SUMMER/FALL 2024 : VOLUME 10 NUMBER 1

MGH INSTITUTE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

A MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE BOSTON GRADUATE SCHOOL FOUNDED BY MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL



Gifts of Giving Back

Alumni are staying engaged with the MGH Institute and benefiting the community in numerous ways

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MGH INSTITUTE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

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Pictured: Haley Matuszek, PP-OTD '22 (right), alongside her colleague Casey Rabideau, PP-OTD '25 (left). Haley referred Casey following her positive experiences at the Institute.

> Personal student feedback and experiences are unlike anything else because they're the ones that lived it. And then they can give you tips and feedback and strategies to help you be successful as you step into that role.

– HALEY MATUSZEK, PP-OTD '22
on the weight carried by a referral from someone you know and trust



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On the cover: Abby (Po Jung) Lee, Joseph-Jude Deauna, and Lauren Jiang represent three generations of mentor-mentee relationships in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders Master's in Speech Language Pathology Alumni Mentor Program.

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www.mghihp.edu **MGHInstituteofHealthProfessions** **MGHInstitute**

Innovation and Promise on Numerous Fronts, Delivering on the IHP Mission

It's a known tenet that in any business, you either innovate or you get left behind. For organizational success, the willingness to change, be creative, and possess an entrepreneurial spirit are all necessary ingredients of that innovative equation.

Academia is no different.

Enrollment winds of change, financial pressures, mergers, and regulatory challenges mean institutions of higher education need to embrace new ideas, procedures, and initiatives to maintain the educational mission. In fact, keeping the mission and goals front and center provide the true North Star for leaders to manage and influence that change.

That's what we're doing at the MGH Institute; a new referral program, reduced tuition, a new doctorate degree, and a part-time program option are entrepreneurial options we're pursuing. This edition of our magazine describes just some of our innovations to help us achieve our mission.

At the IHP, we're in an enviable position as the only degree-granting entity within the Mass General Brigham system, which employs over 82,000 people. And while we have always been an educational resource for MGB employees, we wanted more of them to experience the IHP. Last year, I shared with you details on the Tuition Reduction Incentive Plan, or TRIP. This program provides a 40% tuition discount for many IHP programs for MGB employees. Since its launch, the number of MGB employees attending the IHP has increased by approximately 185.

Just as the tuition discount has boosted enrollment, we're hopeful that a second program based on encouragement will be just as successful. With the IHP Pay It Forward Program (article, page 33), an alum or someone who knows the quality of an IHP education can refer a potential student to the IHP, and if they enroll, the student will receive a $500 credit applied to their tuition bill. The idea is to encourage those who know us best to spread the word about the quality educational experience that is the IHP.

Building on the exceptional post-professional doctoral programs in occupational therapy and speech and language pathology, we will launch the Doctor of Health Science program next summer. This will be an interprofessional program for those wanting a rigorous curriculum that develops their professional identity but also builds in content and experiences related to the equitable delivery of care. We also have added a class this fall for our accelerated baccalaureate degree in nursing (ABSN) program, and we're adding a part-time option next spring. Lastly, we're launching our Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences in the summer of 2026.

As you can see, the process of strategic change at the IHP has never been more important, or more pronounced. We are committed to live our mission through innovation and a commitment to excellence.

For organizational success, the willingness to change, be creative, and possess an entrepreneurial spirit are all necessary ingredients of the innovative equation.



Paula Milone-Nuzzo,
President and John Hilton Knowles Professor

As I write this message, we are about to welcome approximately 430 new students to the IHP. This is such an exciting time of the year for all IHP faculty and staff because we know the importance of the work we will be doing over the next several years to help these students develop into the healthcare leaders who will transform health care. We will continue creating the student success that is emblematic of an IHP education.

I hope you will consider visiting us and reliving your experience as a student or reengaging as a friend. You will get to understand what I see every day here—exceptional faculty, committed staff, and students who are beyond compare. All of this makes up the heart of the IHP.

I wish you a joyous and peaceful fall.

FIVE QUESTIONS

Dr. Joanna Christodoulou, Director of the Brain, Education, and Mind (BEAM) Lab

Researcher Dr. Joanna Christodoulou, director of the Brain, Education, and Mind (BEAM) Lab, and her team recently surpassed the 500-student mark in those who've been served by her lab's summer program partnership with Charlestown elementary schools. Officially named the Summer Program in Literacy and Scholarship (SPLASH), the initiative is now in its seventh year. Chief Communications Officer Sean Hennessey spoke with the professor of communication sciences and disorders about the program's growth, its corporate backing, and the effect on the kindergarten through 6th-grade students who've been helped.



1 What is the "summer slump?"

Dr. Joanna Christodoulou: Summer slump refers to the idea that academic scores decline during summer vacation. So, while a student's performance level at the start of summer reflects the prior academic year of learning, scores by the end of the summer tend to decline in the changed literacy landscape (activities, experiences, and resources) during this prolonged vacation.

2 Can you explain how the new research into this area has turned the old research on its head?

JC: New research has benefited from several large-scale datasets with students across the U.S. This work has revealed that most students show score decline during the summer, and it is not associated with socio-economic status (as was formerly understood).

3 Tell us about the Summer Program in Literacy and Scholarship (SPLASH).

JC: Our partner schools have strong literacy programming, and we are grateful to build on this foundation. We offer consultation, materials, and expert staff for summer programming. We offer guidance on selecting summer literacy programs, review of scheduling and group settings to implement reading instruction, training for school staff on reading programs, acquisition of reading materials and programs, and translation of research for practice. This is all provided at no cost to the school or families.

4 Congratulations on surpassing 500 students in the program's seven years. Tell us about the growth and how the national accounting firm RSM played a role.

JC: Before RSM's generous funding support, we were reaching about 50 students each summer. Now, we have tripled that number to about 150 students each summer who are involved in SPLASH. The RSM three-year grant enabled us to expand our program with more grades included and shorter waitlists at Harvard-Kent Elementary School as well as add another Charlestown elementary school, Warren-Prescott. The funds have also enabled research efforts to be supported so we can study the impact of summer programming.

5 What's been the impact, and what are the hopes for the future?

JC: Our aim is for summer school students to start their new school year feeling more capable and intact as readers so they can pursue their interests and learn more easily. I'd like to emphasize how important it is to consider how children read, but also how they feel about reading, how much they enjoy it, and how much they get out of it. One child started the program crinkling up their materials in frustration, and now seeks out even more challenging work because the infrastructure to succeed is available from their teaching team. We hope to amplify and extend stories like this one, because they capture the actualization of reading potential in striving learners.

Two New Centers of Excellence

BY JOHN SHAW

The faculty at the MGH Institute of Health Professions explore a wide variety of research approaches within specialized areas of the health professions. While some researchers informally worked with colleagues, there hadn't been an easy way for faculty with common interests to collaborate.

That changed with the creation of two Centers of Excellence: the Center of Excellence in Healthcare Simulation Research, and the Center for Translational Research, Implementation Science, and Dissemination for Equity (cTIDE) that will allow IHP faculty from multiple disciplines to collaborate on developing ways to advance patient care.



Janice Palaganas (l) and Tiffany Hogan (r) discussed their respective Centers of Excellence at the 2024 Research and Scholarship Day celebration.

Dr. Janice Palaganas, director of the Center of Excellence in Healthcare Simulation Research, said her center's mission is to generate research on how to use simulation and conduct simulation research more effectively, something that has lagged behind in research.

"The one critical need is that we have to grow our researchers," she said. "We have to grow their skills, as what's being produced out there is not very good research. The biggest challenge is to create an environment in which information is shared so that we can keep building upon knowledge rather than reinventing the wheel."

Within the center is the Research on Experiential-Based Education Lab (REBEL), which specializes in three research areas: examining healthcare simulation methods; cognitive neuroscience of health professions feedback conversations; and generative AI using healthcare simulation for assessment. REBEL will have post-doctoral fellowships and research scholar opportunities, as well as seed grants, beginning in 2025.

"For the last 10 years, I think we have really positioned the IHP to be a leader in healthcare simulation research," she said, noting the position to be primarily due to the school's Department of Health Professions Education, which offers master's and doctoral degrees in HPEd. "And over the last two years, we have really pushed that boundary and we now are being recognized as one of the leaders, if not the leader, with the creation of the new center."

Dr. Tiffany Hogan, director of cTIDE, was one of the first full-time researchers hired by the Institute in 2013. While Hogan said cTIDE is at the beginning stages, she says the goal is to provide research that practitioners can use more quickly.

"The National Institutes of Health have put a priority on translational research," she said. "If we measure the success of what we do based on evidence-based practice for our patients, only about 60% of the care that our patients receive qualifies as evidence-based practice. Translational science is focused on improving and reducing the gap between evidence and clinical practice that we see every day."

Hogan, who directs the Speech and Language Literacy (SAiL) Lab focusing on the learning gaps in schoolchildren, said implementation science can be used in academic settings to help close the gap between better interventions and the reality of what can be done during the school day.

"For instance, one-on-one intervention four times a week may be best for outcomes, but the schools we work with don't have those resources," she said, noting that the center could also look at improving strategies to increase the use of evidence-based practice. "The ultimate goal is to improve the outcomes for the patients we see."

Getting Back in the Virtual Swing of Things



Doctor of Occupational Therapy students Alice Lee (l) and Jean Paul Vasquez Rivera (r) assist client Ciaran Moore (seated) in playing a video golf game that's part of his rehabilitation from a brain injury.

BY JOHN SHAW

Ciaran Moore has been an avid golfer throughout his life. But physical difficulties from a traumatic brain injury prevented his return to the links in person.

However he still golfs—now, electronically. At the MGH Institute, he has been playing a video golf game while working with Doctor of Occupational Therapy students at the Tabor/Connor Family Occupational Therapy Center for Learning, Participation, and Rehabilitation.

Incorporating interactive gaming into rehabilitation is something Kevin Berner, an assistant professor of occupational therapy, has supported for some time.

"Most of the time after someone has had a brain injury, they have to work on things like brushing their teeth or putting on their socks," said Berner, who noted some of the equipment was donated by AbleGamers, a company that works to ensure people with disabilities have positive influences through play. "But once you work beyond that, we can work on them getting back to things they love and want to do. It's a great way to bring some fun into a person's rehabilitation because they're really motivated to do it."

Berner believes the impact of gaming will become more respected in the health professions as it becomes increasingly popular with younger people.

"Gaming can level the playing field, allowing individuals with disabilities to play alongside or against their nondisabled peers," he said. "People game for all sorts of reasons—to engage socially, to unwind, to compete, to escape. Many experts expect that virtual reality will forge a bigger presence in our lives, and gaming will likely be a part of this."

> **"It's a great way to bring some fun into a person's rehabilitation because they're really motivated to do it."**
>
> *– KEVIN BERNER, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY*

RSM-Institute Partnership Continues

BY JOHN SHAW

Dr. Tiffany Hogan's first grant from the Charlestown office of accounting firm RSM in 2019 was to establish an after-school literacy program at the nearby Harvard-Kent Elementary School.

Her project was so successful that RSM has now awarded her a three-year, $300,000 grant for her project, "The MGHIHP Engaging Educators to Improve Literacy Outcomes in At-Risk Charlestown Children (Project OAR)," to work with a new audience at the public school.

"The impact of this really quadruples because instead of working with an individual child, we're working with an individual teacher that works with possibly hundreds of children during the year," said Hogan, director of the MGH Institute's Speech and Literacy (SAiL) Lab, who used the original funding to help secure a $3.6 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to expand her work to other school districts across the country.

Over the past six years, RSM has awarded the MGH Institute more than $1,130,000 in grants. Those grants have helped fund programs that support reading and literacy of children at the Harvard-Kent Elementary and Warren-Prescott Elementary schools to counter the "summer slide" while supporting research to document student outcomes, and occupational speech-language therapy services at the John F. Kennedy Center to support kindergarten readiness and decrease educational and health inequities related to access and use of needed rehabilitation services.

"We've really developed a great partnership with the MGH Institute that's really making an impact on the youth in Charlestown," said Madison McCabe, president of the RSM Boston Foundation, which awarded the grants.

"Our partnership with RSM is an example of what can be done when organizations come together to work on a common goal," noted Institute President Paula Milone-Nuzzo.

Focusing on What Matters to Patients and Families

BY LISA MCEVOY

A medication error that caused a brain injury to her one-year-old son changed Juliet Ochura's life, and led to a new career.

While her son was at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital's inpatient rehabilitation unit, Ochura met Lynette Holmes, an MGH Institute faculty member in speech language pathology, her son's speech and feeding therapist.

"Watching Lynette work with my son was how I learned about the profession," explained Ochura. "I found it really inspiring and it looked like something I would love to do for families who have kids like mine."

A native of Kenya, Ochura completed her Master's in Speech Language Pathology in 2017 and is now a speech language pathologist at Boston Medical Center and Boston Children's Hospital, specializing in evaluating and treating pediatric feeding and swallowing disorders, known as dysphagia.



Juliet Ochura seeks to understand the unique challenges of underserved families with children who have dysphagia.

Improving access to health literacy is one way she has been bridging the gap in access to care for underserved communities. She received health equity and patient safety grants from Boston Medical Center that have helped her get dysphagia education videos and other resources to patients in five languages and distribute feeding supplies to families who receive care at BMC. The funding will also provide more education about dysphagia for providers.

She has conducted focus groups with caregivers in Spanish, Haitian Creole, and other languages to better understand the barriers to accessing care from the perspective of the caregiver, and strategies for improving access.

"This work is very dear to my heart, and I am proud to be a leader advocating for change in this niche," said Ochura.

Graduating From IHP Student to Registered Nurse

BY CATE FESENMYER

Addressing the acute-care nursing shortage and the pressing need for workforce diversification, the MGH Institute's School of Nursing continues to expand its role to enhance the workforce pipeline at hospitals within the Mass General Brigham healthcare system.

For the second year in a row, scholarships have been given to three high-performing Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing students who are in their final semester. Catherine Callahan, Laura Bostwick, and Danielle Silva each received a $10,000 scholarship and a two-year work commitment at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) or Mass Eye and Ear (MEE).

"We're thrilled that these partnerships are expanding throughout the Mass General Brigham system," said then School of Nursing Dean Dr. Ken White. "The hospitals will get exceptionally prepared new nurses who are familiar with MGH and MEE. They have done clinical rotations there, know the nurses, and have experience working with the interprofessional teams."



(l to r) Catherine Callahan, Danielle Silva, and Laura Bostwick will spend the next two years working at Mass General Brigham hospitals.

Bostwick said her preceptorship at Mass Eye and Ear reinforced the importance of working with professionals in other disciplines.

"Having interprofessional experiences working with students from other programs at the IHP translates to, for example, the operating room, where you interact with different people, personalities, doctors, nurses, and patients," she said.

Dr. Rebecca Hill, associate dean for Academic Affairs in the School of Nursing, called the growing relationship between the IHP and hospitals within the MGB system a win-win.

"Graduates from our ABSN program secure more nursing positions in the MGB system than any other nursing school in the region," said Hill. "These scholarships are a testament to the commitment of our clinical partners to hire, support, and retain IHP-prepared nurses."

Raising Stroke Awareness, One Stride at a Time

BY JOHN SHAW

Lauren Lamm has run four marathons for Tedy's Team since she had a stroke the day after she turned 25 eight years ago. But seeing the Tedy's Team Center of Excellence in Stroke Recovery, housed alongside the MGH Institute's Sanders IMPACT Practice Center, for the first time gave her a better understanding of how the thousands of dollars she has raised are put into action.

"To see what's being done here to help other stroke survivors is amazing," said the Scituate resident after getting a tour that included the Institute's speech, aphasia, physical therapy, and occupational therapy centers where students under faculty supervision provide free rehabilitation services to clients whose insurance benefits have expired. "It really gives me a better sense of what I'm running for."



Physical therapy faculty Jane Baldwin (l) describes how clients are assisted in the Sanders IMPACT Practice Center, where the Tedy's Team Center is housed, to (l-r) Dr. Gwen Larson, the Center's education/community outreach coordinator; Tedy's Team executive director Elizabeth Tirrell; and Tedy's Team runner Lauren Lamm.

> **"Knowing that survivors can come to the IHP and get top-notch care is really important because people don't have to stop their progression because they can't afford it.**
>
> *– ELIZABETH TIRRELL, DIRECTOR OF TEDY'S TEAM*

Lamm was among the two dozen runners who attended the June 6 celebration of the Tedy's Team Center that's located on the Institute's Charlestown Navy Yard campus. She renewed friendships with fellow runners and stroke survivors like Frank Feraco, a Worcester native who flew in from Michigan to attend the event, and Tricia Callaway of Andover. Together, the three have run more than 20 marathons and shorter races to financially support the Tedy's Team mission.

The Center, which was launched in March 2023, was made possible thanks to a $1 million gift by the charitable entity that uses running as a platform for stroke awareness and philanthropy. Tedy's Team was co-founded by former New England Patriot great Tedy Bruschi and his wife, Heidi, after Tedy suffered a stroke at the age of 31.

"We are so excited to have you here to honor your dedication, your perseverance, and your remarkable commitment to raising funds and awareness of stroke and heart disease," said Dr. Kim Erler, the director of the Tedy's Team Center. "None of this would be possible without you."

During the event, the audience heard about the Center's work over the past 15 months that focuses on three areas: research, community outreach, and rehabilitation care.

Elizabeth Tirrell, director of Tedy's Team, noted how much has been done since the Center was founded.

"The Center has allowed us to expand into more areas than we had before and along with seeing a lot of populations," she said. "Knowing that survivors can come to the IHP and get top-notch care is really important because people don't have to stop their progression because they can't afford it. And being able to see what is happening with the research and how fast it's actually going to reach patients is super important. It's just a wonderful partnership, and we look forward to having it grow because we know there are so many stroke survivors out there who need care."

Steve Parnell, who had a stroke six years ago and currently goes to the Aphasia Center each week, participated in the 2023 Wellness Walk. In his remarks, he recognized the work the Bruschis are doing for people like him.

"It's superb what Tedy and Heidi have been able to do," Parnell said. "They are making a difference in our lives to get better."

Student Trip to India Yields Lessons, New Perspectives, and Areas Where U.S. Health Care Can Improve

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

International experiences in India made a triumphant return as a contingent of MGH Institute nursing students and faculty spent nearly a month in Manipal as part of an immersion experience at Kasturba Hospital and the surrounding community where they shadowed students from the Manipal College of Nursing.

The group left New Year's Eve and returned in late January; the trip came on the tenth anniversary of the Institute's first nursing trip to India.

Making the 8,000-mile trek were Master of Science in Nursing students Leah Rothchild, Kyle Fletcher, Disha Patel, Sonal Bhatt, Nikita Desai, and Ilan Millstrom, who were accompanied by Professor Elissa Ladd and Assistant Professor Kaveri Roy.

"It was such a privilege," said second-year student Desai. "We had so much access."

Ladd spearheaded the first trip in 2014 after returning from a six-month placement as a Fulbright Scholar at Manipal University.

"When I was there, I remember thinking, 'Wow! This is this is such a wonderful, rich place to bring students,'" remembered Dr. Ladd. "You have the setting in South India, a wealth of cultural activities, as well as healthcare services that are being provided in the context of a low-middle income country."

Unlike many of the international trips MGH Institute students take, where hands-on experiences lend themselves to learning, this was an immersion trip with observerships. Along with full workdays, there were case studies, workshops, and presentations to take part in too. Ladd called it a bilateral peer mentorship.

"The students were mentoring each other," said Ladd. "They were sharing their own experiences and their own context in terms of how they do things, where they work, what are the challenges."



(l to r) Nikita Desai, Assistant Professor Kaveri Roy, Ilan Millstrom, Kyle Fletcher, and Leah Rothchild at the Kaveri River Crossing on the way to the Dubare Elephant Camp.

For Rothchild, a third-year student and veteran of IHP service trips to Malawi and Uganda, the hands-off experience was very different than providing direct patient care or administering education.

"It was actually really fun in a way because it took all the pressure out of this situation and it really allowed me to take everything in with no obligation to intervene or even offer advice or an opinion on anything," she said. "So I had the opportunity through questions to share what we do differently."

In the area of community health, people were met where they're at, thanks to primary health centers in rural outposts where people receive free health care. Screenings for pregnant women, tests, and vaccinations are no cost because they're provided by the government. More complicated, higher-risk procedures are done in a private facility at an out-of-pocket cost.

> **"The students were mentoring each other. They were sharing their own experiences and their own context in terms of how they do things, where they work, what are the challenges."**
>
> *– PROFESSOR ELISSA LADD*

"The way that they do community health there is light years ahead of how we do community health here," said Bhatt. "Their outreach is absolutely amazing. The way they go into communities and provide care for people and make sure that everybody has a basic level of care is amazing."

With an interdisciplinary approach a central tenet of the IHP education, the lack of it in India was glaring.

"In the U.S., we'll have interdisciplinary rounds that include the whole care team with nurses being at the table and developing the plan of care," said Fletcher, a third-year student specializing in acute care. "In India, there wasn't a dedicated time for all the different disciplines—medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, or speech-language pathology."

The 26-day trip led to considerable lessons and learning to be leveraged.

"It helps them realize, 'OK, we are good at some things, and they are good at some things,'" said Roy. "It may affect how they see other countries that they go to as well. In the U.S., we have this habit of saying, 'We're going to go and save these people, or we're going to provide these services that they don't have.' We really need to start looking at what can we provide and what can they provide. There needs to be reciprocity. And I think that's what they learned."

For Fletcher, the trip takeaway was confirmation about his career track.

"It helped me solidify that I could see myself working in the ICU," said Fletcher. "I went into it without much exposure in that specific setting, so I have only really played with the idea of pursuing that specialization in the future. The experience really solidified that it's a fun environment for me to practice in." ■

MGH Institute Boasts Three Top-20 Programs in *U.S. News & World Report*

BY SEAN HENNESSEY



Five IHP programs are among the leaders in New England according to new rankings released by *U.S. News & World Report*.

The MGH Institute of Health Professions continues to receive impressive rankings in *U.S. News & World Report*'s 2025 Best Graduate Schools list.

Three programs in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences are ranked in the Top 20 nationally, and join two programs in the School of Nursing among the top-rated programs in New England.

The Doctor of Physical Therapy is tied as the top-ranked PT program in New England and tied for 11th nationally out of 246 ranked programs, placing it in the top 4% of all physical therapy programs.

The Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology is 2nd in New England and tied for 9th nationally out of 281 ranked programs. It is in the top 3% of all SLP programs in the country.

The Entry Level Doctor of Occupational Therapy program is in the top 6% out of 264 programs, tied for 3rd in New England.

The Master of Science in Nursing is ranked 2nd in Massachusetts and tied for 4th in New England. It is in the top 8% of all MSN programs nationwide.

The Doctor of Nursing Practice is ranked 2nd in Massachusetts, tied for 6th in New England, and is in the top 18% of all DNP programs.

All programs at the IHP are integrated into its interprofessional education and practice curriculum, known as IMPACT Practice. Students learn from and with each other so they are prepared to work in healthcare teams that improve patient outcomes.

"While rankings are not what drive our faculty and staff teams to build the highest quality, student-centered educational programs, this type of external validation is a testament to our team's commitment to excellence," said Dr. Reamer Bushardt, provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Finding Ways to Connect With Children

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

Jennifer Dean Durning, a pediatric nurse practitioner at Mass General Brigham Community Physicians, has been teaching at the MGH Institute since 2015. After earning her PhD in Nursing Education from Villanova University, she was recently named assistant professor at the Institute.

For Durning, enthusiasm fused with an individualized touch is key to pediatric nursing.

"Every time we talk in health care it's oftentimes, 'Well, the diabetic in Room 13' or 'The concussion in Room 11,' and I really like to stop and say, 'You know, this is a 7-year-old with this scenario going on. How is it affecting all the other parts of their lives?'" she said.

Durning said treating the clinical encounters as a partnership with the caregiver is critical.

"I'm not the one who defines what the child's best health is," she noted. "We're working in partnership with the child themselves and whoever their primary caregiver or adult is that brought them in today. What are their goals? How can I work with them to help them get there?"

Also critical? Bringing her patient experiences to the classroom.

"I like to say, 'Just last week we were talking about this, and then the next day in clinic, I saw this child. Here's how it actually unfolded compared to what we read in the article or in the textbook,'" said Durning. "We're a very practice-focused discipline and I think that that



MGH Institute Assistant Professor Jennifer Dean Durning says spending the extra time answering patient questions goes a long way in easing their anxieties.

real world piece—having that connection to real life—is a huge part of my success in the classroom. I think that's part of what makes the IHP a good place—most faculty are actively practicing as well as teaching."

Clara Gona Named American Academy of Nursing Fellow

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

Clara Gona is living her dream. An associate professor in the MGH Institute's School of Nursing, she mentors faculty and students at the IHP and Massachusetts General Hospital; conducts research with Zimbabwean immigrants; and travels every year to Africa to teach and mentor students.

And now, the veteran nurse has been selected to be a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing (AAN), the highest honor bestowed on a nurse from the world's most prestigious nursing organization, joining eleven other IHP faculty members.

"I think this is the pinnacle of a career that people outside of my institution respect," she said. "It doesn't feel like I have arrived, but instead, it's confirmation that the work I do matters."

A Zimbabwe native, Gona joined the MGH Institute in 2011 and has been a nurse since 1988; currently, she is also a nurse practitioner at the Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital in Brighton.

Nominated by then-School of Nursing Dean Dr. Ken White and Director of Faculty Development Elaine Tagliareni, she will be formally inducted on November 2 at the AAN's annual ceremony in Washington, DC.

"I think this is really like the cherry on top," said Gona. "It's like this little girl who had dreams—I never thought I could reach this level. It was good enough for me to get my PhD, and I'm teaching, and I'm doing research. But for me to be recognized by others, it's the cherry on top. It's great."

"Clara has been influential in inspiring global and regional nursing students to consider conducting research and



Associate Professor Clara Gona (right) teaching a class of nursing students at Mbarara University of Science and Technology, in Uganda during July 2023.

raising clinical questions that address the needs of diverse patient populations. She truly embraces the American Academy of Nursing's mission to achieve health equity by impacting policy through nursing leadership and science," said Tagliareni.

Petzold Lecture Features Leadership Lessons Learned from Crises and Calamity

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

Nurses can handle anything—but for Dr. Kimberly S. Glassman, one night was unlike any other. She was chief nursing officer at NYU Langone Medical Center when Hurricane Sandy hit.

"I sent an email to all the nurse managers who were sheltering in place with us that night," recalled Glassman, now a professor and dean of the Mount Sinai Phillips School of Nursing in New York City. "And all these emails come back, 'We're fine.' Except for the nurse manager who was covering pediatrics. She said, 'We're black. Can you come up here right now?'"

Glassman was the featured speaker during the third annual Natalie Petzold Endowed Lecture, co-hosted by the MGH Institute and Massachusetts General Hospital.

"I walked upstairs to the PICU and NICU and it was dark and silent. There was no noise—dead silence—meaning that no ventilators were working, no monitors were working," said Glassman. The superstorm had knocked out power to the pediatric wing.

"I said to my nurses, 'Prepare to get everybody out of here' because they were the experts on it," she continued. "I trusted that they knew what they were doing."

And they did. One would carry a baby while other personnel carried equipment attached to the baby. In lockstep, the team walked down nine flights of stairs in the dark.

"We had medical students holding flashlights in the stairwell," Glassman remembered. "And once they got down to the first floor—we were flooded up to the first floor, so those floors weren't usable because they were underwater—the baby was taken by the EMS team onto a stretcher. And this is how we took them out."



Dr. Kimberly S. Glassman, dean of the Mount Sinai Phillips School of Nursing, delivers the keynote address at the third annual Natalie Petzold Endowed Lecture. The event was co-hosted by the MGH Institute and Massachusetts General Hospital.

For her initiative, she received a congratulatory call from President Barack Obama.

Speaking in Boston was a homecoming of sorts. Not only did Glassman earn her RN diploma from the Massachusetts General Hospital School of Nursing (the diploma school that was a precursor to the MGH Institute), but her sister graduated from the MGH Institute's nurse practitioner program in 1993. And her mother—who was seated in the front row—worked at MGH, first as a nurse, then as a supervisor.

Natalie Petzold was the last director of the nursing school, which closed in 1981, and served as dean of students at the MGH Institute during its formative years. She remained a supporter until her death in 2012.

"Miss Petzold admitted me to the school. And I am really thrilled to be the first Petzold lecturer who actually knew Miss Petzold," Glassman said.

A recent venue change meant more IHP faculty and MGH clinicians attended the annual talk.

"We're thrilled about the attendance and the engagement and obviously, it's a variety of audiences," said then-School of Nursing Dean Dr. Ken White. "We have our faculty, our IHP staff, lots of nurse directors and nurse leaders from MGH, and staff nurses too. So it's a great turnout and wonderful to see the mix of colleagues and friends."

Dr. Debbie Burke, senior vice president for patient care and chief nurse of Massachusetts General Hospital, was also pleased.

"Ken and I have been working together for a few years now to try to tighten the relationship between the School and MGH," said Burke. "This is just another example of our coming together to try to do things jointly."

Institute Bids Adieu to Five Longtime Employees

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

Laughs, cheers, stories, smiles, heart-warming memories, and plenty of gratitude—just some of what was on display when the MGH Institute community gathered to say goodbye to five veteran stalwarts whose aggregate service within the Mass General Brigham system exceeds a century.

"We talk about people being the heart and soul of an organization," said President Paula Milone-Nuzzo. "You have given us a great foundation on which to build, and we can't thank you enough for that. The IHP is better because you all have been here."

At the ceremony, each of the retirees shared a few words about their time at the Institute. Here are some excerpts:



(l-r): John Shaw, director, communications in the Office of Strategic Communications; Marjorie Nicholas, chair of Communication Sciences and Disorders; Patrice Nicholas, director of the Center for Climate Change, Climate Justice, and Health in the School of Nursing; Ken White, dean of the School of Nursing; and Rita Olans, associate professor emerita in the School of Nursing, gather during their IHP retirement ceremony.

John Shaw, BS
Director, Communications, Office of Strategic Communications

"It's been quite a privilege and an honor to be able to have chronicled the growth of the school since I got here and everybody was in three and a half floors of Shouse with 826 students, I believe. Over this time, we've doubled everything—we've doubled the size, the number of students, the faculty, and staff.

"It's been a real joy to be able to chronicle and help tell the story of the IHP because this is a terrific place. I'll miss the friendships and the camaraderie, and all of those things that come along with that. ... Thank you very much. It's been a wonderful time."

Marjorie Nicholas, PhD, CCC-SLP, FASHA
Chair, Professor, Communication Sciences and Disorders

"I joined the Institute ... and within two weeks of moving to my office on Merrimack Street, 9-11 happened. We all moved here to the Navy Yard three months later; that was just setting the stage for getting used to frequent change as the common order of each day, which for me has now stretched to 23 years as a full-time faculty member.

"The IHP is such a special place. I wouldn't have stayed here so long if it hadn't been. I will miss all of my faculty colleagues—everybody in the CSD department. I will miss everybody. I think I'm going to love retirement. Some people worry about it, but I think I'm going to love it."

Patrice Nicholas, DNSc, DHL (Hon.), MPH, RN, NP-C, FAAN
Distinguished Teaching Professor and Director, Center for Climate Change, Climate Justice, and Health, School of Nursing

"It has been a joyful 47-year career. I feel so fortunate. When I was 17 and heading off to college, my dad said, 'I think you'd be a great nurse or a great teacher' and I became both. How lucky am I? So, it's been joyful. One of my favorite memories is serving as one of the preceptors for Dr. Debbie Burke, who's the senior vice president of patient care services and chief nurse at MGH, when she was a brand-new nurse. We were practicing in a building that no longer exists, but the friendship is forever.

"I will miss the people—all the staff, all the faculty, all the administrators, and especially the students. It's been joyful."

> **"You have given us a great foundation on which to build, and we can't thank you enough for that. The IHP is better because you all have been here."**
>
> *– MGH INSTITUTE PRESIDENT PAULA MILONE-NUZZO*

Rita Olans, DNP, CPNP-PC, SNP, FAAN, FNAP
Associate Professor Emerita, School of Nursing

"We took care of each other. We were all part of a family, and being part of the family is very important. And I think of all of you, as part of my family, and I will keep in touch. Consider me part of your posse, and I will show up. I am so proud to have worked here and to have been part of this institution. We are very lucky to be able to take such good care of each other here.

"I will miss the IHP people the most. These are my family, my friends. I'm here for all of these years because of the people that work here and the students. I teach so that I can keep learning, and my students have been the most incredible teachers for me over the years. I love my job."

Kenneth White, PhD, AGACNP, ACHPN, FACHE, FAAN
Dean, School of Nursing and Professor, Nursing and Health Administration

"The other day I started packing things in my office, which was quite an emotional experience for me. It represented 51 years of memories of things that I've carried from office to office to office. ... I like quotes, and my all-time favorite is by Joseph Campbell: 'When you follow your bliss, doors will open for you that you didn't know were there, and that wouldn't be there for anyone else.'

"I went through a lot of doors that weren't my own. Our careers are not linear. They're not easily planned. In fact, we can't plan now because opportunities come our way and we go through different doors... I've had a successful exploration. And I've arrived back where I started and I've enjoyed an incredible career, where I've followed my bliss and the many doors that have opened have brought me to this day and the next chapter." ■

Healthcare Data Analytic Program Hosts National Conference



Shuhan He (second from right), program director of the MGH Institute's Master of Science in Healthcare Data Analytics, talks to (l-r) Mark Zhang, Jeff Hersh, and Chris Martinez at the Consortium for Health Innovation Partnerships East Coast conference.

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

The Healthcare Data Analytics program at the MGH Institute of Health Professions is helping to unleash the potential of data analytics, technology, and health care.

As one step, the MGH Institute hosted the Consortium for Health Innovation Partnerships' East Coast conference in June.

In the daylong "conference hackathon," speakers presented challenges in three areas—digital health records in underserved communities and international settings where a lack of infrastructure means paper records are used; international telehealth in conflict zones such as Ukraine; and patient report outcomes in academics—and students developed prototype solutions that were assessed at the day's end.

"Our program is a leader in research and innovation, and we work very closely with partners globally and locally," said Shuhan He, program director of the Masters in Healthcare Data Analytics program and an emergency room doctor at Massachusetts General Hospital. "We're at the intersection of academia, nonprofits, and innovation at the private sector. What this conference is about is bringing them together to not just talk, but to take action."

Judges were Mark Zang, founder and president of the American Medical Extended Reality Association and instructor of medicine at Harvard Medical School; Jeff Hersh, former chief medical officer at GE Healthcare; and Chris Martinez, who oversees a Brooklyn-based accelerator, BK-XL, that invests in underrepresented founders.

"Data analytics and technology is an applied practice, just like medicine," said He. "You can't learn it effectively in a textbook. You have to apply those skills to problems, and you have to build experience. ... This is not just for the IHP and our data analytics program, but for the international community of health, data, and innovation."

Refusing to Overlook Trauma

BY SOPHIE HAUCK

Trauma-informed care is an emerging framework for acknowledging how pre-existing trauma impacts patients' medical experiences. According to IHP nursing instructor Kathryn Kieran, "Just like we put on gloves every time we touch blood or bodily fluids, we should automatically assume trauma is in the background for every patient because it's so pervasive, and so many people cope with it."

Coming from the Greek word for "wound," trauma is any event or circumstance that leaves someone with physical, emotional, or life-threatening harm, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

"People who are exposed to lots of violence already tend to be more at risk for psychotic disorders just because of the hecticness of their environment,"



Nursing instructor Kathryn Kieran discusses trauma-informed care with first-year students in their Mental Health Nursing class.

said Dr. Danielle Walker, an IHP nursing instructor who treats patients with psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

"As healthcare providers, we're always telling our patients, 'Oh, just go for a walk.' A walk is free, it doesn't take anything just to get outside, but people are legitimately scared for their lives and can't go outside," Walker said.

Trauma isn't confined to patients. Experiencing occupational trauma is common for nurses, who often treat patients under intense, high-stakes circumstances. Kieran wants healthcare workers to know that the burden of avoiding burnout isn't theirs to bear alone.

Resources like the Student Assistance Program, which provides no-charge counseling to IHP students, can help emerging healthcare workers stay on top of their mental health.

"If you need to talk to someone, talk to someone now," Kieran said. "Don't wait. It's the best thing you can do for yourself."

Christodoulou Grant to Look at the Intersection of Research and Instruction

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

During her decade-long research career at the MGH Institute, Dr. Joanna Christodoulou has undertaken dozens of research studies to learn the best ways of teaching children with reading limitations or learning disabilities. The one constant has been the search for what works to improve reading skills.

The latest grant the director of the Brain, Education, and Mind (BEAM) Lab received does not entail finding new information, but finding the best way to implement established research findings.

The year-long $50,000 grant from the William T. Grant Foundation, "Improving the Use of Research Evidence for Teaching Students with Language-Based Learning Disabilities," will fund members of the BEAM Lab and Dr. Annie Fox, associate professor of healthcare data analytics. The project will be carried out in collaboration with the Landmark School Outreach Program, which provides instructional coaching and consultation to schools and districts on how to best support students with language-based learning disabilities.

Christodoulou's team will be evaluating Landmark Outreach's instructional coaching model with schools throughout the Commonwealth.

"They want to understand how to best collaborate with educators and school leaders to integrate the latest research into their classroom settings," said Christodoulou, an associate professor in the Communication Sciences and Disorders program. "Their approach is, 'What's the point of educational research if we're not able to bridge research to practice to effectively impact student



Brain, Education, and Mind (BEAM) Lab director Dr. Joanna Christodoulou and first-year speech-language pathology student Emile Zahr discuss data related to Christodoulou's latest research project.

outcomes?' That's the best part of these collaborative efforts. We can work together to bring the data to life."

"For all the research that we do at the student level, the work would be for naught unless adopted and implemented," she noted.

Ana Aguilar's Inspiring Journey: Perseverance After Stroke

BY KATE CHANEY

One recent Tuesday morning, Ana Aguilar entered the Sanders IMPACT Practice Center (IPC) at the MGH Institute, an innovative interprofessional hub that strives to transform health professions education and community wellness, chronic care, and recovery.

She moved swiftly with a walker, looking forward to challenging herself in physical therapy with faculty and students at the IPC's Marjorie K. Ionta PT Center for Clinical Education and Health Promotion.

Two strokes in 2018 landed Aguilar in the intensive care unit at Massachusetts General Hospital.

The Chelsea resident couldn't make a fist, struggled to sit, and couldn't walk. With support from her family and her inpatient physical therapy team, Aguilar began to regain some of those abilities. She knew she had a long road ahead of her—but not how long.

After her physical therapy services ended at MGH, her doctors recommended she continue treatment at the Institute. For the past five years, Aguilar has been a regular client, working with Doctor of Physical Therapy students overseen by faculty in her quest to continue improving her quality of life.

When she arrived at the IPC in November 2019, she couldn't walk on her own. Thanks to years of working on her gait, balance, strength, and muscle coordination, she now can strut down the hallway with confidence, releasing her grip on her walker to play catch with her PT team.

The IPC allows health professions graduate students to apply their classroom knowledge in real-life situations. Aguilar estimated she has worked with 100 DPT students over the past five years, and has nothing but praise for them.



Ana Aguilar walks down the hall of the Sanders IMPACT Practice Center, spotted by Ana Sanchez-Junkin (l), adjunct PT faculty, and DPT student Chelsea Sakai (r).

"I try to be patient with them," she said in her native Spanish. "And they are patient with me. I enjoy working with them, and they enjoy it too. They are very encouraging."

"It's been good to be able to work with [Aguilar] on things we've been exposed to in class, like strengthening exercises," said Hannah Antonellis, a first-year DPT student. "Working with her, I've gained a new perspective of physical therapy. And the progress that she has shown from day one to now is amazing."

Aguilar also participates in events like the Tedy's Team Waterfront Wellness Walk at the New England Aquarium and an exercise class at the Chelsea Senior Center.

Tedy's Team Center of Excellence in Stroke Recovery at the MGH Institute, founded in 2023 with a generous donation from Tedy and Heidi Bruschi, empowers people living with strokes and their caregivers to live their best lives. The Center supports community education and outreach, research, and rehabilitation care within the IPC's clinical centers.

Gwen Larson, an instructor of physical therapy and the education/community outreach coordinator in the Tedy's Team Center of Excellence in Stroke Recovery, knows Aguilar well. "She's made good gains in the time she's been with us, and knows she is an inspiration to others through her recovery," said Larson.

A local business owner in her home country of Guatemala before coming to America, Aguilar has always been a woman of strength, according to her family. Her objectives have remained consistent: reclaiming as much of her pre-stroke life as possible and becoming more self-sufficient.

"She was driven to get better, always motivated," Aguilar's son said. "The nurses at MGH used to say she was cute and I'd say, 'My mother?' She's a fighter."

Mombrun Wins Excellence in Teaching Award



Cassandra Mombrun won the Presidential Award and Education/Teaching Award at the New England Regional Black Nurses Association Excellence in Nursing Awards gala.

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

In February, Cassandra Mombrun, an instructor in the MGH Institute's School of Nursing, received the Education/Teaching Award at the New England Regional Black Nurses Association's 36th Annual Excellence in Nursing Awards.

"It's what I love, it's what I do best," she said of teaching. "It comes naturally to me."

Formerly a nurse director at Brigham and Women's Hospital for an inpatient thoracic surgery unit, Mombrun pivoted to teaching full time.

"Her efforts go way beyond the classroom," said then-School of Nursing Dean Dr. Ken White. "She's a wonderful advocate for health equity, focusing her teaching on the social determinants of health and how nurses are able to make a difference with socially disadvantaged persons and communities who have experienced healthcare disparities."

Mombrun also received the New England Regional Black Nurses Association's (NERBNA) Presidential Award, the organization's most prestigious honor. Her 13-year affiliation with NERBNA has included serving as secretary, board member, and, currently, as vice president.

E. Lorraine Baugh, a long-serving IHP trustee and first Board chair, organized the first meeting of what is now known as the New England Regional Black Nurses Association.

"One of the core values of the IHP is inclusivity—it's justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion," said Mombrun. "Having an organization like NERBNA be connected to the IHP gives a sense of importance and impact on the students of color. Knowing that the school has a relationship with this organization will give them confidence and will let them know that the Institute and NERBNA share similar values, and that's exactly what students want to see."

Faculty's Book on Emotional Intelligence Resonates

BY JOHN SHAW



Dr. B.A. White (left) discusses her emotional intelligence class with Dr. Jenn Mackey, who has taken White's course.

When students in the MGH Institute sign up for a class on emotional intelligence, they're being taught by a faculty member who is a leading authority in the field.

Dr. B.A. White, associate professor in the Department of Health Professions Education, is co-author of a new textbook, *Leading Self and Others with Emotional Intelligence*. Co-authored with Joann Farrell Quinn and Erin Barry, it delves into the four domains of emotional intelligence (EI): self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. This can translate into leading teams successfully, collaborating with others, mentoring colleagues, and managing stress on different levels.

"Especially in the health professions, we've got the clinical education component down pat," White said. "It's the 'people' side of it that still needs some work. So we looked to the literature that shows emotionally intelligent leaders can reduce burnout, reduce turnover, and have better morale within their teams. It's a way to strengthen relationships and social skills elevating the clinical experience."

She noted that, unlike when she was teaching medical students who resisted EI, it's a different story at the MGH Institute, where she's been teaching healthcare practitioners—including physicians—since 2019.

"The health professionals I'm teaching at the IHP are eating this up, they're so glad to have a way to methodically dissect conflict so it can be resolved," White said. "This is why I love teaching at the IHP, because I'm working with people who understand these skills are necessary."

"I've had many students tell me 'I've grown so much and I'm so glad that I've been able to use these concepts'," she added. "That's the best. That's my favorite part."

Making Their Voices Heard

BY JOHN SHAW

They may not be professional lobbyists, but students in the Master of Physician Assistant Studies program made their voices heard at the U.S. Congress and on Beacon Hill.

Led by former program chair Josh Merson, several first-year students participated in the 2024 Washington, D.C., spring advocacy trip organized by the PA Education Association (PAEA), which represents physician assistant programs in the U.S. Their goal was to convince lawmakers to increase funding that will support more resources for curriculum development, increase clinical rotation availability, and enhance student diversity in alignment with PAEA's advocacy agenda. A bill of particular interest was H.R. 6077—the POST GRAD Act, which would restore access to subsidized Stafford loans to graduate students and eliminate thousands of dollars of interest payments for the typical PA student borrower.

"This is a great way for students to become empowered and to know that their voices really matter," said Merson. "They realize that this is something they can do to make a difference above just treating patients."

In April, students accompanied Merson to Beacon Hill for the annual Massachusetts Association of Physician Assistants lobby day to promote a bill that would remove the requirement that PAs file a supervising physician with the Commonwealth, while retaining the ability of healthcare facilities to require this at the practice level. Bills in both the House and Senate would extend provisions that were temporarily granted during the COVID-19 pandemic and help fill a labor gap.



Then-PA Chair Josh Merson (far left) at the U.S. Capitol with students Mariana Shalit, Jessica Langston, Rita Sharma, Kaitlin Farrell, Abigail Abellana, Marjorie Archila, Lodtz Joseph, and Angel Fuentes, where they lobbied politicians.

More than 200 students from the IHP, Tufts University, Northeastern University, and Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences took part.

Marathon Runners Raise $11,000 for Student Scholarship Fund and Impact Practice Center

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

Team IHP has added more than $5,000 to the MGH Institute's scholarship fund and more than $6,000 for the Dr. Charles A. and Ann Sanders Impact Practice Center, thanks to students Molly Allen and Taylor Jenkinson. Both completed the 128th Boston Marathon this year and raised money with every stride.

Jenkinson, a student in the Master of Science in Nursing program, raised $6,003 for the IPC while finishing the 26.2-mile course in 5:03.02. Allen, a student in the Doctor of Speech-Language Pathology program who previously graduated from the IHP in 2018 with a master's in SLP, raised $5,101 for scholarships and finished just behind her teammate in 5:09.14.

Their total brings to approximately $171,000 raised since 2011 by more than two dozen students, alumni, and faculty who have run for Team IHP.



Molly Allen (l) and Taylor Jenkinson (r) with her family on the course of the 2024 Boston Marathon.

2024 Graduates Urged to Make a Difference



Leah Rothchild was the student speaker during the School of Nursing's Commencement ceremony.

BY JOHN SHAW

The 571 new graduates of MGH Institute of Health Professions celebrated at their Commencement ceremony in May.

"I could not be more excited to be here," said Madison Homsey, who earned her Master of Science in Nursing degree. "The Institute really prepared us for practice, and we've all worked very hard to make it."

Held at the Boston Convention and Exposition Center before more than 3,000 family, friends, classmates, and IHP staffers, the IHP's 44th graduation exercise was marked by speakers who exhorted the new graduates to make their mark in an increasingly complex world.

"I hope you are eager to get to work so that decades from now you can look back and say you left things better than when you found them," President Paula Milone-Nuzzo told the graduates.

Leah Rothchild, from the Master of Science in Nursing program, was the student speaker at the morning's School of Nursing ceremony. Debbie Burke, vice president for patient care and chief nurse at Massachusetts General Hospital, also spoke, calling nursing "an intimacy with another human being that is sacred and something that not many people get to experience."

In the afternoon, Lauren Whitman, who earned her Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology degree, was the student speaker for graduates from the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences and School of Healthcare Leadership. David F.M. Brown, MD, president of Academic Medical Centers at Mass General Brigham, told the new graduates they are entering the workforce at a critical time.

"I am well aware of the substantial and increasing need for skilled, caring, innovative healthcare professionals," he said. "We need you now more than ever."

All in the Family as IHP Professor Watches Daughter Graduate from Healthcare Data Analytics Program

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

Off to the left of the Commencement stage, Jordan Green held the colored cloth and waited for the signal. Then the Matina Souretis Horner professor and director of the Speech and Feeding Disorders Lab carefully pulled the hood over the head of the candidate in front of him.

Green wasn't acting as faculty, but as a father. The candidate was his daughter, Reese, who smiled, hugged her dad, and walked across the stage to become part of the MGH Institute's first Master's in Healthcare Data Analytics graduating class.

After graduating from the University of Vermont with degrees in neuroscience and mathematics, Reese enrolled in the IHP's newly launched Healthcare Data Analytics program. A formalized



Dr. Jordan Green, the IHP's chief scientific officer, with his daughter, Reese, part of the first graduating class of the Master of Healthcare Data Analysis program.

statistical report she wrote for the nonprofit group A Healthier Democracy, showing a correlation between low Internet access and preventable hospitalizations, was accepted by the *Journal of Medical Internet Research*. She won the Healthcare Data Analytics program's Healthcare Impact Award and earned herself a paid, six-month fellowship with A Healthier Democracy.

"It's a really exciting field to be in," said Reese Green. "There's so much work that can be done and should be done. The fact that it's a program specific to health care makes it highly unique and is one of the reasons why I enrolled."

"Graduation is so exciting, but now my daughter's part of it," said Jordan Green, shaking his head in wonder. "Reese is now part of that IHP family. That's what it feels like. I've had a great career here and have loved the Institute. And now bringing my daughter into the fold makes everything richer and more meaningful for me. It's great for her, too."

Tedy and Heidi Bruschi Receive Honorary Doctorates for Roles in Stroke Recovery and Awareness

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

Peering into a sea of health professions graduates of the MGH Institute of Health Professions, former New England Patriots linebacker and two-time stroke survivor Tedy Bruschi spoke of his emotions following the stroke he suffered during the prime of his NFL career.

"I went to see Coach Belichick and said, 'I'm retiring. I can't do this. They have to repair a hole in my heart, and I couldn't see the left field in both of my eyes.' I thought it was over," said Bruschi. "I thought I was forever changed—but rehabilitation and therapy helped me come back, and the relationship all of you will be having with your patients is going to be incredible."

Bruschi and his wife, Heidi, received honorary doctorates from the MGH Institute for helping create the Tedy's Team Center of Excellence in Stroke Recovery at MGH Institute of Health Professions. The Center was made possible thanks to a $1 million gift by Tedy's Team, the couple's charitable entity that uses running as a platform for stroke awareness and philanthropy.

Tedy's Team Center of Excellence is founded on the pillars of community outreach, research, and bridging the gap between practice and research. The Center leverages the innovative education-care model treating people with chronic stroke at the IHP Impact Practice Center, where approximately 200 chronic stroke survivors received treatment over the past year for speech, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and nursing. Recently, the Center named four research fellows to study the effects of stroke on areas like speech, language, and brain activity.



Heidi and Tedy Bruschi received honorary doctorates for their role in stroke awareness and education and for helping create the Tedy's Team Center of Excellence in Stroke Recovery.

For Boston Marathon Bombing Survivor Jessica Kensky, an IHP-MGH Success Story



Jess Kensky and her service dog, Rescue, walk across stage during Commencement 2024.

BY JOHN SHAW

When Jessica Kensky walked across the graduation stage with her service dog, Rescue, it was the culmination of a journey that she couldn't have imagined 11 years ago.

In 2013, Kensky lost both her legs during the Boston Marathon bombing. An oncology nurse at Massachusetts General Hospital, she battled through multiple surgeries over several years and returned to work. She also enrolled in the MGH Institute's Doctor of Nursing Practice program.

"It certainly was a family affair, with Mass General and the IHP providing so much help to get me here today, plus Patrick and my family," she said, referencing her husband, Patrick Downes, who lost one leg in the attack. "Everyone was just determined to make this happen for me with their support and being so flexible. There were a lot of really hard times, and it took a whole community of people to get me through. I'm so grateful."

That support began with Jeanette Ives Erickson, who was vice president for patient care and chief nurse at MGH when Kensky was injured. Now chair of the MGH Institute Board of Trustees, Ives Erickson urged Kensky to forge ahead and helped get Kensky a scholarship to attend the IHP.

Kensky, who recently received a promotion on her unit, was pleased to have completed the program.

"It's amazing to have finished at the IHP," said Kensky, who was featured in the 2018 summer edition of the *MGH Institute Magazine*. "It's nice to feel like I'm getting back to things that were a part of me and the trajectory I was on before I got hurt."

Research Shows Sustained Improved Arm Function for Stroke Survivors

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

A new study led by MGH Institute researcher Dr. Teresa Kimberley has found that targeted brain stimulation therapy, combined with rigorous rehabilitation therapy, leads to sustained limb movement that is double that of someone who receives the therapy alone.

Dr. Kimberley presented her one-year data findings at the International Stroke Conference in February. Calling it the "durability of effect," she says it demonstrates that connecting a brain stimulation device to the vagus nerve, and pairing it with rehabilitation therapy, can improve movement, function, and quality of life.

"We saw the benefit of this pairing after 90 days, which was exciting," said Kimberley. "The question was—could it be maintained over a year? The answer is yes. This is a watershed moment for rehabilitation science.

"These long-term, pivotal results enhance our long-term results from an earlier pilot study where we showed that patients continue to improve or maintain their gains up to three years after starting vagus nerve stimulation (VNS) therapy paired with rehabilitation. As a clinician, it is surprising to see someone with chronic stroke—stroke that in many ways is a progressive and chronic disease—continue to improve and not show a decline.

"This is quite impressive in the rehabilitation world because most studies don't follow people for a year—they might do three or six months," said Kimberley. "And typically, improvements generally decrease. So, maintaining an improvement for up to a year is quite a notable impact for people with stroke."

Kimberley's team compared results using a control group that received a sham or fake stimulation and a group that got the real stimulation. Over the course of six weeks, the participants with the real device implanted received "nerve zaps" three times per week, stimulating the vagus nerve; combined with the rehabilitation therapy, it helped the brain create or strengthen new neural pathways like building a bridge to bypass a damaged road.



Brain Recovery Lab Director Dr. Teresa Kimberley (r) and lab postdoc Isha Vora, OT, PhD (l), work with stroke survivor Julie Hahnke, who participated in the VNS-REHAB trial that led to research proving the effectiveness of nerve stimulation with rehabilitation.

Following that, the sham group crossed over and underwent the same six weeks of intense physical therapy with real stimulation as the other group. Both groups were sent home for a year of in-home exercise that was combined with daily stimuli to the vagus nerve. When at home, the implant, inserted just under the skin in the upper chest area, is activated when a magnet is swiped over the area, sending a "nerve zap" to the brain while the person does their exercises.

Kimberley, director of the Institute's Brain Recovery Lab, began working on pairing vagus nerve stimulation with physical therapy a decade ago and helped develop the rehabilitation protocol the FDA says was necessary to pair with the Vivistim Paired VNS during rehabilitation therapy to improve upper extremity motor function.

Thanks to the collaborative efforts of Mass General Brigham's research and clinical institution, the first patient on the East Coast had the device implanted at Massachusetts General Hospital, then underwent rehabilitation therapy at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital.

Kimberly says her latest research should set the stage for further developments in stroke recovery.

"It opens the door wider now for this to be explored and provide a more comprehensive boost to therapy for people with stroke," she said. "It has the potential to address all of their impairments."

Using Artificial Intelligence to Decide Which Research Is Worthy of Funding

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

Artificial intelligence (AI) is pervasive in society. We use it for navigation, personal assistants, shopping, health care, transportation—you name it, and AI is seeping into our everyday lives.

You can now add one more avenue—the research funding world. Can artificial intelligence identify funding possibilities that will have the most societal impact, while taking human bias out of the decision-making?

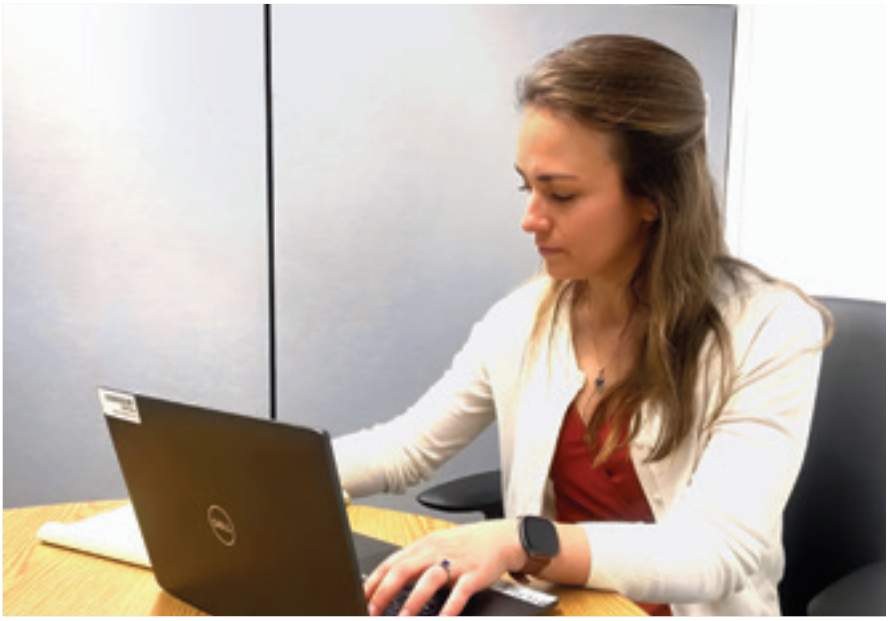
Nicole Danaher-Garcia, PhD, hopes so. She's an assistant professor of Healthcare Data Analytics in the School of Healthcare Leadership at MGH Institute of Health Professions and is on the research team that has just published a paper in the prestigious *Scientific Reports* on this very topic. Shuhan He, MD, and director of the IHP's Healthcare Data Analytics program, is also an author in this endeavor.

In the paper, "Impact of Medical Technologies May Be Predicted Using Constructed Graph Bibliometrics," the authors write about the growing concern about the potential misuse and abuse of bibliometric measures, and how researchers may engage in self-citation, "which artificially inflates their citation counts, or they may publish multiple papers on the same topic to boost their h-index [influence score]."

Why Research Is Funded This Way

Danaher-Garcia says it's an extraordinary challenge in deciding which research is deserving of funding, and how much.

"How do you objectively assess research?" she asks rhetorically. "How do you compare research in different realms of the same field or in different fields and compare it without having some external measure to tell you how well it's doing in the broader scientific research world?"



Assistant Professor of Healthcare Data Analytics Nicole Danaher-Garcia is on the team that's published a paper calling for artificial intelligence to identify research grant proposals that will have the most societal impact, while taking human bias out of the decision-making.

"I think the problem is that people know that decision-makers are doing their best, but they know the way that they're going about it," she added. "So scientists will game the system by doing these little tricks and making their own work look better because they're competing with so many other potential projects."

That's where using AI to help decide the funding of future grants comes in.

Over the course of two years, the team used AI to analyze the metadata of almost 1.5 million publications from 40 high-impact journals from 1980–2020; the subject, journal, authors, and influence of the authors were all factored in by network analysis.

"Network analysis is a way to get around the issue of independence in data," said Danaher-Garcia, who noted that this approach can determine how much breadth there is to one's research. "People will cite themselves, or a lab will cite its own research. And if it's a human being looking, you might just see different first authors and think, 'OK, those are different projects.' But with AI, you can more objectively look at where the citations are coming from. Network analysis allows you to consider more sides of the story."

The authors found AI could, according to the paper, "demonstrate the impact of the network framework in predicting high-impact publications" and that the "models have a high level of accuracy in distinguishing between high-impact and low-impact publications."

The hope is that this approach leads to more innovation and quicker funding decisions, and that it gives more researchers a greater chance because they'll be getting more attention and more money.

Cancer Rehabilitative Therapy Could Be Just a Phone Call Away

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

Breast cancer treatment not only can create impairments, like strength loss, pain, or swelling, but can cause significant disruptions to one's daily routines and activities. For a third of breast cancer survivors, it's a struggle to get back into the routine of work, family life, and socialization.

Researcher Kathy Lyons is hoping to help change that.

She is lead author on a paper, published in *JAMA Network Open*, that asks the question: Can telephone-based rehabilitation help breast cancer survivors get back to doing the things they love?

In a word, yes.

According to the study, "Telephone-Based Rehabilitation Intervention to Optimize Activity Participation After Breast Cancer," this approach "resulted in significantly greater improvements in self-selected activity participation."

"When breast cancer treatment ends, society thinks, 'The worst is over. You're okay,'" said Lyons, a professor of occupational therapy at the MGH Institute of Health Professions and director of its Cancer Rehabilitation (CaRe) Lab. "And then women need to pick up their lives and get up to speed with work, and parenting, their social and leisure activities, and taking care of their homes after an aggressive and disruptive treatment. Many struggle with this in silence."

Lyons and her research team, which includes Stephen Wechsler, post-doctoral research fellow at the time of the study, and colleague Colleen Muse in the CaRe Lab, focused on a psychosocial rehabilitative approach to help women get back to their preferred life and goals as soon as possible.



Researcher Kathy Lyons is lead author on research published in *JAMA Network Open* that demonstrates telephone-based coaching rehabilitation enhances participation in valued activities among breast cancer survivors.

Over the course of four and a half months during the pandemic, nearly 300 breast cancer survivors were called by licensed occupational therapists—referred to as "coaches"—experts who could help with goal setting and encouragement while providing an understanding and supportive ear.

"We taught them strategies about activity adaptation, and environmental modification, and we worked with them to set goals each week," said Lyons.

During 45-minute sessions each week, the coaches would help participants identify and set goals that would get them more engaged in activities that were meaningful to them and closer to their personal long-term recovery goals.

The key to success was the care and compassion demonstrated on the phone to each of the 284 participants.

"The rapport was high between the coaches and the women," said Lyons. "People told us, 'Thank you for following up with me. It's been great to talk to you' and 'It was really good just to hear that I'm not alone."

The rehabilitation intervention was compared to a control condition where the coaches provided education regarding cancer survivorship and symptom management. While both groups made clinically meaningful improvement in quality of life and social participation, the rehabilitation intervention outperformed the control condition on helping increase performance and satisfaction with individually-selected valued activities.

As for the contribution for the field, Lyons said this study demonstrates the value of not focusing solely on how the body recovers from cancer. There's the psychosocial aspect that needs attention too.

"Our approach of being top down and focusing on meaningful activities is important to people. They like it, and it gets them doing their valued activities more comfortably and more often. That's a really important part of occupational therapy—trying to help people get their lives back, as opposed to just fixing impairments," said Lyons.

A Bridge to a Better Life for Heart Failure Patients

BY JOHN SHAW

Traditionally, patients with end-stage heart failure would work with an occupational therapist only after it was determined they would get a pump, called a left ventricular assist device (LVAD), that would act as a short-term bridge while they waited for the possibility of having a life-saving heart transplant, or as a longer-term permanent way to extend their lives.

But a team at Massachusetts General Hospital, including Jessica Asiello, an assistant professor of occupational therapy at the MGH Institute, saw things differently. They thought that these end-stage heart failure patients could have far better outcomes if OTs were involved during pre-operative evaluations, when interprofessional teams that included physicians and nurses were determining whether or not a patient was a candidate to receive the device. Pre-operative occupational therapy could also allow for earlier planning to support patients' abilities to return to their life roles and routines with an LVAD.

"Everyday living with the LVAD is complex, particularly for people with physical or cognitive impairments or limited social supports," said Dr. Asiello, noting that the pumps require constant attention because they must operate 24/7 to keep blood flowing through the body. "Being part of those conversations really early in the process, we felt we could identify family members or people in the community to help them if needed, or look at possible adaptations to the device or individual strategies to help them be more independent."

Working with Christina Kelley, occupational therapy clinical specialist for Mass General's Cardiac, Oncology, Transplant and Medicine Services,



Assistant Professor Jessica Asiello (center) with several co-authors of their paper (l-r): Class of 2023 OTD students Kellie Cannone and Lauren McInnis, Associate Professor John Wong, and MGH occupational therapist Christina Kelley.

Asiello and a team of IHP occupational therapy students began looking at the results of more than 200 pre-operative OT consultations with LVAD candidates. Over the past five years, with funding from a School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences faculty research grant, 10 OT clinicians at MGH—which include several IHP graduates, nine students, and other IHP faculty—determined that including OTs at the start made a big difference.

Kelley said she now sits in on weekly rounds with the LVAD team, where she is an integral part of the conversation of determining patient care.

The paper that presented the results, "Addressing the Functional Needs of Left Ventricular Assist Device Candidates: Development and Feasibility of an Occupational Therapy Pre-Operative Evaluation," was published in the journal *Heart & Lung*. Asiello's co-authors included Institute associate professor Dr. John Wong and Kelley. Other authors were 2020 graduate Alyssa Taubert and 2021 graduate Nicole "Nikki" Lam (both of whom now work at MGH), and 2023 graduates Kellie Cannone and Lauren McInnis.

Asiello, who also received the Podium Presentation Award for Research at the American Association of Heart Failure Nurses annual meeting for "Occupational Therapy Pre-Operative Evaluation of Left Ventricular Assist Device (LVAD) Candidates: A New Standard of Care to Focus on Function," believes their results can have a far wider impact than just at Mass General, based on having heard from OTs and LVAD coordinators at several other hospitals since the article was published that they plan to use this evidence to involve occupational therapy in LVAD patients' pre-operative care.

"The results showed that it is feasible to integrate a comprehensive functional assessment into routine care because these patients have complex multifactorial needs," said Asiello. "We hope that this will influence practice across the country," she said.



Gifts of Giving Back

Alumni are staying engaged with the MGH Institute and benefiting the community in numerous ways

BY ALYSSA HAYWOODE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When Mollie Kam moved from Boston to the Washington, D.C. area, becoming a mentor kept her in touch with the IHP. Kam graduated from the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program in 2020. She worked at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, and last year she moved to the nation's capital, where she works for Set Physical Therapy.

"I'm passionate about advocating for the PT profession and about helping the next group of people who are coming through the educational system," Kam says.

"Mentoring felt like a great opportunity to stay involved and offer advice on changes I've recently gone through. I had just found a job, moved to a new place, and gotten a new license in a new state, all things that I could share to help students prepare to be new graduates.

"It's a period of uncertainty when people wonder if they are really prepared and what their experience will be when they don't have someone supervising them."

Kam's mentee was Clarence Lee, a 2024 DPT graduate, who, like Kam, also left the Boston area. In his case, he moved with his then-fiancée, now wife, to Philadelphia, a new city where he'll start a new job.

To spark conversations between mentors and mentees, the DPT program provides a list of topics that led to useful conversations between Kam and Lee. They talked about Lee's final clinical rotation and about preparing for the board exam, finding and interviewing for jobs, and the most useful continuing education opportunities.

The relationship was useful for Lee, who is a career-changer. He had graduated from Brandeis University with a degree in economics and went to Washington, D.C., to work in government.

"I was working for great organizations, but I always felt that I was helping the helpers instead of getting directly involved with people," he recalls. To do that, he decided to become a physical therapist. He had benefited from physical therapy himself, and he was impressed by the other career-changers he met when he was looking into enrolling at the IHP.

Having a mentor, Lee says, has been a way to build on the relationships he already had with his instructors.

"Mollie has been very involved and proactive. I was able to bounce ideas off her, and it was great to have someone who was so clearly invested in my future and my well-being help guide me along."

Key players

The MGH Institute's dynamic community of alumni is one of its greatest treasures. With over 11,000 graduates, Institute alumni are integral partners in helping the Institute achieve its mission and vision. From the newest graduates to the most seasoned professionals, alumni give back in a variety of ways. More than 200 have served as mentors since 2020, and hundreds have served as clinical educators. Some have donated to ensure the Institute continues to meet the needs of the current students, while others have returned to give advice as guest speakers in classes and on panels. Their commitment not only enriches the student experience and helps the Institute achieve its goals, but it also aids alumni in developing skills that support their career aspirations.



Mollie Kam uses what she learned to help patients and students.

"It's a win-win when a mutually beneficial relationship can be forged between alumni and the Institute," says Katie Mulcahy, director of alumni relations, "because it showcases how, when members of a community support each other, the whole community succeeds."

Another layer of support

In 2019, four students in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders Master's in Speech Language Pathology program shared an idea to create an alumni mentorship program for BIPOC students. The proposal led to a collaboration between students, faculty, and the alumni office director designed to address the disproportionally low number of faculty and professionals from diverse backgrounds in the field and the need for more student mentoring programs in CSD. Today, that proposal is the Alumni Mentor Program (AMP), and it is one of the ways that alumni remain engaged with the MGH Institute of Health Professions and give back to the community.

Since it started, the AMP has connected four cohorts of students and alumni. One of the mentors for the first cohort of students was Abby (Po Jung) Lee, who earned a master's degree in speech language pathology (SLP) at the Institute in 2017. Since then, Lee has mentored two more students and gone on to join the Institute's faculty.

As a student, Lee found the Institute had a strong sense of community, one that she has been able to add to as a mentor.

"One of the biggest lessons I've learned about being a mentor is the importance of being empathetic and listening," Lee says. "It's also very important to me to support students who identify as BIPOC because we're underrepresented in our field."

Another lesson Lee shares with her mentees is taking time to reflect on difficult professional experiences such as microaggressions.

"I might draw from my own personal experiences," Lee says, "or I might ask them to reflect on their emotions and share strategies on how to navigate those emotions prior to handling conflicts. My advice is always: If you're not in a state where you can emotionally handle something, set it aside and work on managing your own emotions first."

One of Lee's mentees was Joseph-Jude Deauna. He came to the Institute with a performing arts background, and he was looking for ways to combine his passion for acting with his desire to care for others. What he learned from Lee was that speech pathologists can carve out exceptionally unique paths for themselves.

"Abby has had such a unique career; she has helped children, adults, and she has such varied interests," Deauna says. "And it was very empowering to see her doing that, and seeing that we don't have to limit ourselves, that there are ways to weave our interest and patients' interests into the things that we do."

In 2022, Deauna graduated with a master's in speech language pathology and now works at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital in Cambridge. And he has, in turn, become a mentor.

"One thing that really struck me as I entered the CSD profession was that the profession is more than 90% women and more than 90% white," says Deauna, who is Filipino and comes from a family with a low income. "I really wanted to invest myself in the mentor program because this is a way of helping the IHP say, 'We know there are not that many SLPs of color, so why don't we try to create a pipeline so that people who are already in the field can lay the groundwork to welcome others.'"

One of Deauna's mentees is Lauren Jiang, a current student in the SLP master's degree program. What appealed to Jiang about signing up for a mentor was the opportunity to be matched with someone who stood on common cultural and professional ground.

"In all the clinical settings that I've been in so far, I have been the only Asian SLP there and the only Asian provider," Jiang says. "Before talking about this experience with my mentor and talking about it in the interprofessional Impact Program, I didn't have the words to describe how this felt. And I didn't realize that what I was feeling wasn't just because I was a student, but it was because I was a student of color."

Jiang says one of the best conversations she has had with Deauna was about how to respond when a patient rejected her as a care provider.

> **"It was very empowering … seeing that we don't have to limit ourselves, that there are ways to weave our interest and patients' interests into the things that we do."**
>
> *– JOSEPH-JUDE DEAUNA, SLP*
> *SPAULDING REHABILITATION HOSPITAL*

"We ran through a mock scenario of what I could say," recounts Jiang. "We talked about things that happened to me and what I did well, what I could have done differently, and how to move forward. He also told me stories about what he has encountered. That was one of the most helpful, realistic conversations."

Once she's working, Jiang sees herself becoming a mentor and sharing what she has learned, from setting boundaries to "knowing that you as a person are worthy of respect."



Anna Cardoni is able to share what she knows about cardiac surgery with students.

Providing a clinical education

Mentoring is one way to help students learn important lessons; teaching is another.

"I'm still learning every day from my supervisor and colleagues," Anna Cardoni says, "so working with IHP students was a natural thing to do."

Cardoni, who earned her master's in physician assistant studies in 2018, works in cardiac surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital, and is a clinical educator for IHP students.

"Everyone in this profession and everyone at the hospital has had a teacher," says Cardoni. "So I enjoy being able to give back and have a positive influence on students."

Cardoni has shepherded students through operating rooms, teaching them about cardiac surgery and sharing everything she knows about working with patients, from communicating effectively to helping students understand that they are seeing patients on one of the hardest days of their lives.

"I want students to learn everything they can, then choose a job they truly enjoy because that will make them better clinicians who can really help patients."

One of the best parts of being a clinical instructor, Cardoni says, is seeing her students eventually become her colleagues.

"We're in the process of orienting someone right now, which is so great. It's so rewarding to see them develop as a student, take time off for their exams, and then come back and develop into a clinical provider."

Erin Foley, a 2018 graduate of the IHP's Doctor of Occupational Therapy program and a clinical educator, loves creating opportunities for IHP students.

"Fieldwork was the most valuable thing I did as a student," Foley says. She's currently an occupational therapist at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital. "I had incredible clinical instructors who shaped my thinking and my approach to treating patients, and those experiences still come back to me now, six years into my career.

"So I love working with current students, being able to give back by sharing what I learned as a student and what I'm learning as a clinician."

School, Foley says, can be theoretical, but it's clinical fieldwork that connects what students learn to patients' lives. So, she teaches students the clinical reasoning and occupational therapy skills they'll need as well as the "soft skills" of "how to have a difficult conversation and how to approach a patient who may be struggling."

She also teaches students that occupational therapy is a holistic, creative, evolving field, and that the best way to succeed is to become a lifelong learner. Ultimately, Foley says, clinical education is an investment in the future.

"It's great to see how excited students are, and to help them understand how exciting it can be to join the profession and carry it forward."

New career, same desire to help

Sometimes alumni support can help many students. That's the case with Scott Olszewski, a 1998 master's in nursing graduate, who is a loyal donor along with his wife, Elizabeth.

"The reason the IHP is important is because I wouldn't be where I am in the biotech and pharmaceutical industry without the background knowledge of having been a nurse practitioner in hematology oncology," Olszewski says.

After the IHP, Olszewski worked at Massachusetts General Hospital with bone marrow transplant patients. It was rewarding and emotionally demanding work that left a deep impression. Now as a senior regional director for the hematology field medical team at the pharmaceutical company BeiGene, Olszewski looks to hire people who have patient care experience.

Although Olszewski was a student back when the IHP was in a downtown Boston office building on Merrimack Street, he



Scott Olszewski is supporting students through donations to the Institute.

points with pride to how much the Charlestown campus has grown and how rich campus resources are.

"I'm here to support that campus however I can," he says. "I'm thrilled to support nursing students. And I'm thrilled to support the mission."

It's a feeling that other alumni share. The IHP has offered them opportunities—and friendships and colleagues—that they want to offer the students who follow them.

Reports from the field

For Abby Finer, who earned her master's degree in genetic counseling in 2021, giving back to the IHP has meant having students do rotations with her and giving classroom lectures to help students in her program understand how sweeping their careers can be.

Finer came to genetic counseling after studying philosophy in college. In both fields, she says, the underlying question is the same: What does it mean to be human? This broad thinking led to her first job, far beyond the familiar boundaries of her field.

Finer worked in the pathology department at Massachusetts General Hospital, where she helped build and run a provider-facing consultation service within the molecular lab where researchers study the genetics of tumors. This meant working with genes she'd never encountered before and determining what was most relevant about their variations.

"There's so much you can do with a genetic counseling degree. In my new role, I work as a variant scientist."

That new job is at Tempus AI, a genetic testing company that brings technology and artificial intelligence to the work of cancer care.

"Tumor DNA is really the wild, wild west," Finer says, "and there's not a lot of training on it in genetic counseling graduate programs, which is why I think it's so important to share this emerging part of the field with students."

Finer also hopes students will become advocates for their profession, raising awareness about what genetics counselors do and how much they have to offer.

Another IHP alumni who is giving back to the IHP and working hard to broaden the boundaries of health care is Kai Camara, who earned a master's degree in nursing in 2022 and became a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner. Then in 2024, they earned a nursing doctoral degree.

"There's something about being at the IHP that feels like more than being at a school for me. When I first started there, I was nervous. I didn't know anybody," Camara recalls. "I made friends with people. We stuck together, and we helped each other through the program. I got to know my teachers on a first-name basis in a lot of cases, and I formed professional relationships with them as my education continued.

"It was one of the first educational spaces I had been in where I sort of showed up authentically as my whole self, and that whole self was welcomed by people."

Today, Camara works at Transhealth, a nonprofit organization in western Massachusetts that provides gender-affirming health care.

Camara has given back to the IHP in multiple ways. They have been a guest lecturer in IHP classes, and along with IHP Professor Kevari Roy, Camara has presented a faculty development seminar on creating gender-affirming educational spaces. Camara is also a preceptor for two IHP interns. And in the fall, they will participate in one of the IHP's mental health simulation labs.

One project that Camara created and has shared at the IHP is Cases Without Faces.

"I presented this to the faculty, and I said, 'What if instead of saying we have a 27-year-old white male with these symptoms, we don't give students demographic information?' Then we can talk about how they picture patients and how that will be different from person to person depending on their own preconceived notions and subconscious expectations."

Giving back, Camara says, also means honoring the IHP community.

"The IHP isn't just a school that I went to. It's a place where my friends are. It's a place where my colleagues are. And I like the idea of creating that space for other people who are coming after me." ■

Alum Donates $25,000 to Create Scholarship for Physical Therapy Students

George J. Davies, DPT '04, "paying it forward"; funds for students with financial need or exceptional ability

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

George J. Davies has done just about anything you'd want to do as a physical therapist: worked at multiple Olympic and Paralympic Games (1980, 2002, 2008, 2012), is widely published in peer-reviewed journals, has written several books, has a successful clinical practice, has been a tenured professor everywhere he's taught, presents at conferences around the world, is internationally known in physical therapy circles, was the original co-founder and co-editor of *The Journal of Orthopaedic and Sports Physical Therapy*, original co-founder and associate editor of *Sports Health*, and he is still teaching physical therapy after 50 years.

Now Davies, an MGH Institute alum, wants to do something else: give back to the IHP.

The Dr. George J. Davies PT Scholarship is an endowed scholarship fueled by a $25,000 gift from the DPT '04 alum. It will support a student in the Physical Therapy program who demonstrates financial need and/or exceptional abilities and contributions to the PT profession. Davies' $25,000 donation will be matched by the Kay Bander matching program to create a $50,000 endowment.

"The original intent was to help people that had financial need," said Davies. "But I tweaked the criteria and added the exceptional abilities piece because if a student is coming in with outstanding credentials, and doing research projects that might make a significant difference to the profession, it's valuable to try to support those people, as much as it is to help those with financial needs."



George J. Davies, an IHP alum whose career has included working Olympic and Paralympic Games, book writing, teaching, and clinical practice, has donated $25,000 to create a scholarship for students in the physical therapy program.

Davies knows what having financial needs is all about because he, too, struggled for a few years while attending Columbia University for his physical therapy degree and trying to raise a family. A Marine Corps veteran, Davies used the G.I. Bill, loans, savings, and the kindness of family to get himself, his wife, and two young children through some lean years.

"With this scholarship, I'm just paying it forward and trying to give back to the universities or the schools that have helped me achieve my successes," said Davies.

Davies started his career as a college athletic trainer, but after realizing teaching and games at night didn't leave a lot of time for his family, he chose physical therapy. Davies earned his master's degree and then began a 30-year teaching career at the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse.

After his wife of 32 years died of cancer, Davies moved to Savannah, GA, where he taught physical therapy at Armstrong State College (now Georgia Southern University) for 20 years. Now, he's beginning another chapter—professor at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley—starting in January.

"Since I started as a student athletic trainer in 1965, I have been involved in sports medicine for almost 60 years," said a proud Davies. "I still I feel that I'm near the top of my game. And I'm still doing clinical practice, which is the most important part, because it keeps my clinical skills sharp, and that's critical when it comes to teaching. And it is still *fun* after 60 years!

"I hope the scholarship I'm starting at the MGH Institute can lead to a similar career—one of happiness, accomplishment, and satisfaction."

> **"With this scholarship, I'm just paying it forward and trying to give back to the universities or the schools that have helped me achieve my successes."**
>
> *– GEORGE J. DAVIES*

Going for the Gold: At the Olympics with MGH Institute Alumna Deirdre McLoughlin

The USRowing physical therapist says working the Olympic Games "never gets old"; is doing all she can to ensure all rowers reach the starting line healthy

BY SOPHIE HAUCK AND SEAN HENNESSEY



Deirdre McLoughlin, DPT '09 (second from right) with part of the USRowing support team and the Men's Eight Olympic team that won the bronze medal at the Olympic Games in Paris.

Towering above the sprawling gray rooftops in Paris, the Eiffel Tower was in full view from the Olympic Village, where MGH Institute alumna Deirdre McLoughlin would be living for the next 17 days. But it's the Olympic rings hanging on the Eiffel Tower's south side that stand out, serving as a vivid symbol of the mission McLoughlin was part of—to help Team USA's men's and women's rowing teams bring home the gold.

"It's always a moving experience to enter the athletes' village on the first day—even at my third Games!" said McLoughlin. "Being able to walk around off campus as opposed to the absolute lockdown we were all in at Tokyo feels especially delightful."

McLoughlin, DPT '09, was a team physical therapist at the 2020 Games in Tokyo that were delayed to 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and before then, she was at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Earlier this summer, the 12-year veteran of the USRowing sports medicine staff was with the team for her third Olympics—a privilege and responsibility she's never taken lightly.

"I never started my practice thinking I would end up at the Olympics," said McLoughlin. "I could have a big practice with 20 employees, but what I feel really satisfied about is knowing that these athletes would trust me to work on them the night before the Olympic final. They trust putting all they have worked for into my hands."

McLoughlin helped treat 42 men's and women's rowers who competed in 12 different races and says the real "measure of success" is the knowledge that every athlete is healthy enough to compete.

"Obviously, we want them to win medals—that's their job. My job is to make sure everyone is at full strength, full capacity, and can get to the starting line," she said.

The starting line at the Vaires-sur-Marne Nautical Stadium, where the Olympic rowing competition took place, is a long way from being a walk-on rower at Boston University, where McLoughlin competed for four years.

"My rowing career was not as great as my PT career," said McLoughlin with a chuckle. "We won the Head of the Charles one year—that was a big moment for us. We were in the Open 8 with all the national teams and everything. Two national teams beat us, but we were the first collegiate team. That was my senior year, and that was my biggest excitement because the Head of the Charles is just the best race ever, second to the Olympics."

After volunteering to help coach the BU rowing team as she pursued her master's degree in physical therapy, McLoughlin worked at the Deaconess Hospital (now Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center) in Boston, then launched her own physical therapy business, Resolute Rehab, in 2006. Not long after that, she began the doctorate in Physical Therapy program at the MGH Institute, then worked with the U.S. National Rowing team and at the NCAA championships with the University of California Berkeley women's rowing team (a position she has held since 2004).

Having worked at dozens of high-stakes regattas, rowers sometimes turn to McLoughlin for moral support, seeking more than physical therapy when they approach her treatment table.

"They can get on the table and either use that time to be really quiet, or they

can relax, or they can talk about things," noted McLoughlin. "It's a real privilege and an honor to be on the inside and try to do whatever it is the athlete needs to perform their best."

As she helped her athletes stay fine-tuned and loose, McLoughlin shakes her head in amazement at where she is, while being thankful for everyone who helped along the way. It took a village, an Olympic one at that.

"I just feel a real sense of gratitude towards everyone that's helped me get here, whether it's my initial physical therapy school, Boston University, or the MGH Institute where I got my doctorate," said McLoughlin fondly. "It's my parents, my wife, and two grown kids who put up with my traveling. It's everyone who supported me to do this part of my job to help these athletes. I'm just grateful to be here." ■



McLoughlin poses with USRowing gold medalist Justin Best from the U.S. Men's Four.

Listening to Alumni

BY LISA MCEVOY



To better serve alumni, the MGH Institute's Office of Alumni Relations and the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness collaborated on a survey to better understand alumni attitudes, preferences, and needs. According to responses from 15% of the contactable alumni, the best aspects of being a graduate of the Institute are the knowledge, skills, and experiences they gained during their education; the connections and friendships they have with other alumni; and the prestige that comes from being a graduate of a highly regarded institution.

One alum shared, "I loved my time at the IHP and feel the education and practical experience I received prepared me well for my first job and beyond. I am also so grateful for the friendships I developed while I was a student at the IHP." This is one of the many comments that showcase why 83% of respondents are willing to recommend their program to others, which could benefit a prospective student through the Pay It Forward program (see page 33).

Alumni indicated that they want to stay connected to the IHP as they navigate their own professional journey. Attending continuing education events that enable them to obtain credit, mentoring current students, learning from former faculty or healthcare experts at alumni events, and attending social and professional networking events in their geographic area as well as during receptions at national conferences are the top ways alumni want to stay connected.

An important part of the survey process is achieving a statistically significant result and then incorporating the results into future programming. "The response rate is in line with national levels for this type of survey," shared Katie Mulcahy, MEd, director of alumni relations. "It was affirming to see that alumni will show up when asked and will openly share their hopes, pain points, and needs for the future with us.

"It is clear the alumni community wants to continue learning and growing professionally, to share their expertise with students, and connect with each other," said Mulcahy. "I want alumni to know that they are part of the IHP community for life. We heard their desires and we will be leaning in on giving them ways they can continue to learn and grown professionally, sharing their expertise with students, and connecting with each other."

Class Notes

Class Notes are compiled through a variety of sources, including information sent in by alumni, hospital publications within Mass General Brigham and beyond, and public information by various organizations.

Communication Sciences and Disorders

Kristin Branco, MS-SLP '02, was inducted into the East Providence Local Advisory Committee (EPLAC) Wall of Fame for her long-standing support of special needs students/programs in the district during the 16th annual Special Needs Recognition Program in May 2024.

Clinical Investigation

Jennifer Ellis Cahill, MS-CI '07, is quoted in the Mass General Brigham article, "The Most Challenging Frontier: How Researchers Across Mass General Brigham Are Confronting Brain Cancer." Her research focuses on patient-reported outcomes like symptom experience and other aspects of quality of life during early-phase clinical trials for new brain tumor therapeutics.

Dietetics

Jill Castle, MS-DI '95, pediatric nutritionist, has published *Kids Thrive at Every Size.* The book provides a holistic, whole-child approach to health—focusing on physical and emotional wellness—and empowers parents to create a positive culture of health and self-esteem in their kids, no matter their size.

Health Professions Education

Stephanie Mann, MS-HPEd '19, was named senior associate dean for academic affairs at the Methodist University Cape Fear Valley Health School of Medicine, which is a new partnership between Methodist University and Cape Fear Valley Health. The school will be housed at Cape Valley Health. Dr. Mann will oversee the design, implementation, and continuous improvement of the four-year School of Medicine curriculum.

Nursing

Jennifer Canesi, MS-NU '09, owner of Boston Medical Aesthetics, shares her expertise on Botox for the younger generation in the NBC2 article, "Preventative Botox Is Being Done by People in Their 20s, but Is It Needed?" Canesi believes that Botox can be a way to get ahead of those early signs of aging before they develop.

Joseph Furtdao, MS-NU '93, CAS-NU '03 passed away on April 20, 2024 after a brief illness. Joe will be remembered for his sharp wit, his unwavering care, and his advocacy and support for his patients and their families.

Tiffany Vassell, RN, BSN '14, MS-NU/s, received the Black Maternal Health Honoree Award from the National Black Maternal Health Task Force of the Black Nurses Association for her book with co-author and fellow RN Althea Robertson, *Preparation for a Hospital Birth*.

Ellen Taylor, MS-NU '98, passed away on February 18, 2024, from pancreatic cancer. While becoming a nurse practitioner was a second career for Ellen, she was always working to support the needs of others. Ellen was a special needs teacher first and then a disabilities coordinator for the city of Somerville, MA. In her nurse practitioner role, which spanned more than twenty years, Ellen cared for geriatric psychiatry patients.

Occupational Therapy

Maggie Flynn Greelish, OTD '20, and her colleague, Jane Musgrave, will give the keynote address at AOTA's Mental Health Specialty Conference in October 2024.

Virginia "Ginny" Sullivan, OTD '20 and her colleague, Marley Kalata, both now of Cleveland Clinic, will be the keynote address at the AOTA's Adult Rehabilitation Specialty Conference this September in Cleveland.

Kristen Keech, PP-OTD '22, was awarded a prestigious NBCOT Impact Award, which recognizes OTPs who demonstrate exceptional professional commitment to improve their clients' overall life satisfaction and valued occupations. Additionally, Keech's Innovation Project manuscript with mentor support from Jessica Asiello was just accepted to the journal *Brain Injury.*

Nicole Bickhart's, PP-OTD '24, Innovation Project poster was accepted to the AOTA Education Summit. The conference is in October 2024. Additionally, ASHT has extended a special invitation to highlight her poster in a "spotlight" session live in St. Louis this September.

Whitney McWherter Cranna's, PP-OTD '22, article, "Building Disability Inclusive Panel Discussions: Supporting Interdisciplinary Conference Spaces," which was written with her interprofessional colleagues, was published in *OT Practice* in the July 2024 edition.

Ann Henshaw, PP-OTD '23, represented occupational therapy during an interprofessional panel discussion titled "Bedside Rehabilitation Interventions in Palliative Care" at the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) Annual Interdisciplinary Conference. The conference focused on opportunities and challenges on the front lines.

Alicia Tardiff, PP-OTD '23, along with Sunny Winstead as her mentor, published "The Occupational Therapy Vocational Profile (OTVP): Supporting Transition and Employment Opportunities for Young Adults with Disabilities" in *Journal of Occupational Therapy, Schools, & Early Intervention* in July 2024.

Physical Therapy

Christopher Bise, DPT '10, and **Julie Sherry, DPT '11**, shared their expertise in *The Optimist Daily* article, "5 Ways to Transform Car Rides from Painful to Pleasant." Bise suggested activating your core and moving slowly as you exit the car: "Your core muscles are connected to your spine, and they help stabilize it so it doesn't move back and forth." Sherry focused on keeping yourself moving. She suggested, "Make it a point to do small—but impactful—movements throughout the drive that'll limit stress on your back and keep you from getting fatigued."

Jennifer Fridgen, DPT '05, was a co-author on the *Laryngoscope* journal article, "Injection Medialization in Infants with Vocal Fold Immobility Improves Dysphagia." Initial results suggest that injection medialization is safe and improves early objective swallowing outcomes in children <2 years old with VFI after congenital cardiac surgery.

Andrea Lui, DPT '14, has combined her personal passion for knitting with her professional expertise to create The Knitting PT, an online educational resource and clinical practice focused on helping makers take care of their bodies while crafting.

Kara Mortifoglio, DPT '09, co-owner of Solstice Physiotherapy, shared her professional journey and expertise on pelvic floor therapy on the podcast *Yoga|Birth|Babies Podcast*.

Shawn Pedicini, DPT '14, specialist in orthopedic and sports injuries, shared his expertise on body weight workouts in a *Fitness for Mommies* blog post titled, "Get a Lift from Body Weight Workouts."

Brian Simons, DPT '11, shared his expertise on how to get started with aquatic high intensity interval training if you are a beginner or a regular exerciser in the article, "An Easier Way to Do High Intensity Interval Training," in the *Harvard Health Letter*.

We invite you to submit your news and photos to alumni@mghihp.edu, or at www.mghihp.edu/alumni.

MGH Institute Launches Student Referral Program

Pay It Forward Referral Program geared toward leveraging IHP's greatest ambassadors: students, alumni, and employees

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

For years, the MGH Institute of Health Professions' reputation has generated a healthy "word of mouth" campaign that's led to a steady stream of students eager to enjoy the same quality academic experience as the person they spoke with. Now, the MGH Institute is formalizing things with its recent rollout of the Pay It Forward Referral Program.

President Paula Milone-Nuzzo says referring prospective students to the MGH Institute plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of healthcare and contributes to the expansion and diversification of our community.

"We recognize that our greatest ambassadors are our own faculty, staff, and alumni," said Milone-Nuzzo. "Their firsthand experiences and insights about the IHP are invaluable, and we want to empower them to share their enthusiasm with others who may benefit from our programs and offerings."

Here's how the Pay It Forward Referral Program works: Anyone can refer a student to the IHP, and there is no limit to the number of referrals one can make. If a prospective student hasn't made an inquiry to the IHP within the past two years, he/she can get a $500 tuition award. The award can be put toward any program except for the PhD in Rehab Sciences degree, Nursing Education grant recipients, and non-degree offerings such as online prerequisites.

"There were so many positive parts of the program that I feel like if people are looking to do it somewhere, why not do it at the IHP?" said Colleen Craven, a Class of 2022 Post Professional Doctor of Occupational Therapy (PP-OTD) graduate who recommended two of her colleagues at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.



IHP graduate Colleen Craven (center), an occupational therapist at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, recommended colleagues Casey Hynes (l) and Melissa Williams (r) to the OT program.

> **"Referring prospective students to the MGH Institute plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of health care and contributes to the expansion and diversification of our community."**
>
> *– MGH INSTITUTE PRESIDENT PAULA MILONE-NUZZO*

Craven referred two of her colleagues at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center: Melissa Williams and Casey Hynes.

"Colleen had the confidence and the knowledge behind it to speak up for herself, and advocate for things that work in interdisciplinary communication, knowing how to advocate for ourselves as a profession to other people," recalls Williams.

It's a similar story for Lisa Cohen, a Class of 2023 PP-OTD graduate who was referred to the IHP by her Brigham and Women's Hospital colleague Jessie Franco, who graduated from the same program the year before.

"I would say Jessie's recommendation was pretty significant," said Cohen. "If I didn't have that input, I'm not really sure if I would have done it. Just knowing someone that had gone through it was key."

"I'm glad that it worked out for Lisa," said Franco. "Anytime I hear someone is interested in going further—post-professional—I try and convince them to go to the IHP."

The legion of those referring others to the IHP isn't limited to clinical practice. Just ask Casey Rabideau, who needed to obtain an advanced degree when she took on a faculty role at the University of New Hampshire. That's when she spoke to Haley Matuszek, who had graduated from the IHP in 2022.

"Haley was the proof in the pudding—I saw her success," said Rabideau, who will graduate from the PP-OTD program in 2025. "I could see what she was doing. She was using her degree in academia, which is what I wanted to do."

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Wilcox and Peifer Take Home Alumni Awards

BY SEAN HENNESSEY



Emerging Leader Award recipient Sarah Peifer (r) with President Paula Milone-Nuzzo.



Bette Ann Harris '83 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient Reginald Wilcox (r) with the graduate for whom the award is named.

Commencement Day included two graduates who received prestigious alumni awards. Reginald Wilcox was named the Bette Ann Harris '83 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient, while Sarah Peifer took home the Emerging Leader Award.

The Emerging Leader Alumni Award is for an alumnus who graduated within the past 10 years. For the past seven years, Peifer (MS-NU '16) has distinguished her time at South Shore Health by contributions to psychiatric care, healthcare innovation, and education. She is the lead emergency department psychiatric nurse practitioner and in 2021, implemented the HEADS-ED tool, a mental health and addiction screening tool for children and young people, which significantly reduced pediatric psychiatric boarding times. Earlier this year, Peifer was promoted to director of psychiatric advanced practice clinicians.

The highest form of recognition awarded to a graduate of the Institute, the Bette Ann Harris '83 Distinguished Alumni Award is named in honor of the Institute's first master's degree graduate.

The career of Wilcox (DPT '04, MS-PT '05) is distinguished by contributions to advancing patient care, outstanding leadership skills, and commitment to teaching. A board-certified orthopedic physical therapist at Brigham and Women's Hospital (where he has been since 2001), Wilcox's clinical focus work is on lower extremity sports injuries, shoulder dysfunction, and postoperative shoulder procedures. In 2017, he was named executive director of the hospital's Department of Rehabilitation Services.

"B.A. Harris has been instrumental in shaping my professional journey," said Wilcox. "She was the first professor I met at MGH IHP back in 1999, served as my thesis advisor, and inspired me to consider a move back to an academic medical center nearly 24 years ago—a decision that led me to Brigham and Women's Hospital. Receiving an award named in her honor, 25 years after we first met, is a profound privilege. I was truly humbled and honored to accept this recognition."

IHP Nursing Alum a Leading Voice at Duke University Health System

BY SEAN HENNESSEY

When Terry McDonnell graduated from the MGH Institute with a master's degree in nursing, and then a doctorate a few years after that, she was well on her way to advancement within a new career. But she never imagined the kind of success that would come.

"Nursing opens doors that you really can't even imagine are out there to be opened," said McDonnell.

The doors McDonnell has walked through since earning her master's in 2005 and doctorate in 2013 have been substantial. Today, she is the chief nurse executive and senior vice president for patient care services for the Duke University Health System, a system with 24,000 employees that includes Duke University Hospital, Duke Raleigh Hospital, Duke Regional Hospital, and the Watts College of Nursing. McDonnell is responsible for more than 10,000 of its registered nurses, advanced practice providers, nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, medical assistants, nursing assistants, and surgical technical assistants.

"Every day is an adventure," said McDonnell. "As part of a growing health system, we all wear multiple hats. There's the vertical of nursing and patient care services. But then at the executive level, you also are responsible for the horizontal of participating in strategic thinking and leading the health system with your colleagues to deliver the safest, best quality patient experience you can."

The IHP Difference

With undergraduate degrees from Boston College in English and economics, McDonnell forged a path into a number of careers before settling on nursing. There was the finance job right out of college, followed by her owning a restaurant where she was the pastry chef. McDonnell also ran a Montessori school but after a series of family illnesses, she changed careers and went into nursing. Because Mass General was the family's hospital, the IHP would be McDonnell's graduate school.



Terry McDonnell, who earned master's and doctorate degrees in nursing from the MGH Institute, is now the senior vice president and chief nurse executive for the Duke University Health System.

> **"There's nothing more important in any healthcare system than the stabilization of the workforce—because it's ultimately our people who serve our patients."**
>
> *– TERRY MCDONNELL*

"When I made that decision, I only ever wanted to go to the IHP because I wanted to train at Mass General," recalls McDonnell.

After finishing her initial degree, McDonnell became a nurse practitioner at Mass General and soon began taking on increased leadership roles. McDonnell began to consider what she needed to further round out her leadership training. The IHP's new doctorate program seemed like a logical pursuit.

"I wanted to be an effective leader, and I wanted to have all of the necessary tools to successfully lead and support teams of clinicians," remembers McDonnell. "The people I went to school with were leading incredibly busy hospitals in a complex environment. These were nursing leaders that were coming together and being educated on how to look at issues around finance, leadership operations, and administration."

McDonnell says that experience, along with her IHP education, has provided the tools to face significant issues in the nursing landscape, including the biggest of today—supporting her workforce and retaining employees.

"There's nothing more important in any healthcare system right now than the stabilization of the workforce because it's ultimately our people that serve our patients," said McDonnell.

As McDonnell looks back on her immense success, she points to having the confidence to try new things and to think differently, and that's largely because she possesses the tools to do so.

"But without the confidence and the basic skills, you don't necessarily have that ability," said McDonnell. "The IHP gave me a strong foundation. I remain incredibly grateful for all of the skills and the wisdom and the relationships that have come from the MGH Institute."

LAST WORDS: JANE BALDWIN, ELISSA LADD, AND KAVERI ROY

The Educational Value of International Student Programming

It's safe to say that whenever one travels internationally, our view of ourselves and that of others inevitably changes, and, most frequently, in incredibly positive ways. Of course, there is much to be said about immersing ourselves in the culture and ways of others that may be different; we almost always are able to see the great unity in our diversity.

The same goes for our students. At the MGH Institute, we're fortunate to offer annual international student immersion and service programs that seek to broaden the perspectives that the students have on healthcare delivery. These experiences not only incorporate a primer on healthcare systems in low- to middle-income countries, but also may offer experiences to actively participate in care delivery. As faculty of the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences and the School of Nursing, we supervised immersion experiences this year to India and Guatemala. Without question, we found that our students returned with fresh perspectives and insightful appreciation of both the challenges and the strengths of healthcare delivery in these settings.

The program in India was a bilateral peer mentorship program—the US students and Indian students spent time teaching each other in clinical, classroom, and community settings. This mentorship took the form of sharing applicable clinical knowledge and perspectives on both the strengths and challenges of their respective healthcare systems. In Guatemala, in-service education was provided to further equip local therapists with skills that improve the health of local communities—this in an area with limited monetary, infrastructure, and health literacy resources.

Students who participated in the global health immersion program in India were required to complete weekly reflective journals. They commonly noted the differences in the Indian and US healthcare delivery systems, specifically focusing on differences in available resources and the overall healthcare infrastructure. Because of this, they were able to explore approaches to clinical problems, utilizing clinical reasoning that they may not have practiced in the US. For example, one student noted, while spending time in the emergency department, how impressed he was with the level of diagnostic skill that was employed, and mostly honed by the lack of availability of technological resources. At the same time, the students noted how impressed they were with the extensive use of public health resources, especially in rural communities. Several students remarked on the robust public health infrastructure that had been developed in India, which is based on extensive community-focused programming. In Guatemala, students reflected on each day's events during and after our communal evening meal. Students noted the commitment and dedication of family members that assume total care of their loved ones amidst little to no support or resources from the limited healthcare system. One student remarked: "The ingenuity and grit of many families is amazing."



Doctor of Physical Therapy alums Xavier Brito (l) and Sidney Argueta (center) demonstrate how to use a Hoyer lift to Guatemalan healthcare workers.



Nursing Professor Elissa Ladd is all smiles as she sits atop a camel that would take her for a ride along the beach in Manipal, India.

Overall, our students were able to gain a fresh appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of health systems in low- to middle-income countries. They were also able to gain insight into the growing health disparities worldwide that include new infectious and lifestyle diseases, mental health challenges, and health problems that result from conflict, migration, and climate change. And importantly, they gained perspective on the fact that our world will remain highly connected, and the health of a population is not confined by national borders.

Please email alumni@mghihp.edu if you are interested in sharing your first-person story with the IHP community.

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When you update your employment information, we are better able to connect you to the people and educational content that will move your career forward. In turn, your updated information supports our NECHE reaccreditation process, which is critical to the Institute's success. Let's succeed together!



Pictured: Naseem Chatiwala, DPT '07, MS-PT '04 with a client at her private practice, Rehab Health 360, in Acton, MA.

Scan the QR code or visit:
mghihp.formstack.com/forms/employer_information_form
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New Initiative: Our IHP alumni business directory is going live this fall! We invite you to complete our full form to best promote your business. **mghihp.formstack.com/forms/alumni_business**

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THE IHP TODAY: FACING TOMORROW TOGETHER

Proceeds from this event will allow us to increase scholarship support for deserving students who will become frontline healthcare leaders providing care to our communities. The program will feature inspiring stories from IHP students whose lives have been profoundly impacted by the generosity of our supporters. Their testimonials serve as a poignant reminder of the real-world difference our collective efforts can make. We hope you will support and join us as your presence not only enhances the night's festivities but also helps create lasting, positive change.

We look forward to presenting you with an inspiring and celebratory evening with a curated menu, refreshments, fun entertainment, and a beautiful view of Boston Harbor.

DETAILS

Date and Time
Thursday, September 26, 2024 | 5:00–7:00 p.m.

Location
One Constitution Plaza, Charlestown, MA
Validated parking onsite

Cocktails and Cuisine
Curated menu of signature hors d'oeuvres
provided by East Meets West Catering

More Information
For tickets: mghihp.edu/the-ihp-today

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