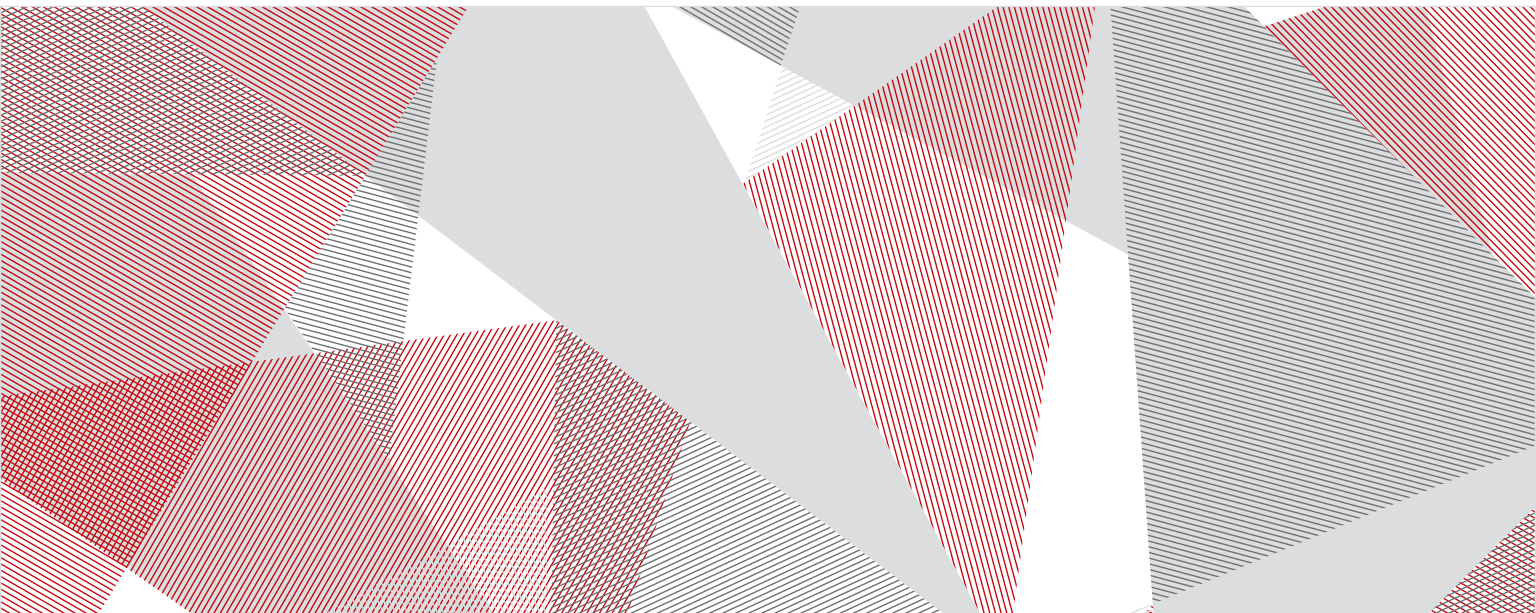
Throughout the year, residents benefit from multiple faculty-led bedside training opportunities, fostering hands-on experience and skill development. Additionally, a dedicated robotic simulation day in the fall, along with year-round access to simulation training through UIC lab courses, further strengthens trainee robotic proficiency.

These curriculum enhancements ensure that UW residents are well-prepared to excel in the evolving field of robotic surgery.

Participation in the National ATLAS Laparoscopic Study

The Association of Surgical Education, the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons Fellowship Council, and the ACS Accredited Education Institutes (AEI) Program are sponsoring a national assessment of laparoscopic suturing skills of senior surgical residents and minimally invasive surgery fellows through the Advanced Training in Laparoscopic Suturing (ATLAS) program. This initiative aims to objectively quantify the educational gap that surgery trainees face in demonstrating proficiency in laparoscopic suturing.

A total of 20 ACS-AEIs is sought to recruit and test a minimum of five participants. Preference will be given to Fundamentals of Laparoscopic Surgery testing centers, sites with ACS-AEI accredited simulation fellowships, and/or Fellowship Council minimally invasive surgery fellowships.



Department of Surgery Global Surgery Program

The Department of Surgery's Global Health Outreach initiatives extend across multiple continents, reflecting a strong commitment to advancing surgical care worldwide. The department has established enduring faculty partnerships in Ethiopia, Vietnam, Zambia, Uganda, Guatemala, The Gambia, and Rwanda.

Rooted in the Wisconsin Idea, our Global Surgery Program reaches far beyond state borders. Through faculty leadership, resident engagement, visiting professorships, and sponsored training initiatives, we focus on sustainable capacity building and meaningful bilateral exchange.

In the past year, faculty completed 23 international trips (with some faculty serving in multiple countries), supporting education, clinical collaboration, and systems development.

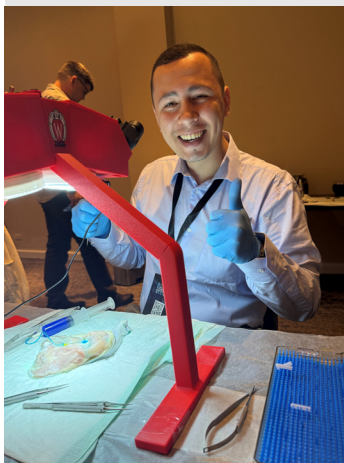
Global Surgery in Plastics

The Division of Plastic Surgery maintains an active global surgery program focused on sustainable partnerships, surgical education, and capacity building. Faculty and trainees regularly participate in international collaborations aimed at expanding reconstructive and microsurgical care while supporting local surgical training programs.

Key components of the division's global health work include:

- Rwanda: Collaboration with regional surgical partners to support reconstructive surgery education and mentorship.
 - Two trips in the past year involving Catey Garland, Samuel Poore, Brian Christie, Dan Cho, Mike Bentz, and Suzie Inchauste.
- Vietnam: Longstanding partnership with surgeons in Hanoi focused on microsurgery education, complex reconstruction, and academic exchange.
 - Participants include Dan Cho, Suzie Inchauste, Samuel Poore, and Brett Michelotti. Resident participation included: Mary Christine Carbullido, Peter Wirth, Ellen Via, Jasmine Craig, and Armin Edalatpour.
- International education: Participation in surgical training courses, visiting professorships, and collaborative research initiatives.
 - This year, UW faculty taught three international microsurgical training courses, including the first microsurgery course held at the annual meeting of the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECESA). Additional courses were held in the Dominican Republic and Vietnam.
- The division also hosted six international residents from South America and, most recently last month, six Ukrainian surgeons at UW–Madison for training in microsurgery and techniques in advanced amputation care.
 - Sustainable capacity building: Emphasis on long-term partnerships, skills transfer, and locally reproducible training models.
- The division partners with organizations including Nuoy Reconstructive International and the Surgeons in Humanitarian Alliance for Reconstruction, Research and Education (SHARE).

global health



Through these efforts, the Division of Plastic Surgery continues to strengthen reconstructive surgical capacity worldwide while promoting education, research collaboration, and equitable access to care.

General Surgery Resident Experiences Abroad

- Clayton Marcinak, Hawassa, Ethiopia
- Dawda Jawara, The Gambia

"Having the opportunity to return home to The Gambia for my global surgery elective provided me with a new perspective on surgical care delivery in low- and middle-income countries. During the four weeks I spent there, I worked closely with medical students, house officers, and medical officers on the wards and in the operating room. I was involved in technically challenging surgeries that were successfully completed despite limited resources.

This experience highlighted not only the technical capabilities of the consultants and trainees but also their resilience. The medical officers demonstrated constant motivation and enthusiasm to learn new skills, including laparoscopy. I was fortunate to participate in simulation sessions in which I led skills training. This rotation was a valuable learning experience and further contributed to my development as someone deeply interested in global surgery."

– Dawda Jawara, MD

Global Oncology Symposium 2025

The 2025 Global Oncology Symposium, hosted by the UW–Madison in partnership with the Big Ten Cancer Research Consortium on December 10, 2025, brought together clinicians, researchers, trainees, and advocates committed to improving cancer care worldwide.

Held at the Health Sciences Learning Center, the symposium welcomed approximately 90 in-person attendees, creating space for meaningful dialogue, trainee research presentations, and new collaborations in global oncology.

Under the theme “Uniting for Impact: Advancing Cancer Care Through Collaboration,” the event highlighted the importance of partnerships in addressing cancer disparities and improving outcomes across diverse populations. Participants included speakers and guests from leading institutions such as Northwestern University, the University of California San Francisco, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Mayo Clinic, Johns Hopkins University, and the University of Pennsylvania.

The evening Pre-Symposium session focused on global oncology funding strategies, providing guidance on navigating the National Institutes of Health, industry, and philanthropic partnerships.

As cancer incidence continues to rise globally, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where nearly 70% of cancer deaths occur, the symposium reinforced the urgency of collaborative research and innovation to advance equitable cancer care.



Quality Improvement Courses at University Teaching Hospital - Zambia and Hawassa University

As part of an ongoing initiative to strengthen surgical and anesthesia care in low- and middle-income countries, faculty from the UW-Madison Department of Surgery and the Department of Anesthesiology partnered with clinicians at Hawassa University Comprehensive Specialized Hospital in Ethiopia to host a two-day workshop focused on perioperative quality improvement.

Delivered in collaboration with the American College of Surgeons Health Outreach Program for Equity in Global Surgery (HOPE) and the Global Academic Anesthesia Consortium, the program is part of a longitudinal training series conducted annually in Ethiopia and Zambia.

The 2026 workshop marked an important milestone: local faculty led the sessions, demonstrating growing regional leadership and sustainability after three years of training and mentorship.



global health

Participants learned the foundations of healthcare quality improvement, explored data-driven surgical improvement strategies, and worked in multidisciplinary teams to develop practical quality improvement project ideas that address local challenges such as emergency room preparedness, perioperative protocols, and patient safety.

This initiative, supported by the Baldwin Wisconsin Idea Endowment and led by Dr. S. Nabeel Zafar and Dr. Deb Rusy, aims to build sustainable systems for tracking surgical outcomes and implementing locally driven quality improvement programs across Sub-Saharan Africa.

Cancer Care Across Cultures Study Abroad Course

The UW Carbone Cancer Center's Global Oncology Program is connecting students to cancer prevention and care delivery in other areas of the world through a new immersive learning and study abroad opportunity.

Twenty students interested in cancer-related fields became the inaugural class of this course, which began with expert lectures from 15 UW Carbone researchers touching on global cancer topics, such as disparities in care access and research spending, and affordable and scalable prevention and treatment methods.

The students then traveled to Copenhagen, Denmark, for two weeks of immersive learning with Danish cancer care teams. This course attracted nearly 100 applicants, showing the excitement among students for learning through a global lens.

The goal of the course is to help prepare the next generation of globally-minded cancer clinicians and researchers to combat rising cancer rates in low- and middle-income countries. Researching practical solutions to cancer needs abroad can also improve care and prevention efforts here in the U.S.

For more information on the course and to apply, visit <https://studyabroad.wisc.edu/program/?programId=330443>



Observership Process

We are pleased to announce the launch of a structured Observership Process for our department. This initiative is designed to support meaningful two-way learning by creating clear guidelines for hosting and participating in observerships. The process encourages collaboration, strengthens academic partnerships, and promotes the exchange of expertise across institutions. Faculty and staff can review the full process and access application details here: https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1zujAI46ZHgLsnc

Global Surgery Related Publications

1. Jaraczewski T, Diehl T, Jawara D, Tefera G, Zafar SN. Surgical outcomes research in LMICs: a narrative review. *Afr Health Sci*. 2025 Mar;25(1):642-654. doi: 10.4314/ahs.v25i1.48. PMID: 41640541; PMCID: PMC12865052.
2. Jaraczewski TJ, Vo T, Agrawal A, Tafesse H, Abebe BM, Schroeder M, Dodgion C, Iverson KR, Hooyer K, Nabeel Zafar S. Building better outcomes: A grounded theory approach to understanding creation and management of surgical data systems in Ethiopia. *PLOS Glob Public Health*. 2026 Jan 30;6(1):e0005355. doi: 10.1371/journal.pgph.0005355. PMID: 41615968; PMCID: PMC12857948.
3. NIHR Global Health Research Unit on Global Surgery and the GlobalSurg Collaborative. Safety and equity in scaling minimally invasive surgery worldwide in 109 countries using cholecystectomy as a tracer procedure: a prospective cohort study. *Lancet Glob Health*. 2026 Feb;14(2):e199-e212. doi: 10.1016/S2214-109X(25)00476-0. PMID: 41519150.
4. Moturu A, Virani SS, Jaraczewski T, Melesse B, Vo T, Ko CY, Pikiti F, Sonkwe H, Moyo B, McQueen K, Tefera G, Peters X, Ojuka D, Kaafarani H, Parker R, Dodgion C, Rusy D, Zafar SN. Building Capacity in Perioperative Quality Improvement in Low- and Middle- Income Countries: Experiences From Mombasa, Lusaka and Hawassa. *World J Surg*. 2026 Jan;50(1):75-84. doi: 10.1002/wjs.70126. Epub 2025 Oct 9. PMID: 41068051; PMCID: PMC12831525.
5. Virani SS, Nasim MT, Adnan F, Ibrahim M, Moosajee MS, Khan MR, Ghias K, Murtaza M, Khan S, Zafar SN. Presentation of Metastatic Colorectal Carcinoma at a Tertiary Care Center in Pakistan. *J Cancer Allied Spec*. 2025 Oct 17;11(1):40-50. doi: 10.2478/jcas-2025-0008. PMID: 41728106; PMCID: PMC12924647.



Advancing the Future of Burn Care: A Recap of the 2025 Midwest Regional Burn Conference

Under the leadership of Dr. Lee Faucher, the UW Department of Surgery was honored to host the 2025 Midwest Regional Burn Conference in Madison.

The event was a resounding success, drawing nearly 200 clinicians and experts while generating over \$100,000 in revenue. More importantly, the conference served as a vital forum for advancing burn care, featuring specialized tracks on resuscitation, surgical innovation, and psychosocial recovery.

Conference Highlights and Impact:

Held from September 24–26, the conference brought together a multidisciplinary cohort—including surgeons, nurses, therapists, and researchers—to address the most pressing challenges in burn treatment. The program was designed to bridge the gap between bench research and

clinical bedside application.

Key focuses of the 2025 gathering included:

- **Surgical Innovation:** Discussions on cutting-edge treatments such as biologic therapies, advanced skin substitutes, and the latest techniques in wound debridement.
- **Critical Care & Resuscitation:** Expert-led sessions on fluid management and new protocols for stabilizing severely injured patients during the acute phase of care.
- **Patient Recovery:** A dedicated three-day Rehabilitation Track specifically for Physical and Occupational Therapists, emphasizing that recovery extends far beyond the operating room.
- **Professional Development:** High-level certification opportunities, including the Advanced Burn Life Support (ABLS) Instructor Course and the Certified Burn Registered Nurse (CBRN) Exam Review, ensuring the next generation of providers is equipped with gold-standard credentials.



Now Offering CME! Burn Patient Multidisciplinary Care Conference

Series Overview:

- This CME activity provides an interdisciplinary, evidence-based review of burn patients, emphasizing early recognition, prevention, and timely intervention. Participants will apply current burn-care guidelines and American Burn Association standards to optimize burn complication outcomes and strengthen multidisciplinary communication. The course highlights real-time care coordination, adaptive treatment planning, and continuous quality improvement to support high-performing burn teams and improved patient outcomes.

Global Objectives:

- Identify key risk factors and early indicators of skin and soft tissue infections in burn patients and explain how each discipline/role contributes to prevention, early recognition, and intervention.
- Apply current burn care clinical guidelines and evidence-based practices to improve graft success, reduce infection rates, and align care delivery with American Burn Association standards.
- Demonstrate effective multidisciplinary communication strategies that support real-time care review, anticipate future care needs, and facilitate rapid adjustments in treatment plans.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of implemented treatment modifications and identify opportunities for ongoing education, training, and iterative improvement within the multidisciplinary burn team.

This course champions the interdisciplinary approach to patient care by offering accredited continuing education for a wide range of healthcare professionals. We are proud to provide credits recognized by:

- **Physicians:** AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™
- **Nurses:** American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)
- **Pharmacists:** Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE)
- **PAs:** American Academy of PAs (AAPA)
- **Dietitians:** Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR)
- **Psychologists:** American Psychological Association (APA)
- **Social Workers:** ASWB Approved Continuing Education (ACE)
- **Surgeons:** American Board of Surgery Lifelong Learning (CME)
- **General:** Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

continuing medical education

Congratulations, Dr. Hee Soo Jung: ACS Surgeons as Educators Course



**Hee Soo Jung, MD, FACS,
FCCM**

Congratulations to Dr. Hee Soo Jung who was accepted into and successfully completed the prestigious ACS Surgeons as Educators course last Fall! This rigorous six-day program, offered by the ACS Division of Education, equips surgeons with essential knowledge and skills to excel as educators and

leaders in surgical education.

With enrollment limited to just 40 participants, this highly competitive course is designed to achieve the following key learning objectives:

- Select optimal teaching methods and technologies and enhance the application of these methods to maximize learning.
- Plan and document an instructional unit (e.g., a clerkship or residency rotation) using an organized instructional design framework.
- Apply leadership and management skills in the administration of educational programs, including motivating faculty, implementing change, managing conflict, and guiding career development.
- Develop a sound system for assessing the performance of learners and teachers and the efficacy of curricula at the undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education levels.

Dr. Jung joins the growing list of faculty who have represented the UW at this course:

- Adam Brinkman (Fall 2019)
- Dawn Elfenbein (Fall 2022)
- Amber Shada (Fall 2024)
- Kaitlyn Kelly (Fall 2024)
- Courtney Morgan (Spring 2025)
- Hee Soo Jung (Fall 2025)



Surgical Entrustable Professional Activities Innovation and Research

Innovation has allowed Wisconsin Surgery to be at the forefront when it comes to collecting EPA micro-assessment data. The Department of Surgery started using its in-house mobile application, SEPA, to collect EPA assessment data in July 2018. SEPA allows users to submit and review assessments, see real-time dashboard reports, use advanced report filters, and receive notifications of missing assessments. Since this app was developed in-house, modifications can be made to adjust end user settings as needed. Users can also access a web application where they can see more detailed dashboards and analytics, including assessment counts, graphs of EPA entrustment levels over time, summary of comments, trainee summary, and summative entrustment levels. The Wisconsin Surgery SEPA team is developing AI algorithms to provide directional feedback to trainees and the Clinical Competency Committee regarding trainee progress based upon qualitative feedback.

Wisconsin Surgery's strong commitment to educational excellence is demonstrated in the department's strong engagement with EPAs and our willingness to complete assessments. In 2025, there were 3,045 faculty assessments of trainees and 2,692 self-assessments by trainees. From the launch of SEPA on July 1, 2018 through the end of 2025, there were 10,124 faculty assessments of trainees and 9,437 self-assessments by trainees. The department encourages engagement by providing goals for the number of assessments that trainees and faculty members should complete, and by displaying a leader board featuring the names of faculty and trainees who have completed the most EPA assessments. Training the next generation of surgeons is an integral part of Wisconsin Surgery. Adopting and implementing EPAs is just another way that the

department is committed to being at the forefront of training the next generation of excellent surgeons. As indicated by the below list of publications, we have also been at the forefront of research in this area, with more research underway related to fellowship EPAs and the use of AI to facilitate feedback and future entrustment decisions.

Stahl CC, Collins E, Jung SA, et al. Implementation of Entrustable Professional Activities into a General Surgery Residency. *J Surg Educ.* 2020;77(4):739-748. doi:10.1016/j.jsurg.2020.01.012

Stahl CC, Jung SA, Rosser AA, et al. Entrustable Professional Activities in General Surgery: Trends in Resident Self-Assessment. *J Surg Educ.* 2020;77(6):1562-1567. doi:10.1016/j.jsurg.2020.05.005

Collins E, Stahl C, Schnapp B, et al. Changing Medical Education When Change Is Hard: Implementing an Interdepartmental Entrustable Professional Activity. *AEM Educ Train.* 2020;5(3):e10561. Published 2020 Dec 16. doi:10.1002/aet2.10561

Stahl CC, Jung SA, Rosser AA, et al. Natural language processing and entrustable professional activity text feedback in surgery: A machine learning model of resident autonomy. *Am J Surg.* 2021;221(2):369-375. doi:10.1016/j.amjsurg.2020.11.044

Padilla EP, Stahl CC, Jung SA, et al. Gender Differences in Entrustable Professional Activity Evaluations of General Surgery Residents. *Ann Surg.* 2022;275(2):222-229. doi:10.1097/SLA.0000000000004905

Krecko LK, Jung S, Martin S, et al. Enhancing the Value of Surgical Entrustable Professional Activities through Integrative Learning Analytics. *J Surg Educ.* 2023;80(10):1370-1377. doi:10.1016/j.jsurg.2023.07.018

Layne D, Jung S, Varley P, O'Rourke A, Minter R. How well do faculty do in providing general surgery EPA feedback?. *Am J Surg.* 2024;236:115902. doi:10.1016/j.amjsurg.2024.115902

Ly N, Ocoko F, Minter RM, Jung S. Assessing general surgery residents outside of the operating room: Our experience with entrustable professional activities in the pre-operative and post-operative settings. *Am J Surg.* 2025;239:115849. doi:10.1016/j.amjsurg.2024.115849

Lindeman B, Scott-Smith C, Jones A, et al. Practice Readiness of Chief Residents in a National Sample During the First Year of EPA Assessments. *Ann Surg.* 2025;282(4):601-607. doi:10.1097/SLA.0000000000006839

Transforming Lifelong Learning Through Precision Education Grant from the American Medical Association

Earlier this year, Dr. Brigitte Smith and her team were awarded a \$1.1 million grant to fund a four-year project titled, “Graduate Performance Profiles to Enhance Learning Analytics and Precision Program Improvement in Vascular Surgery.” The project will explore the extent to which Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs can intervene at both the program and individual trainee levels to ensure high quality care post-graduation. It will develop and pilot a comprehensive analytical platform that predicts post-graduate surgeon-level patient outcomes using multimodal GME data. The platform will provide surgery residency programs with comprehensive profiles of their graduates’ early career performance, including processes of care and patient outcomes, linked with measures of their performance during training. Predictive analytic models will enable programs to identify program factors that impact graduates’ performance and could be modified to enhance the competence of current trainees and future graduates. Collaborators on this project include Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, the University of Florida, the Vascular Quality Initiative registry, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, and other supporting sites. Over the course of the project, Dr. Smith and members of her team will attend frequent meetings with the AMA ChangeMedEd Initiative leadership and the 10 other funded project teams to share ideas, insights, and challenges, and to add to the medical education scholarship space of precision education.

Residents Assessment of Faculty Teaching Integrated within SEPA

Our first Education Research Fellow is interested in how resident feedback could support faculty to improve their intra-operative teaching skills. Dr. Kessler Hurd is developing a “workplace-based assessment” that residents will be able to complete about faculty performance as teachers. We are working closely with SEPA leadership to incorporate this brief micro-assessment into the EPA workflow. The project will also include “train-the-trainer” to support residents in providing quality, actionable feedback, as well as faculty engagement to learn about their perspectives on how best to deliver this feedback. Since increasingly meaningful assessment of faculty as teachers is required for promotion purposes and end-of-rotation evaluations are fraught with challenges, we also hope the project will address this gap.



Kessler Hurd, MD
General Surgery Resident



education awards

Education Awards

Medical Student Teaching Awards

Layton F. Ridders Faculty Award for Medical Student Education

2010	Bruce Slaughenhaupt
2011	Rebecca Sippel
2012	Louis Bernhardt
2013	Michael Bentz
2014	Jacquelynn Arbuckle
2015	Chip Foley
2016	Jennifer Steiman
2017	Jacob Greenberg
2018	Evie Carchman
2019	Amber Shada
2020	Greg Hartig
2021	Lee Faucher
2022	David M. Melnick
2023	Courtney Morgan
2024	David Al-Adra
2025	Chad Ennis

Dean's Teaching Awards

1997	Diane Heatley
2007	Yolanda Becker
2010	Bruce Slaughenhaupt
2010	Gretchen Schwarze
2012	Rebecca Sippel
2014	Louis Bernhardt
2016	Michael Bentz
2017	Ann O'Rourke
2019	Neil Salyapongse
2023	Dawn Elfenbein
2024	Dawn Elfenbein
2026	Lee Faucher

Dean's Award for Excellence in Student Research Mentorship

2010	Herbert Chen
2013	Gregory Kennedy
2016	Rebecca Sippel

General Surgery Resident Teaching Awards

Chief Award to Faculty for Teaching

Selected by chief class as the best faculty teacher

2009	Chip Foley
2010	James Orr
2011	Jim Maloney
2012	Mike Garren
2013	Jacob Greenberg
2014	Peter Nichol
2015	Charles Leys
2016	Kenneth Kudsk
2017	Evie Carchman
2019	Ann O'Rourke
2020	Jacob Greenberg
2021	John Scarborough
2022	Evie Carchman
2023	Roland Vega
2024	Dan Abbott & Raymond Georgen
2025	Kenneth Foster

Louis Bernhardt Resident Teaching Award

Awarded to faculty who has made significant contribution to the educational mission of the General Surgery Residency Program

2013	Clifford Cho
2014	Ann O'Rourke
2015	Suresh Agarwal
2016	Jennifer Steiman
2017	John Scarborough
2018	Roland Vega
2019	David Melnick
2020	Adam Brinkman

education awards

2021	Eugene "Chip" Foley
2022	Amber Shada
2023	Patrick Varley
2024	Sean Ronnekleiv-Kelly
2025	Nicole Werner

Layton F. Rikkers Chair Teaching Award

Awarded to faculty for educational excellence based on resident evaluations

2013	Lee Wilke
2014	Rebecca Sippel
2015	Chip Foley
2016	Lee Faucher
2017	David Foley
2018	Joshua Mezrich
2019	Tony D'Alessandro
2020	Eugene "Chip" Foley
2021	Cristina Sanger
2022	Angela Gibson
2023	Jacqueline Garonzik-Wang
2024	Evie Carchman
2025	James Maloney

General Surgery Resident Awards

Ben Lawton Award

Awarded to the chief resident with the best overall medical student score over the course of their residency

2009	Chirag Dholakia
2010	Erik Johnson
2011	Joshua Hermsen
2012	Aaron Chalmers
2013	Andrew Russ
2014	Ari Reichstein
2015	Laura Fischer
2016	Patrick Shabino
2017	Sara Holden
2018	Ryan Shmocker

2019	Lane Frasier
2020	Becca Gunter
2021	Joseph Imbus
2022	Devon Livingston-Rosanoff
2023	Trieu Do
2024	Nicole Reedy
2025	Laura Krecko

Resident Teacher and Leader Award

Selected by residents and awarded to the General Surgery resident who best demonstrates the virtues of teacher and leader

2013	Andrew Russ
2014	Ari Reichstein
2015	Adam Brinkman
2016	Patrick Shabino
2017	Michael Nabozny
2018	Ryan Shmocker
2019	Tiffany Zens
2020	Jay Nathwani
2021	Sebastian Danobeitia
2022	Annie Dunham
2023	James Barrett
2024	Taylor Aiken
2025	Alyssa Wiener

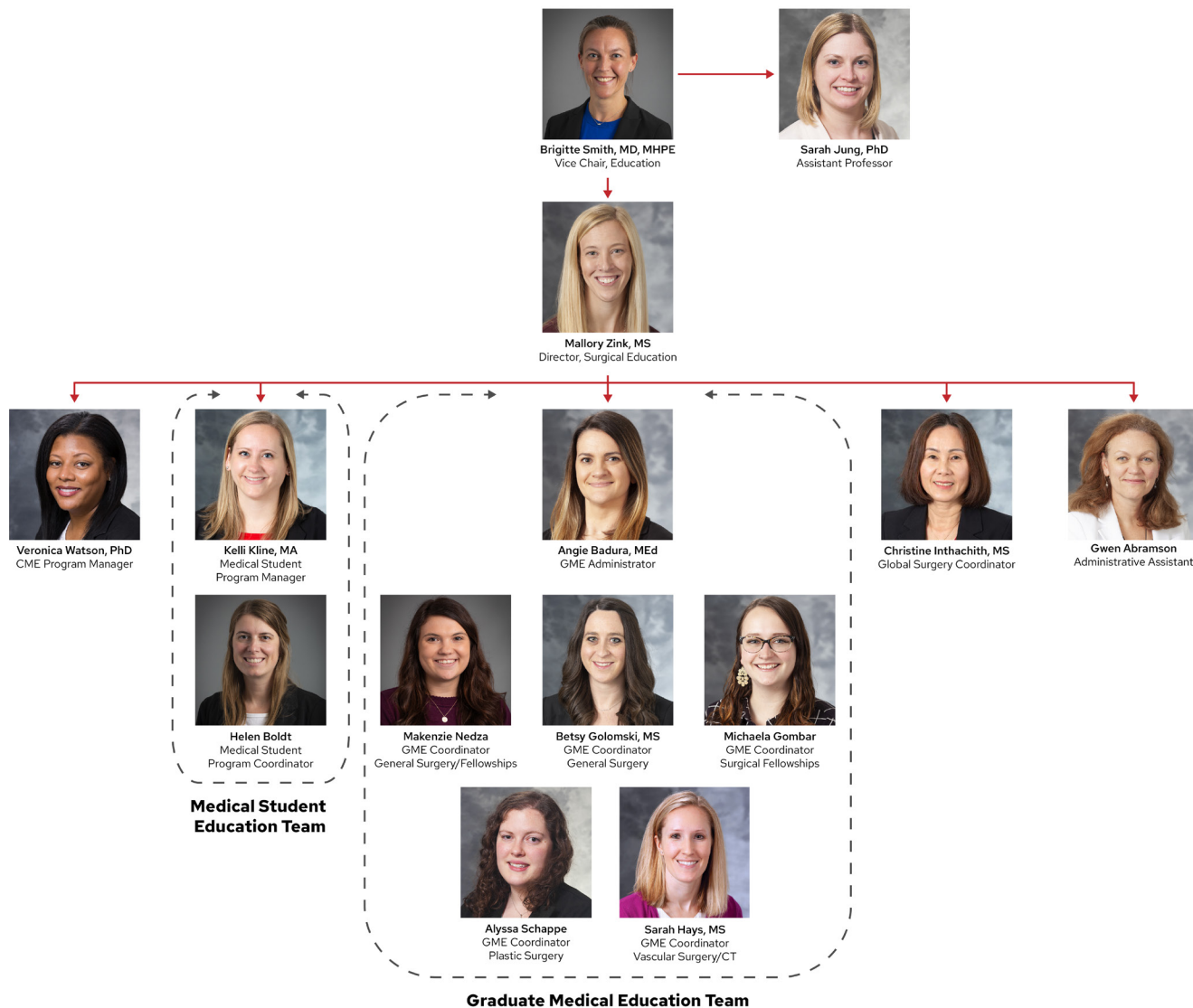
2025 Annual Resident Teaching Awards

Given to a PGY-3 or PGY-4 involved in clinical teaching in the Third Year Surgery Clerkship and based on medical students' evaluations and focus group comments

- Hillary Johnson (General Surgery)
- Caroline Cardenas (General Surgery)
- Hayley Mann (Otolaryngology)
- Katie Reuter Muñoz (Plastic Surgery)
- Jack Bontekoe (Vascular Surgery)

office of surgical education

Our Team





Department of Surgery
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SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

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