

# Savoring Homecoming 2022

The tradition of homecoming, during which we revisit our past selves and reconnect with the presence of those who mean so much to us, has always held a special place in my heart. It is not unlike re-reading a favorite book next to a fireplace on a wintry night — the amber light flickering on the pages of dancing characters, conveying a story that is at once familiar and unfamiliar. Irrespective of the demands of our daily lives, all of us benefit from a homecoming. It is chicken soup for the soul.

On May 14-15, 2022, our department hosted its first Homecoming event, welcoming back alumni spanning six decades of our collective history and four generations of department chairmen. From all over the continental United States, our accomplished alumni returned to share their stories and memories, to commemorate the legacy of our department, and celebrate our emergence from the pandemic. In this issue, we share with you the reflections from and remembrances of this Homecoming event

When the first cases of COVID-19 were reported in Wuhan, China, very few of us realized the extraordinary circumstances and challenges that lay ahead. The ensuing two years of social isolation and tectonic shift in our healthcare landscape has created draconian impositions on many of us. Longing for the presence of those we missed, we are reminded of the seemingly infinite demands that detract from the finite time we have with our colleagues and loved ones. This homecoming event attended by more than 80 participants carried a special meaning in this context.

During the event, we coalesced our three endowed annual lectures. We learned from Dr. Rees Cosgrove, Professor and Director of Functional Epilepsy at Harvard Medical School, about the Oslerian ideals that guide us as physicians, educators, and individuals. We learned from Dr. Roberto Heros, Professor, University of Miami, and Senior Vice-President, Jackson Health System, about the hazards of single-minded Quixotic quests in the context of the historical politics of Central and South America. We learned from Dr. Sepideh Amin-Hanjani, director, Cerebrovascular and Skull Base Surgery, The Warren R. Selman Endowed Chair of Neurological Surgery, and Vice-Chair, Department of Neurological Surgery, University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center, about the Edisonian persistence requisite to shaping the clinical practice of tomorrow. The words of these lectures were spiritually fulfilling, emotionally inspiring, and intellectually exhilarating.

The world, when seen through the ephemeral mist of a rainbow, bears a poetic hue of meaning that extends beyond our everyday life. Through the rainbow of this Homecoming event, we rejoiced in the memories of our formative years and reflected on our legacy. We were greeted with the comfort of familiar voices and graced with the opportunity of learning together, as we did once upon a time. We are reminded of the purposes of our journey and our intended destinations.

Re-reading the history of our department through this Homecoming was a precious moment in time for me. I hope it was for you as well.

Warmly,

Clark

## Inside this issue

- Photo Gallery ..... 2
- State of the Department ..... 3
- Photo Gallery ..... 4
- Titrud Lecture ..... 5
- Chou Chair Appointee ..... 5
- Photo Gallery ..... 6
- Chou Lecture ..... 7
- Photo Gallery ..... 8
- Haines Family Lecture ..... 9
- Molly Hubbard Memorial ..... 10
- Remembering Ed ..... 10
- 2023 Peyton Society Meeting ..... 11
- Homecoming Perspectives ..... 12-13

# HOMECOMING

May 14th-15th, 2022  
Department of Neurosurgery



PGY5 resident Dr. Youseff Hamade (center) enthusiastically greets 2021 graduate Dr. Adam Khan during the Homecoming event. Residency Director Dr. Michael Park enjoys the moment.



Faculty member Dr. Andy Grande (right) reminisces with former Department Chair Dr. Robert (Bob) Maxwell.

## Photo Gallery



*A group of the attendees during our time in the art museum. Of particular note are the four chairmen, both former and current seated in the front row. Dr. Stephen Haines (fourth from left), Dr. Roberto Heros (to the right of Haines), Dr. Robert Maxwell (to the right of Heros), and current chairman Dr. Clark Chen (next to Maxwell)*



*Faculty member Dr. David Darrow (at the dais) talking about the Molly Hubbard Fund during her memorial. Molly, who graduated in 2019, passed away in January 2020.*



*Faculty members Dr. Ann Parr (left) and Dr. Andy Venteicher chat during the Weisman Art Museum tour.*



*A special keepsake from the Homecoming event will be video snippets from various attendees. Here, alumnus Dr. Dennis Wen waits for the camera to start rolling.*



*PGYS resident Dr. Youssef Hamade (left), and new faculty member Dr. Logan Helland.*

# State of the Department

There were so many moments during the Homecoming event that resonated deeply with me. But the moments captured by these photos of my three predecessors bear special meaning. These were the moments during which they reflected on their legacy in this department.

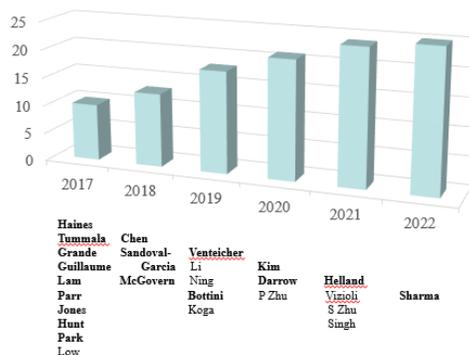


To Drs. Heros (upper left), Haines (upper right), and Maxwell (lower left), and honored alumni guests, I present to you this State of the Department. Everything this department has achieved, we have done so on the foundation that you built. If we can see beyond or go

farther, it is because of your legacy and because of the contributions from those in this audience.

The Department has experienced significant growth during my five-year tenure, expanding from a faculty pool of 10 to a team of 21 talented and dedicated members, with another to join us in 2023 and two more recruitments in planning. (Research faculty are not bolded.)

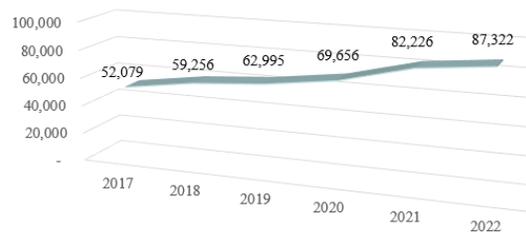
Faculty Expansion 2017-22



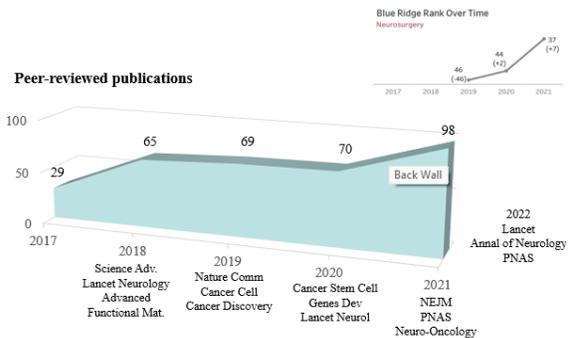
Accompanying this expansion is a burgeoning of clinical services year-over-year, built on innovation, quality of care, and patient service. (See illustration at top right. wRVU is work relative value units.)

We are also witnessing an unprecedented renaissance in research achievements, with landmark studies published in highly regarded journals and clinical studies that impact the standard of care. Accordingly, we have achieved consecutive im-

Department of Neurosurgery, wRVU, 2017-22



provements of our Blue Ridge ranking, a measure of our standing relative to other academic programs and continued growth of federal research funding.



We made discoveries with our community and edified the impact of these discoveries through patient stories. Many of these stories and others were amplified by local and national media, including many “firsts” in Minnesota or in the nation – the first deep brain stimulator placement performed at the Minneapolis Veterans Affairs Medical Center, the first GammaTile brachytherapy treatment for brain cancer, the first neuromodulation clinical trial for intractable back pain, the first experience with Neurophoresis — a filter designed to treat subarachnoid hemorrhage, the first surgical gene therapy for pediatric neuro-degenerative disease, and the first T suite with an intraoperative magnetic resonance scanner.

Notably, these accomplishments were achieved against strong headwinds. COVID-related disruption of healthcare and mounting healthcare costs have magnified financial pressures facing academic medical centers. Neurosurgeons are increasingly asked to shoulder this financial burden despite depletion of support staff and supply chain shortages. This strain is intensified by rising patient expectations about surgical outcomes and aggravated by competition from digital healthcare delivery. On the research front, mounting inflation outpaces federal appropriation in research funding. The impact of this gap is deepened by rapid adoption of costly technologies, such as single cell and spatial genomics.

Despite these headwinds, the State of this Department is strong, and we are ready to embrace disruptive initiatives to face future challenges in a disciplined and coordinated manner. The world is shaped by small groups of like-minded individuals, such as those in this Department. Because of you, I remain firm in my belief that the world that we imagine for our children and grandchildren is within our grasp.

## Photo Gallery



Jana Noonan Photography

All the department chairs were on stage during their interview with faculty member Dr. Ramu Tummala (far right). From the left, Dr. Robert Maxwell, Dr. Roberto Heros, Dr. Stephen Haines, and Dr. Clark Chen.



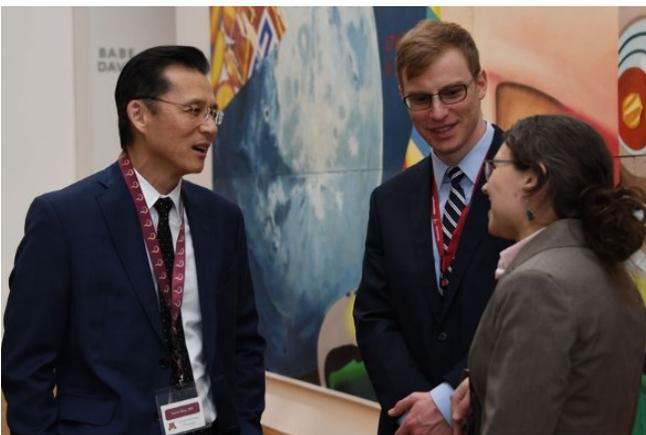
PGY3 resident Dr. Ahmed Elbermawy and his wife Heday Alattar.



2020 graduates, faculty member Dr. David Darrow (left) and Dr. Coridon Quinn (center), reunite with Residency Program Director Dr. Michael Park.



Former Chairman Dr. Robert Maxwell (far right) reminisces with alumnus Dr. Mahmoud Nagib, while alumni Dr. Young Chung (far left) and Dr. Dennis Wen enjoy the moment. They were in the same graduating class in 1992!

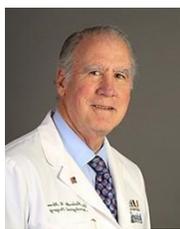


Faculty member Dr. Stephan Kim (left) greets PGY3 resident Dr. Dominic Gessler and his wife Tess.



There were many moments during the Homecoming event like this one. Faculty member Dr. Cornelius Lam shares a laugh with an alumnus.

## Lecturer describes the harsh realities of life in Cuba



The 2022 Titrud Lecture in Neurosurgery was given during the Homecoming event by former Department Chair **Dr. Roberto Heros** about the topic, *Some Thoughts About Latin America and Cuba*. Born in Cuba, Dr. Heros came to the United States when he was 17, the first member of his family to do so. An

uncle in Havana who was a Mayo Clinic-trained neurosurgeon inspired Dr. Heros to follow in his professional footsteps.

After graduating first in his class from the University of Tennessee's Medical School, Dr. Heros completed neurosurgery residency at Massachusetts General Hospital. He ascended through the ranks to Professor at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Heros then moved to the University of Minnesota as Chairman of the Department of Neurosurgery (among other leadership roles). Currently, he is the Co-Chairman of the Department of Neurosurgery at the University of Miami and founding Director of the University of Miami International Health Center.

Dr. Heros believes that there is significant misunderstanding in the United States about what living in a real totalitarian regime like that in today's Cuba means. "They often think that it's just a little to the left politically and there are great social programs and so forth," he said. "Or they say, 'Yes, there's a dictator...many Latin American countries have had dictators — what's new about it?' What's new is that a totalitarian regime is different than anything else people in the United States have experienced. As with fascism and communism, there is no political freedom, no social freedom, no personal freedom. The government tells you where you can work, where your children are educated and what they are taught, and what you can do in your free time. It's a different level of control of the individual, who becomes a very small part of the State. It's hard to understand for



Former Chair Dr. Roberto Heros sitting in what used to be his office.

people who have not lived in such a regime.

"I've had a great life and was very fortunate to have been given the opportunities I had as a refugee here," Dr. Heros continued. "Sometimes, we don't realize how special the U.S.A. is and how there was nowhere else in the world I could have gone and been given the opportunities I have in this country. It was remarkable and I

will be eternally grateful."

During the Homecoming event, Dr. Heros was proud to see what current chair Dr. Clark Chen is doing. "He is increasing the level of academic commitment in the program and the number of papers being published based on the research work being done," he said. "The department has grown significantly in good ways. I had a great time when I was at the U of M. I miss Minnesota. It was emotional for me to come back and see the same offices, the same areas, and some of the same people."

## Following in the footsteps of a special leader

The Shelley N. Chou Endowed Chair in Neurosurgery was established to retain highly talented neurosurgeons in the Department of Neurosurgery. It was awarded during the Homecoming event to **Dr. Daniel Guillaume** (pictured below), Professor and Chief of Pediatric Neurosurgery at the University of Minnesota Masonic Children's Hospital.



"Dr. Guillaume is one of the most highly regarded pediatric neurosurgeons in the country," said Department Head Dr. Chen. "He is a talented researcher, a highly skilled surgeon, a gifted teacher, and a wonderful human being. It is with great satisfaction to confer this Chair to someone so deserving."

Dr. Guillaume recognizes the honor associated with this endowed Chair. "Shelley Chou was such an incredible human being," he said. "Born in China, Dr. Chou overcame significant cultural and language barriers to emerge as a preeminent neurosurgeon and the first Asian neurosurgery department head in a U. S. academic institution. Receiving this honor bearing his name is an incredible inspiration. If his name is associated with mine, I have a responsibility to serve the field and the community the same way he did."

## Photo Gallery



*Alumnus Dr. Tom Bergman (center) is greeted by Department Chair Dr. Clark Chen (right). Department Administrator Larry Gunderson is behind them.*



*Chou Lecturer Dr. Rees Cosgrove (left) reconnects with alumnus Dr. Richard Moser while Haines Family Lecturer Dr. Sepideh Amin-Hanjani enjoys a moment with someone off camera.*



*Faculty member and alumnus Dr. Ramu Tummala (left) connects with alumnus Dr. Adam Hebb at the Weisman Art Gallery. Alumni Dr. Dino Terzic (far left) and Dr. Patrick Graupman (light jacket) are in the background.*



*Enjoying one of the four chairman's responses to a question during the interview with Dr. Ramu Tummala are (from left, going around the table): PGY3 resident Dr. Dominic Gessler, PGY3 resident Dr. Sam Jones, PGY5 resident Dr. Huy Do (masked), PGY1 resident Crina Peterson, and Dr. Gessler's wife, Tess. In the background are faculty members Dr. Gati Singh (far left) and Dr. Logan Helland. Faculty member Dr. Andy Grande is sitting behind Dr. Do.*

## Chou lecturer focused on a medical pioneer who remains highly relevant



The Shelley N. Chou Lecture, held Saturday, May 14, featured G. Rees Cosgrove, MD, FRCS, Director of Epilepsy and Functional Neurosurgery, and Program Director of the Neurosurgery Training Program at Brigham and Women's Hospital, and Harvard Medical School.

The title of Dr. Cosgrove's lecture was, *Oslerian Principles and the Foundations of Neurosurgical Wisdom*.

### Early use of pathology to inform diagnosis

"Sir William Osler fundamentally changed medical education," said Dr. Cosgrove. Born in Canada, he received his MD from McGill University in the mid-1800s. "Dr. Osler created the concept of having medical students come to the bedside to examine patients, taking a detailed history and developing their diagnostic skills," Dr. Cosgrove added. "He was also a pathologist, which gave him a unique understanding of the diseases he was observing. Dr. Osler created the first residency training program at Johns Hopkins based on his diagnostic and teaching skills. His textbook, *The Principle and Practice of Medicine*, was the bible of medicine for decades."

### Osler's principles

Dr. Cosgrove highlighted a few of Dr. Osler's ideas that remain relevant today, including:

1. To care for patients, you must care about them and always strive to do the right thing for them. "Even though we can do many things for our patients, we have to ask ourselves, are they the right things to do," said Dr. Cosgrove. "Would you recommend the same thing for your mother as you're recommending for your patient?"
2. Learn from books and from your predecessors, but you really learn about diseases by seeing how they affect patients. "So much of our education is based upon listening to patients," said Dr. Cosgrove. "Great clinicians constantly learn nuanced information by talking to and examining their patients, both directly and with imaging."
3. Live your professional life in day-tight compartments. "Dr. Osler's accomplishments were based upon doing the day's work to the best of his ability," said Dr. Cosgrove. "Even if it was a bad day, he said, 'Don't let that pour over into your tomorrows. Wake up the next day to a new start; take what you learned yesterday and

apply it to today."

### Inflicting judicious injury

Dr. Cosgrove emphasized that surgery is the most intimate of human interactions. "The patient must trust you and is completely vulnerable to your decisions and actions," he said. "We inflict judicious injury with the goal of helping them. You should never



forget the distinctly human experience you and your patient go through ... impart your diagnostic and therapeutic skills but know that it's much more than that."

### Homecoming perspective

When asked about his reaction to the Homecoming event, Dr. Cosgrove said, "It was an unbelievably enjoyable weekend. I have always recognized the U of M as having a strong neurosurgical and education program, but seeing it firsthand really cemented that impression. Dr. Chen was one of my students and I have the utmost faith in him. The dedication, expertise, and commitment of the department was palpable and it was so special to have three Chairs in attendance who helped build its foundation of excellence. It was a fantastic experience."



Dana Chou discussing her father's legacy during her introduction to the Shelley N. Chou Lecture.

## Photo Gallery



Department Chairman Dr. Clark Chen reunites with one of his teachers, Dr. Rees Cosgrove. Former chairman Dr. Roberto Heros (left) and faculty members Dr. Stephan Kim and Dr. Cornelius Lam (far right) look on.



Alumnus Dr. Farhan Siddiq shares memories of his colleague during Molly Hubbard's Memorial.



PGY6 resident Dr. Bryan Ladd (left) during the Haines Family Lecture. PGY5 residents Dr. Huy Do and Youssef Hamade are to his right.



Faculty member Dr. Ramu Tummala (standing) shares some memories during the Molly Hubbard Memorial. Faculty member Dr. Dan Guillaume is seated at the far left and Molly's co-graduate, Dr. Josh Lim, is seated at right.



Former Department Chair Dr. Stephen Haines enjoying the Homecoming event.



Homecoming event planners Larry Gunderson (left) and Sally Sawyer help alumnus Dr. Patrick Graupman get checked in.

## Training the next generation of neurosurgical researchers

The Haines Family Lecture, endowed by alumnus Dr. Gerald Haines and his son Dr. Stephen Haines, former department chair, was given on Sunday, May 15, during the Homecoming event. The lecture featured **Dr. Sepideh Amin-Hanjani**, director, Cerebrovascular and Skull Base Surgery, The Warren R. Selman Endowed Chair of Neurological Surgery, and Vice-Chair, Department of Neurological Surgery, University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center. Her topic was *Clinical Research Training in Neurosurgery: What, Why and How*.

The lecture's theme prompted Dr. Amin-Hanjani to think about the different types of clinical research, the importance of neurosurgeons being engaged with research, and about how academic departments of neurosurgery can engage with and promote that kind of training during residency and fellowship.



she said.

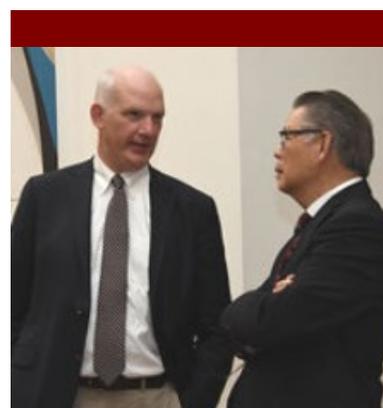
When considering the skills these young researchers should be trained in, Dr. Amin-Hanjani noted that, "We should provide opportunities for advanced training in clinical research, whether it's obtaining a master's degree in clinical investigation or doing things such as taking certificate work related to statistics or epidemiology or completing other course-based learning."

Dr. Amin-Hanjani acknowledges there are some challenges in engaging residents in research. "They have conflicting time demands," she said. "To do research, they must release time already dedicated to subspecialty or enfolded fellowship training. There are also the financial pressures to enter a practice that does not engage in research as a primary activity."

While these challenges aren't always easy to address, Dr. Amin-Hanjani believes that more experienced neurosurgeons are positioned to guide early career researchers. "We must actively promote mentorship and help guide their career development to enhance the importance of neurosurgical research," she said. "There also seems to be an unmet need in training young researchers in conducting clinical trials."

The neurosurgeon is uniquely positioned to bring translational research to the bedside and be involved in clinical trials. "That will ensure new developments reach a level in which they're tested to build a strong basis for evidence-based practice," said Dr. Amin-Hanjani.

When asked about how attending the Homecoming event affected her perception of neurosurgery at the U of M, she said, "It was nice to see the kind of growth and development that has occurred under Dr. Chen's leadership. He has built on the existing traditions of the department and focused on growth clinically, academically, and on the research side. It was impressive to see such positive trajectories on all those fronts."



Alumnus Dr. Walter Galicich (left) catches up with faculty member and researcher Dr. Walter Low.



Faculty member Dr. Robert McGovern asks a question during the Haines Lecture.



Alumnus Dr. Dino Terzic (front) and PGY2 resident Dr. Birra Taha (back) during one of the weekend's lectures.

## Molly Hubbard's Legacy



Use your camera to scan the QR code above for information about how to donate to Molly's Fund.



Dr. Dan Guillaume visited Molly during her away rotation in the pediatrics department of Oregon Health and Science University.



Molly, doing what she loved to do — be outside on the slopes as much as she could.



*(Following is an excerpt from an article written about Molly by former Department Head Dr. Stephen Haines)*

"Molly Hubbard was born in Burlington, VT, in 1986. She grew up in Utah developing a great love for the outdoors and, in particular, for skiing. She graduated from Utah State University in 2008 and attended the Larner College of Medicine at the University of Vermont where her love of nature, biochemistry and medicine evolved into a calling for neurosurgery. ... Molly trained in neurosurgery at the University of Minnesota from 2012 to 2019.

She was a force of nature, 'technically gifted and adorned with judgment beyond her years, she was masterful in her surgery and prudent in her deliberations,' noted Department Head Dr. Clark Chen, in an announcement about her death on January 9, 2020."

To memorialize Molly's life, the Department, working with her parents, Mary and John, set up the Hubbard Fund through the U of M Foundation. "The people who were close to Molly wanted to find a way to remember her forever," said faculty member Dr. David Darrow during a presentation about the fund for the Homecoming event. "That became increasingly important when we didn't have the opportunity to have an in-person memorial for her."

The fund is focused on enhancing the lives and education of residents and nurses. "It will support continuing nursing education with a focus on neurosurgery," explained Dr. Darrow. "On the resident side, we want to focus the fund more on work/life balance, which was something Molly was big on; however, we will also help support away rotations such as the ones Molly participated in."

In addition to the fund, the Department will sponsor an event during which Molly's friends and family can come together to remember her. "On August 5, we're planning on having people who knew and worked with Molly come back and

participate in a half day of education with lectures from nurses, residents, and invited speakers," said Dr. Darrow. "Afterwards, we'll go for a run and have a drink in her honor."

The process for distributing the Hubbard Memorial funds will be via nomination at first, and then there will be an application process, according to Dr. Darrow. All the details have yet to be worked out.

## Remembering Ed

Professor Emeritus Edward "Ed" Seljeskog, MD, PhD, was one of the early graduates of our residency program and a legendary leader in the department for decades (1968 – 2004). He passed away on March 16, 2022. A selfless servant of the practice of neurosurgery, Dr. Seljeskog treated patients and held leadership positions at the University of Minnesota, what was then Hennepin County General Hospital, and the Minneapolis Veterans Administration Hospital.



He also held leadership positions on the national stage in both neurosurgery (1995 President of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons, Director of the American Board of Neurological Surgery) and surgery (Regent of the American College of Surgeons) organizations.

Dr. Seljeskog had a long history of contributing to the growth of the practice of neurosurgery through his teaching, his research, his writing, and through the numerous leadership positions he held in professional organizations and on hospital committees.

Many shared memories of him during the Homecoming event, remembering his toughness, his kindness, his capacity for work, and his occasional goofiness. He will long be remembered by those who knew and worked with him.

# Invitation to the 2023 Peyton Society Meeting

The William T. Peyton Society was established to honor the founding head of the U of M Department of Neurosurgery. In 1937, a Division of Neurological Surgery was formed under the Department of Surgery and Peyton was appointed head of that division. In 1940, he initiated a training program in neurological surgery.

## Graduates/former faculty welcome

All graduates and current and former faculty of the Neurosurgery Residency Training Program are members of the Society. To celebrate the rich history of the department, the Peyton Society typically meets in Minneapolis about every five years. Occasionally, the Society has made efforts to meet in a unique location that holds a special meaning for its members.

One unique aspect of the Neurosurgery Department and its history is its relationship with Seoul National University and neurosurgery in South Korea in general. The Department of Neurosurgery at Seoul National University College of Medicine was founded in 1957 by Professor Bo Sung Sim. Dr. Sim had returned to Seoul after two years of training in neurosurgery under William Peyton, MD, MS, PhD, and Lyle French, MD, PhD, at the U of M. His work in Minnesota was part of the International Cooperation and Administration program, which was designed to help the Republic of Korea recover from the devastation of the Korean War.

## Special relationship with Korea

The University of Minnesota School of Medicine developed a special relationship with Seoul National University and provided training, both in Minneapolis and in Seoul, in many medical specialties. Subsequently, Professors Kil Soo Choi and Jeong Wha Chu also came to Minnesota for training in neurosurgery, returning to join the faculty in Seoul. Professor Choi would eventually become the second department chairman.

To celebrate this long-standing relationship and rich history, the next Peyton Society Meeting will be held in Seoul, South Korea from **July 31 to August 2, 2023**. The Departments of Neurosurgery at Seoul National University and Korea University, two premiere academic neurosurgery programs in South Korea, will be our hosts for the meeting, which we know will be memorable.

## Academic, social, cultural activities

The three-day event will be a combination of academic, social, and cultural activities. The planned itinerary for each day includes:

1. Morning lectures, approximately three hours, by faculty members from UMN, Seoul National University, and Korea University. Each day will feature one of the institutions/programs
2. Lunch – traditional and popular Korean food

3. Cultural activities in the afternoon – guided tours, cultural centers, history museum
4. Dinner – Korean Dinner and social event.

The program will focus on academic activities that will facilitate interaction between these premiere neurosurgery departments. Cultural activities will be planned to allow attendees to experience the rich history and tradition of the Korean culture. Social activities will help attendees catch up with one another and provide opportunities to make new connections.

## How to sign up

Interested members are encouraged to sign up early to reserve a spot for themselves and their families. Please contact Sally Sawyer at [sallyann@umn.edu](mailto:sallyann@umn.edu) to sign up or for more information.



# Homecoming Perspectives

## Current Faculty Members

---



### **Carolina Sandoval-Garcia, MD**

I thought it was a phenomenal two-day event. As one of the relatively recent additions to the department, there was so much to discover. It was humbling and so interesting to hear stories about prior chairs and see the camaraderie among former graduates. The outreach and impact the program has had in different parts of the US and the world was obvious. The event was a glimpse into the proud history of a great neurosurgery program and I felt honored to count myself as part of its current chapter.



### **Ramu Tummala, MD, 1999-2004**

What made it special was the opportunity to see many members of the department from different eras all in one venue. We also had the long overdue opportunity to memorialize Molly Hubbard.

When I got to interview the four former chairmen on stage, I felt that I didn't have enough time for that once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It's important for our residents to know that the department history goes back almost 80 years — it's important to know the history of your neurosurgery family. It was also a chance to showcase the department in a way that we haven't been able to for a couple of years. Overall, the event was overwhelmingly well received. It

was celebratory and sad at the same time, which reflects neurosurgery itself because we go through a full gamut of emotions every day. The weekend encapsulated what our field represents – the highs, the lows, the sadness, the happiness.

## Across the Generations

---



### **Crina Peterson, PGY1 resident**

After starting the program with few in-person introductions because of COVID, it was exciting for me to see so many faculty and staff interacting in one setting. Hearing from former faculty and residents provoked a renewed excitement about the program and family I am now a part of. It was incredibly touching to witness the care and deep sorrow expressed during the Molly Hubbard memorial, and I realized that you truly are part of a family here at UMN. I have only had positive interactions and experiences since starting my journey, and the homecoming event reminded me of why I was so happy to join this program. It truly leaves a legacy through its faculty and trainees and incorporates all the key elements of patient care, excellent training, and incorporation of research that I am interested in research that I am interested in.



### **Sanjay Dhawan, MD, PGY1 Resident**

This was a rare occasion during which four department chairs were on one stage together. I felt lucky to be part of the event and to witness the legacy of the department as one of the oldest neurosurgery residency programs.

I feel that I'm blessed and grateful to be part of such a program. Our alumni and chairs are big names in our field. When I saw Dr. Heros and Dr. Maxwell reading about themselves as they viewed their portraits – the descriptions by the portraits were written either by a trainee or colleague – it was something I could only see once in a lifetime.

One of the most remarkable things about the Homecoming was the interview that former resident Dr. [Ramu] Tummala conducted on stage with the four chairs. They each faced unique challenges during their own tenures. It was also great to learn from alumni about how

to excel during residency and going forward, how to select a subspecialty, how to select a place. Crina and I rounded with the alumni and chairs twice. It was excellent. It's been more than ten days and I'm still excited. In addition, the program has always been diverse, and that legacy is being continued under the leadership of Dr. Chen.



### **Coridon Quinn, MD, 2013-2020**

After graduation, I completed an endovascular fellowship at the U in 2021, and am now in private practice in Asheville, NC. Coming back after experiencing what it really feels like to be in practice, felt nostalgic and proud. The program itself and all the hard work from fellow residents and attendings truly train us to achieve our best as neurosurgeons. It collectively gave me the confidence to succeed in my practice and bring a little Minnesota Way to North Carolina. Visiting with colleagues from varying eras felt like we have our own U of M neurosurgery family. And Molly [Hubbard's] Memorial was beautifully done.

## Homecoming Perspectives

Across the Generations, cont.

---



### **Paramita Das, MD, 2011-2017**

Attending the homecoming event was a special opportunity to come back to the place that shaped me as a neurosurgeon, see old friends, and remember Molly Hubbard. If COVID had not happened, I most likely would have come back more recently to celebrate graduations of my fellow residents but so many plans were disrupted over the last few years. Looking back at my time at the University of Minnesota, although it was hard work, I seem to remember only good times. Now training my own residents, I try to teach them with the same patience and time that all the attendings took while training me.



### **Ray Chu, MD, 1999-2002**

It was great to be reconnected to people you don't necessarily see or talk to all the time ... to be reminded about "the Minnesota way." I owe everything to this training program. There are still things I do in certain ways, especially with my teaching style in our own residency program at Cedars Sinai. I see people who struggle with how we give the residents a little bit of operative leeway while still ensuring good patient outcomes. There is a lot of that that's part of the Minnesota Way to make sure that residents know how to operate. It's surprising what you can do to guide a resident around while assisting. You don't have to do everything for them. Dr. Robert Maxwell, who was chair during my training, had the biggest influence on me. There were many times he served as a bridge to how things were done in Minnesota in the past, and he was definitely my bridge to the next step after graduation. My chairman now recalls talking to Dr. Maxwell about me and being told that "he's ready to go and doesn't need a lot of babysitting." I reminded Dr. Maxwell about this during the event and he laughed and said, "That's what I said before and now he wants me to take it back?"



### **Frank Genovese, MD, 1986-1991**

Homecoming was a special event for several reasons – seeing old friends and sharing stories, playing catch-up and reminiscing conjured up special memories. It was also an educational event, sharing up-to-date information in our field. Touring the campus and seeing how things have changed and in what direction research and technology is going was also very exciting. I was very happy to have been a part of the past there, and excited about what the future holds. It was sad that it had to end so quickly.



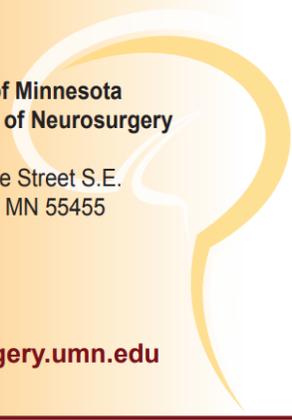
### **Richard Moser, MD, 1977-1982**

I came to the University as kind of an afterthought. When I was a medical student, I did a rotation at the University of California San Francisco (UCSF) and always thought that was where I wanted to go for neurosurgery training. On my way back to Chicago, I stopped at the U of M because I had heard good things about the program. During the three days I spent at the U, I went on rounds and had opportunities to visit with residents and faculty. Having just come from UCSF, I felt there was something very different about the U of M, something I really enjoyed. It seemed more caring, more hospitable, and I felt it would be a good place to raise my family. Coming back to the U for an occasion like this reminds me that those same concepts are still present today and that's very encouraging.



### **Daniel Ahlberg, MD, 1971-1972; 1974-1978**

For me personally, it was not only great fun to see colleagues and to have the endowed lectures but to reflect on my lifetime in neurosurgery and the U. I was in the first third of the people who graduated from training and since then, there have been two or three times as many more graduates. Each of us has our own connection to neurosurgery and to the University of Minnesota. It occurred to me that it's not about a specific program or chairman, it's really the spirit of what, over all these decades, neurosurgery has been to the U after Dr. Peyton was first assigned to be Chair and what has evolved since then. All of us played some part in that. Neurosurgery at the University is not about its beginnings or about specific people, it's about the spirit of what we've all done.

A stylized graphic of a human brain in profile, rendered in shades of yellow and orange, positioned behind the contact information.

**University of Minnesota**  
**Department of Neurosurgery**  
MMC 96  
420 Delaware Street S.E.  
Minneapolis, MN 55455

[neurosurgery.umn.edu](http://neurosurgery.umn.edu)

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Twin Cities, MN  
Permit No. 90155