

DALHOUSIE'S
FACULTY OF
MEDICINE
ALUMNI
PUBLICATION

FALL 2025

DalDocs



2025 DMAA ALUMNI RECOGNITION AWARDS

A RISING TIDE LIFTS ALL BOATS:

A NEW WAVE OF FUTURE

PHYSICIANS IN CAPE BRETON

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FOR COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH LEADS

TO LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

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DalDocs

FALL 2025

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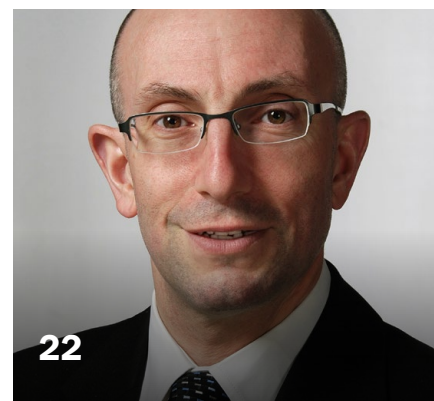
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David Anderson (MD '83)
Dean, Faculty of Medicine

We were pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Ian Epstein as associate dean, undergraduate medical education, effective July 1, 2025. A long-time faculty member at Dalhousie and former leader of its internal medicine residency program and assistant dean of the Office of Professional Affairs at DMNS, Dr. Epstein now oversees undergraduate medical education strategy, curriculum, and faculty support.

We were also fortunate to have Dr. Anna MacLeod, an internationally recognized scholar in medical education, step into the role of assistant dean of student affairs at Dalhousie Medicine Nova Scotia on Sept. 1, 2025. In this role, she will support student wellness, career planning, and academic development across Med 1–5, building on her transformative leadership of the Research in Medicine program.

Over the past few months, I've had the pleasure of joining several classes for their reunions. These gatherings are a meaningful reminder of the strong bonds formed at Dalhousie—among classmates, mentors, and faculty—that continue to shape your journey in medicine. Hearing your reflections and ideas is always a highlight of my role as dean, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to celebrate your achievements and learn how we can keep growing as a medical school.

As graduates of one of the top medical schools in the country, our alumni are instrumental in promoting and maintaining the health of the communities we serve. Your expertise and commitment are vital to fostering a stronger and more equitable healthcare system. Thank you for all that you do.

Dr. David Anderson (MD '83)
Dean of Medicine

There has been much to be excited about in the Faculty of Medicine since the last issue of *DalDocs*.

This September marked a historic milestone for Dalhousie Medical School: the opening of the Cape Breton Medical Campus in Sydney, Nova Scotia in partnership with Cape Breton University. For the first time, students have begun their studies at this new campus, which is uniquely focused on family medicine training and rural health. The campus represents a bold step forward in our commitment to serving communities across Nova Scotia and beyond, and we are thrilled to welcome our inaugural cohort to Cape Breton.

On August 24, we held the annual Dean's Welcome Ceremony in Halifax to welcome our first-year med students to Dalhousie Medical School and to the practice of medicine. With the addition of our CBMC students, the Class of 2029, with 177 students, is the largest-ever class of talented and motivated students in the over 150-year history of Dalhousie Medical School, at a time when the need for physicians has never been greater in our region or country. It was wonderful to meet some of our incoming students and their family and friends.

We are proud to report that nearly half of Dalhousie's graduating class of 2025 began their residency training in family medicine in the summer, marking a significant increase since 2018 when only 25 per cent of the class chose to enter a career in family medicine.



Stephen G. Miller (MD '93)
*Senior Associate Dean,
Medical Education*

As we settle into another action-packed academic year, I am filled with pride and optimism for all that lies ahead for the Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine community. This fall marked a truly historic moment with the official welcome of 30 new medical students at the Cape Breton Medical Campus (CBMC). In just four short years, these learners will join our growing alumni family of more than 11,000 graduates worldwide, continuing our legacy of excellence and service in medicine.

This has been a remarkable year of celebration and connection across our DMAA community. On November 1, over 700 alumni, learners, staff, and community partners gathered at the Halifax Convention Centre for the Dal Med Gala for an unforgettable evening that truly captured the spirit of Dalhousie Medicine. Together, we celebrated our shared achievements, honoured our students and alumni, and recognized the extraordinary generosity of our classes.

A heartfelt congratulations to the Class of 1970, recipients of the 200K Cup, and to MD 1969, MD 1973, MD 1985, and MD 1995 classes, each of whom received the 100K Cup in recognition of their inspiring philanthropic leadership. It was also wonderful to see so many other classes represented that evening! Your enthusiasm and camaraderie made the celebration that much more meaningful.

That same weekend, we proudly honoured our 2025 DMAA Alumni Recognition Award recipients—eight outstanding individuals whose leadership and dedication continue to uplift our profession and community. A major congratulations to all! As we look ahead, nominations for the 2026 DMAA Awards are now open. I encourage you to visit our website and take a moment to recognize a classmate or colleague who is making a difference. These stories of excellence and service are at the heart of who we are as a community.

We also continue to welcome applications for DMAA Members-at-Large. If you're looking for a meaningful way to stay involved and help guide our future, please consider joining the DMAA Board of Directors. This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow alumni, share your voice, and help shape the next chapter of our association. We are continually trying to diversify our board and representation, so all Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine alumni are welcome to apply, whether you're an MD, postgraduate, graduate or physician assistant program alumni. Reach out at medical.alumni@dal.ca for more information. We'd love to have you join us.

This past spring and summer also brought tremendous energy to our community with 14 reunions celebrated across multiple decades of graduating classes. We also enjoyed hosting several alumni receptions, including our Class Connectors event, where alumni came together to exchange ideas, share feedback, and strengthen the ties that make our network so vibrant. These gatherings remind us that while our experiences span generations, our shared pride in Dalhousie Medicine continues to bring us together.

At the DMAA, we remain deeply committed to representing and supporting all members of our Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine family, including graduates, residents, researchers, learners, and those from our expanding Physician Assistant Studies program. The strength of our community lies in its diversity, and together we continue to build a dynamic, inclusive, and engaged alumni network.

I encourage you to stay connected, attend an event, mentor a student, share your story, or simply reconnect with classmates. Every interaction helps strengthen the legacy we share.

Stephen G. Miller, MD, CCFP(EM), FCFP, MEd, DRCPC (Clin Ed) (he/him)
President, Dalhousie Medical Alumni Association (2024-2026)
Senior Associate Dean, Medical Education
Professor, Emergency Medicine



Dr. Julie Copeland
*Senior Associate Dean,
Dalhousie Medicine
New Brunswick*

As we reflect on the past several months at Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick, it is clear that our campus continues to be a place of growth, innovation, and community. Since the last DalDocs issue in the spring, DMNB has marked several milestones and transitions that speak to our shared commitment to excellence in medical education, research, and service.

This summer, we announced the renewal of Dr. Paul Atkinson's leadership as assistant dean, research, a role in which Dr. Atkinson has championed high-impact research and fostered collaboration across our province. In October, we expressed our sincere appreciation to Dr. Samantha Gray for her meaningful contributions to learners and the learning environment during her time as assistant dean, professional affairs at DMNB. She has stepped down from the role following her appointment as clinical academic department head for the Department of Oncology at the Saint John Regional Hospital. Her leadership in this new position is eagerly anticipated. Dr. Gray's work as assistant dean has been deeply valued, and the search for her successor is currently underway. In Miramichi, Dr. Paula Keating completed her term as LIC director, passing the torch to Dr. Lisa Basque, whose energy and vision will guide the next chapter for our students in that region.

October brought two signature events that highlight the spirit of DMNB. Our annual Celebration of Research at Riverside Golf Club in Rothesay gathered faculty, students, and stakeholder partners to recognize the breadth and impact of our research community. Just days earlier, the annual leadership bus tour traveled to sites across New Brunswick, strengthening connections with clinical and community partners and reaffirming our commitment to serving the province.

Among our students, achievements continue to inspire. This year, DMNB PhD student Victoria Nelson was awarded the prestigious Vanier Scholarship for her research in cardiovascular pharmacology, a testament to the calibre of our graduate trainees. In May, we celebrated the graduation of the Class of 2025, our twelfth graduating class, at the Imperial Theatre in Saint John. It was a moment of pride as we watched our medical students transition into residency and practice, ready to make a difference in their communities. In August, our expanded cohort of forty students began clerkship across the province, reflecting our ongoing efforts to expand medical education and meet New Brunswick's health care needs.

Our commitment to training and retaining physicians in New Brunswick remains strong. For CaRMS 2026, we have increased postgraduate residency training positions by three—adding two family medicine seats in Moncton and Miramichi respectively, and an additional internal medicine position in Saint John. By July 2026, DMNB will offer thirty-six residency positions annually based in the province, supporting physician recruitment and retention across New Brunswick.

Community engagement is at the heart of DMNB. This spring, we welcomed high school students from Miramichi to our Saint John campus for an immersive day exploring careers in health and medicine. Their enthusiasm and curiosity remind us of the importance of inspiring future generations and strengthening our ties with communities across New Brunswick.

As I look ahead, I am deeply grateful for the dedication and passion of our faculty, staff, students, and partners. Together, we are shaping the future of medical education, research, and health care in New Brunswick, and I am honoured to be part of this journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Copeland'.

Dr. Julie Copeland
Senior Associate Dean, Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick



Dr. Jennifer Hall
*Senior Associate Dean,
Cape Breton Medical
Campus*

As we look back on a landmark year for healthcare in Nova Scotia, I am honoured to share the excitement and pride felt across the Cape Breton Medical Campus (CBMC) as we officially welcomed our first class of medical students. On Sept. 5, 2025, thirty future physicians began their journey in medicine at the inaugural Rising Tide Ceremony, or El~mpa'q in Mi'kmaq, a moment that marks a new chapter for our region and our province.

The ceremony was a celebration of firsts. Each student in CBMC's inaugural class received a stethoscope from Doctors Nova Scotia president Dr. Shelley McNeil and eastern zone physician advisor Ryan Brown, and lab coats embroidered with the CBMC logo from local business owners Steve and Katherine van Nostrand. A striking sculpture by Nova Scotia artisan Liam Tromans, carved from trees felled by Hurricane Fiona, stood as a beacon of hope and guidance for our students.

This milestone comes just two-and-a-half years after the province announced a \$58.9 million investment to develop a new medical sciences building at Cape Breton University (CBU), in partnership with Dalhousie. Opening later this year, this facility will serve as the cornerstone of CBMC, Dalhousie's third campus and Nova Scotia's second medical school.

CBMC faculty and staff recruitment has been highly successful, resulting in a qualified and diverse teaching team. We were thrilled to welcome several members to our leadership team over the last several months. Welcome to: Dr. Sarah Mader, assistant dean, clerkship; Dr. Steven MacDougall, assistant dean, professional affairs; Dr. Annalee Coakley, assistant dean of student and resident affairs; Dr. Arlene Kelly Wiggins, assistant dean pre-clerkship; Dr. Alison Archibald, director of faculty development; Dr. Abidemi Fasanmi, director, interprofessional education (IPE) and service learning; and Dr. Carl Marshall academic director, Indigenous health in Unama'ki.

Outreach to local physicians has generated strong interest in teaching and mentorship roles, and infrastructure upgrades at Cape Breton Regional Hospital, supported by Nova Scotia Health, will further enhance the learning environment.

CBMC is also investing in research, with plans to recruit five physician-researchers who will contribute to both clinical care and student mentorship through the Research in Medicine (RIM) program. Collaborations have been initiated with Cape Breton University's Centre of Excellence for Healthy Aging.

The Cape Breton Medical Campus is more than a new academic institution—it is a bold and collaborative investment in regional medical education and a testament to the Faculty of Medicine's commitment to health system transformation through community-rooted training. CBMC students can be assured that they will be receiving a world-class medical education in a facility that reflects their ambition and talents.

The inaugural CBMC class will graduate in 2029, poised to serve as family doctors in rural communities across the province. I am honoured to be part of this historic moment and look forward to the continued growth and impact of CBMC in the years ahead.

Dr. Jennifer Hall
Senior Associate Dean, Cape Breton Medical Campus



◀ Dr. Ban Tsui, his wife Eliza and son

From equations to empathy: How Dr. Tsui's multidisciplinary path reshaped the practice of regional anesthesia

Dr. Ban Tsui (MD '95) 2025 DMAA Exceptional Service Award



Since its inception in 1958, the Dalhousie Medical Alumni Association's Exceptional Service Award has recognized senior alumni whose careers exemplify excellence in medicine and extraordinary contributions to their field.

This year's recipient, Dr. Ban Tsui, embodies these ideals through a remarkable career defined by innovation, education, and a dedicated commitment to advancing patient care worldwide.

Dr. Tsui's journey into medicine began in an unconventional way. Before entering medical school, Dr. Tsui studied engineering, mathematics, and pharmacy at Dalhousie. His multidisciplinary background gave him a problem-solving mindset that naturally led him toward medicine.

"It felt like a natural progression from studying systems and equations to applying that knowledge to the human body," he reflects.

For Dr. Tsui, Dalhousie was more than an academic institution; it was a community.

"When it came time to apply to medical school, the decision was easy. Halifax had become my home."

As a student, Dr. Tsui was known for his warmth and leadership, serving as president of the Chinese Student Association and helping fellow international students settle into life at Dalhousie. His fondest memories include not only the friendships he formed but also graduating with his wife, Eliza (a Dalhousie graduate with a degree in education), and one-year-old son by his side. These moments and life experiences served as an enduring reminder of the family and community he built during his time at Dalhousie Medical School.

Over the course of his career, Dr. Tsui has established himself as a global leader in regional anesthesia and pain medicine, holding leadership and academic roles at the University of Alberta and Stanford University, and now serving as executive associate dean at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen.

His pioneering work in translational research led to innovations such as the "Tsui Test" and the E-Catheter, both now used worldwide to improve patient safety. His leadership within the American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine (ASRA Pain Medicine) has also helped shape education and clinical standards for future generations.

"Changing a culture is a long-term endeavour, but it is a necessary fight for the benefit of our patients, students, and society."



Left: Dr. Ban Tsui with his son at his graduation
Right: Dr. Ban Tsui at his son's graduation

Leading with purpose: Advancing innovation, education, and the next generation of physician leaders

Dr. Tsui's career has been guided by an unwavering belief that innovation must be paired with education and service. His recent focus on evidence-based medical education highlights this philosophy and cultivates not only skilled physicians but also compassionate, humanistic leaders.

"Changing a culture is a long-term endeavour," he says, "but it is a necessary fight for the benefit of our patients, students, and society."

Among his many recognitions, including the 2022 ASRA Distinguished Service Award and the 2025 Gaston Labat Award, Dr. Tsui takes the greatest pride in seeing both of his sons follow in his footsteps to pursue careers in medicine.

"Despite the busy schedules and missed soccer games," he says with a smile, "inspiring my children to dedicate their lives to helping others is my proudest accomplishment."

Dr. Tsui's journey reflects curiosity, perseverance, and gratitude, values shaped by his Dalhousie roots. To the next generation of physicians, he offers a simple but powerful message, "When facing a challenge, don't take 'no' for an answer. Find a solution, make an impact."

Through his lifelong commitment to discovery, mentorship, and service, Dr. Ban Tsui continues to exemplify the transformative power of a Dalhousie medical education and the lasting impact of alumni who give back through leadership and innovation.

Awarding Excellence: Dr. Diane McIntosh – Alum of the Year

Dr. Diane McIntosh (MD '93, PGM '98, BSCPH '89) 2025 DMAA Alum of the Year



When Dr. Diane McIntosh learned she had been named the 2025 Dalhousie Medical Alumni Association (DMAA) Alum of the Year, she was stunned. “I can’t believe it,” she said with a laugh. “I’m so honoured.”

With over 11,000 Dalhousie medical alumni around the world, Dr. McIntosh’s recognition marks a standout career devoted to transforming how Canadians understand, diagnose, and treat mental illness.

Redefining the conversation on mental health

A psychiatrist, author, educator, and innovator, Dr. McIntosh has dedicated her life to reshaping the national dialogue around mental health and advocating for better education, access, and compassion.

“My job isn’t just about prescribing,” she explains. “It’s about sales in the truest sense. Selling the idea that mental illness is real, that it’s treatable, and that patients deserve care without stigma.”

After completing her pharmacy degree at Dalhousie, Dr. McIntosh went on to medical school, initially unsure she’d even be accepted. That foundation in pharmacology shaped her approach to psychiatry.

“I’ve always been fascinated by how medication works in the brain,” she says. “But it has to be used properly, and that means educating clinicians to prescribe confidently and appropriately.”

Innovating for better care

That passion for education led her to create SwitchRx in 2011, a tool now used internationally, guiding physicians in safely switching antipsychotic medications. Building on the success of SwitchRx, Dr. McIntosh developed PsychedUp, an accredited continuing medical education program designed to deepen clinicians’ understanding of neurobiology as well as diagnosing and prescribing for psychiatric disorders. Now offered virtually, PsychedUp provides practical, evidence-based, and engaging psychiatric education that empowers healthcare professionals to become more confident, rational prescribers.

Today, Dr. McIntosh continues to advance mental health innovation as the founder and CEO of RAPIDS Health, developing a psychiatric decision-support service that helps healthcare providers to improve diagnostic accuracy as well as deliver evidence-based treatment guidance.

“I want to make psychiatry’s ‘easy button,’” she says. “We’re supporting doctors where they are, so patients can get the right treatment sooner.”

For Dr. McIntosh, innovation is always about human impact. “The greatest part of my career isn’t the technology,” she reflects. “It’s seeing people get better and helping them find safety and stability again.”

That empathy extends beyond her patients to her colleagues and the broader healthcare system. Through her podcast PsychedUp and her book *This is Depression: A Comprehensive Compassionate Guide for Anyone Who Wants to Understand Depression*, she continues to fight stigma and empower patients to advocate for themselves.

Grounded in Dalhousie roots

Even as she leads national change, Dr. McIntosh credits her Dalhousie roots for shaping her patient-centered philosophy.

“Dalhousie trained me to see the whole person,” she says. “That’s the foundation of everything I do.”

From her early days as a medical student photocopying class notes in the Killam Library to building world-class digital tools that are transforming mental healthcare, Dr. McIntosh has never stopped pushing forward. Her career is equal parts science, advocacy, and heart, which exemplifies the very spirit the DMAA seeks to honour as the 2025 Alum of the Year. Dr. McIntosh’s work is truly an example of dedication and commitment to innovation that makes a real difference in people’s lives.

Building bridges between medicine and community

Dr. Leah Jones (MD '18, BSC '13) 2025 DMAA Young Alum of the Year

When Dr. Leah Jones returned home to Nova Scotia after completing her residency at McMaster and working in Ontario for a few years she brought with her more than a medical degree; she carried a vision for a more inclusive, compassionate, and community-driven approach to healthcare.

Today, as Dalhousie’s first Academic Director of Black Health at Dalhousie and the physician lead for the Nova Scotia Sisterhood, Dr. Jones has become a catalyst for change, shaping both medical education and primary care in ways that honour the lived experiences and health needs of Black communities across the province.

Born and raised in Dartmouth, Dr. Jones grew up surrounded by examples of care. Her mother, a nurse, and her father, a chef, taught her that service and compassion take many forms, whether through food or medicine.

“Both my parents cared for people in different ways,” she reflected. “That sense of community care was always part of me.”

Now, at the Faculty of Medicine, Dr. Jones works to bridge the gap between the medical school and Nova Scotia’s Black communities. Through her leadership, Dalhousie introduced the Black Learner Admissions Pathway—a groundbreaking initiative that offers a more culturally informed, holistic approach to admissions and supports African Nova Scotian students pursuing careers in medicine.

Her role also includes advocating for curriculum reform to address how race and health are taught. She collaborates with students and faculty to ensure that materials reflect racial diversity and that discussions about health disparities and anti-Black racism are embedded in medical education.

“It’s about making the system better for everyone,” she said. “A more equitable curriculum benefits all learners, and ultimately, all patients.”

Creating safe, culturally grounded care

In addition to her work in academia, Dr. Jones serves as the physician lead for the Nova Scotia Sisterhood, a free program that provides healthcare for African Nova Scotians, Black women, and gender-diverse individuals, delivered by an all-Black team of female healthcare professionals. For Dr. Jones, the impact is deeply personal.

“Many women come in and say, ‘I’ve never had a Black doctor before,’ and sometimes they cry,” she shared. “That moment of being seen and heard, it’s powerful. It’s why this work matters.”



Her team, now expanded to include a Black nurse, a clinical therapist, a nurse practitioner, and wellness navigators, offers wraparound support that addresses not only physical health but also mental wellness and systemic barriers to care.

While Dr. Jones is quick to emphasize collaboration, her leadership has been pivotal in transforming how Dalhousie Medical School engages with Black communities. She is also candid about the challenges: the weight of being “the first,” navigating systems not built for her, and managing the emotional labour of anti-racism work.

“I love what I do, but it’s deeply personal,” she explained. “This work is about dismantling long-standing inequities, and that takes both courage and care.”

Her advocacy extends beyond the university, informing how other health faculties across Dalhousie, from dentistry to nursing, are re-evaluating their own admissions and curricula through an equity lens.

A legacy rooted in community

Dr. Jones describes her proudest achievements not in titles or accolades, but in the growing number of Black medical students walking the halls of Dalhousie.

“When I graduated, there were so few of us,” she said. “Now, to see over 20 Black students enter the program—it’s incredible.”

She credits her mentors, Drs. David Haase, Gaynor Watson-Creed, Barb Hamilton-Hinch, OmiSoore Dryden, and the broader community for paving the way. And now, through her leadership, she is paving the path forward for others.

Engagement as a way of life

Dr. Dan Reid (MD '70) 2025 DMAA Engagement Award



When Dr. Dan Reid reflects on his career, one theme runs through every chapter—community.

From his early days as a young family physician in rural Nova Scotia to his decades-long role as class president for Dalhousie's MD Class of 1970, Dr. Reid has built his life around connection, care, and commitment to others. It's this lifelong dedication that makes him the deserving recipient of the 2025 Dalhousie Medical Alumni Association (DMAA) Engagement Award.

Growing up in Middle Musquodoboit, Nova Scotia, Dr. Reid was inspired by the small-town physicians who cared for their neighbours and, in doing so, became part of the fabric of community life. That sense of service never left him. After graduating from Dalhousie Medical School, he and three classmates settled in Pictou, which at the time was a town in need of doctors and ready for change. Together, they built a model of community-based healthcare that became a benchmark for rural medicine in Nova Scotia.

"We did everything, from delivering babies to setting fractures," he recalls with pride. "Our emergency department never closed, not for one day in 25 years. We felt it was our obligation to keep it going."

Leadership beyond the clinic

That commitment to people, patients, and place defined not only his practice but his approach to leadership. Whether serving as an MLA and Minister of Fisheries or advising the provincial government on physician recruitment and telemedicine, Dr. Reid

always approached his work with the same sense of purpose: finding ways to serve.

"Medicine gave me so much," he says. "You feel a duty to give something back."

His enduring engagement with Dalhousie and his classmates is a natural extension of that belief. As president of the Class of 1970, Dr. Reid has been the driving force behind one of Dalhousie's most connected and generous alumni groups. His class established one of the first endowed class funds, now over \$200,000, to support Dalhousie medical students through the Research in Medicine (RIM) program. The fund has helped open doors for countless learners to explore research, mentorship, and innovation early in their careers that often shape their path forward in medicine.

"Our class believed in giving back," says Dr. Reid. "Dalhousie was good to us. Supporting the next generation of physicians is the least we can do."

What began as a small group of classmates wanting to help sustain Euphoria (the beloved student variety show they founded during medical school) evolved into a broader culture of generosity and shared purpose. Over time, those contributions grew into something greater: a legacy fund that continues to invest in the curiosity, compassion, and leadership of Dalhousie's future physicians.

Building a legacy of giving

Dr. Reid sees giving as an extension of the same community spirit that guided his medical career.

"It's not just about writing a cheque," he reflects. "It's about staying connected to the school, to one another, and to the students who are walking the same halls we once did. When alumni come together, we're not only giving financially; we're giving encouragement, opportunity, and a sense of continuity."

Even in retirement, Dr. Reid continues to bring people together, from organizing class reunions to mentoring young physicians and celebrating his peers' accomplishments. For him, engagement is not a task but a way of life.

"To me, being engaged means remembering where you came from and making sure the people who come after you have the same opportunities," he says.

With his trademark warmth and dedication, Dr. Reid has spent more than five decades building community in the exam room, in the legislature, and across the Dalhousie Medical Alumni network. He served as the DMAA President for three terms in the 90s and was later awarded the Honorary President Award of the DMAA during his time. His leadership has inspired generations, proving that the true heart of medicine lies not just in healing, but in connecting and giving back so others can move forward.

A Lifetime of care, community, and compassion

Dr. Howard Conter (MD '85, PGM '86, BSC '80) 2025 DMAA Family Physician of the Year

When Dr. Howard Conter reflects on four decades in family medicine, one word rises above the rest: gratitude.

Gratitude for the patients he's served, the communities he's built, and the meaningful connections that have defined every chapter of his career.

A proud Dalhousie alumnus and lifelong Haligonian, Dr. Conter has been at the heart of family medicine in Nova Scotia since 1986. He has provided comprehensive care at his Gladstone Professional Centre practice, the same office he established nearly four decades ago, now known as Richmond Family Practice.

"I always loved the variety," he says. "It kept the job fun and never stale."

Building a community beyond the clinic

For Dr. Conter, being a family physician has always meant more than diagnosing and treating.

"Medicine is about people helping people," he says. "It's not about machines or tests, it's about earning someone's trust and doing your best to never betray it."

Outside his practice, that same philosophy has shaped decades of community work. Dr. Conter has served on the board of the QEII Foundation and a long-standing commitment to Dreams Take Flight Atlantic, an Air Canada charity that takes 140 underprivileged children from across Atlantic Canada to Disney World for a day of wonder and joy.

Turning loss into legacy: The Tema Foundation

Among his many accomplishments, one of Dr. Conter's most meaningful is the Tema Foundation, a national charity he co-founded in memory of his sister, Tema, who was tragically murdered in Toronto at just 25. The paramedics who responded to her call developed post-traumatic stress disorder, and their experience illuminated a gap in mental health support for first responders.

For 30 years, the Tema Foundation has supported the mental and psychological health of first responders, including police, firefighters, military members, paramedics, correctional officers, and other frontline workers. Today, the organization provides education, training, and resources for resilience and trauma management nationwide.



"The goal was always to help people understand the unseen risks of their jobs," Dr. Conter explains. "Tema's legacy is helping thousands of people learn how to take care of themselves and each other."

Family, mentorship, and the heart of medicine

Throughout his career, Dr. Conter has delivered hundreds of babies, mentored countless students, and provided care to generations of families.

"There's nothing like handing someone their newborn and realizing you also delivered their parent," he says with a laugh. "That's the magic of family medicine."

He credits much of his success to the people who have grounded him: his wife of 43 years, Karen; their two children; and seven grandchildren. As he approaches retirement from full-time practice, Dr. Conter remains deeply engaged, whether serving on boards, auctioneering at charity galas with his son, or cheering on the teams he once cared for as team physician for the Halifax Mooseheads, the Halifax Citadels, and even professional soccer and basketball teams.

As he looks to the next chapter, Dr. Conter remains focused on what has always guided him. "If you're going to do something, in medicine, in family, in community—do it with your whole heart," he says. "That's what makes life meaningful."

Leading with heart and purpose in radiation oncology

Dr. Alexandre Riopel PGM '25 2025 DMAA Resident Leadership Award – Royal College



Dr. Stephen Miller, Dr. Alexandre Riopel and Dr. David Anderson

For Dr. Alexandre Riopel, medicine has always been about finding purpose in helping people live better, longer, and more meaningful lives.

His journey to becoming a radiation oncologist has been defined by resilience, curiosity, and a quiet but steadfast commitment to improving the lives of his patients and colleagues.

Before entering medicine, Dr. Riopel studied kinesiology, drawn by a fascination with health, performance, and the human body. But his path truly took shape when, at just fifteen years old, he faced his own health scare, requiring twenty hours of surgery and months of recovery.

“When you’re hospitalized that young, you start seeing life differently,” he reflects. “It gave me a sense early on of how much compassion and care matter in medicine.”

That empathy has carried through every stage of his career. A graduate of the University of Ottawa’s medical program, Dr. Riopel chose Dalhousie for his residency in radiation oncology, not only for the program’s reputation, but for the people. “The department felt like home,” he says. “I could see myself working with these colleagues for years to come, and now, I will be.”

Now, as a graduate of Dalhousie’s radiation oncology residency program, Dr. Riopel continues to advance his career in academic medicine and patient-centred care. Known among peers for his calm leadership and collaborative spirit, Dr. Riopel served as chief resident and helped enhance the residency experience at Dalhousie. His initiatives included creating a case-based simulation workshop in sarcoma care and developing learning opportunities for medical students interested in radiation oncology. He also facilitated national quality-improvement sessions and was invited to speak at Dalhousie’s Chief Residents’ Day.

“Leadership to me means leaving things better than you found them,” he says. “It’s about making sure the next generation of residents feels supported.”

Outside of the hospital, Dr. Riopel is just as committed to balance and community, lessons learned through years of competitive volleyball and coaching youth teams. He believes deeply in the importance of well-being in medicine, both for patients and practitioners.

“You can’t give your best to others if you don’t take care of yourself,” he says. “Finding that balance is one of the hardest but most important parts of being a doctor.”

As he transitions from residency to staff physician, Dr. Riopel remains motivated by the same sense of purpose that guided him from the start. “Medicine is about improving lives, whether through treatment, comfort, or hope,” he reflects. “That’s what keeps me passionate every day.”

For his compassion, innovation, and dedication to advancing care and mentorship in oncology, Dr. Alexandre Riopel is the 2025 recipient of the Royal College Resident Leadership Award—a well-deserved recognition for a young physician already shaping the future of his field.

Dr. Brett Ells honoured with Family Medicine Resident Leadership Award

Dr. Brett Ells (MD '23) 2025 DMAA Resident Leadership Award – Family



Dr. Stephen Miller, Dr. Brett Ells and Dr. David Anderson

When Dr. Brett Ells first applied to medical school, his path seemed uncertain. After earning his undergraduate degree, he started working at a major auto group, quickly becoming part of the leadership team. Although Dr. Ells found early success in this career, he felt a sense of unfulfillment.

“Something was missing,” he recalled. “I missed learning, growing, and connecting with people. That’s what ultimately brought me to medicine.”

Now completing his family medicine residency, Dr. Ells has become a leader known for advocacy, integrity, and collaboration—qualities that have earned him the Family Medicine Resident Leadership Award, which recognizes outstanding leadership among Dalhousie medical residents.

From student leader to system advocate

During his time at Dalhousie Medical School, Dr. Ells served as both class president and president of the Dalhousie Medical Students’ Society (DMSS), leading through the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I saw an opportunity to bring people together: students, faculty, and staff, at a time when connection was needed most,” he said.

His efforts helped maintain a sense of community and continuity for learners during one of the most disruptive periods in modern education.

As a resident, Dr. Ells continued that momentum. He became Chief Resident for the North Nova Family Medicine teaching site and later, president of Maritime Resident Doctors, where he helped lead a landmark collective agreement that significantly improved remuneration and working conditions for residents across Atlantic Canada.

“It wasn’t just about negotiation, it was about showing that when we speak with one voice, we can make meaningful change,” he said.

Leadership built on mentorship and community

Dr. Ells credits much of his growth to mentors who believed in him, including Drs. Andrew Glennie, Greg Thibodeau, Rob Harris (MD '11), Luke Marshall (BSC '05), Brad McDougall, Deanna Field (MD '05, PGM '07, BSCHCN'01 &, BSC '00), Chris Cook (MD '01), and Tara Dahn (MD '16 & PGM '19), and to his training experiences in rural and community-based medicine.

“Whenever I felt uncomfortable in a new learning environment or situation, I leaned in and embraced the opportunities and challenges, because that is when I learn and grow the most” he reflected.

His approach to leadership is grounded in advocacy, not only for his peers, but for patients navigating Canada’s complex healthcare system.

“Family physicians are advocates,” he said. “We’re the first point of contact, and that comes with a responsibility to lead, to listen, and to make sure people feel heard.”

Finding meaning in the messy middle

Dr. Ryan Densmore (MD '21) 2025 DMAA Resident Leadership Award Family



When Dr. Ryan Densmore talks about his journey to medicine, he laughs a little at how “non-linear” it’s been.

“I didn’t have any doctors in my family,” he says. “No real exposure to medicine growing up, other than seeing my family doctor and a lot of physiotherapy for sports injuries.” Yet, it was those small experiences that set off a quiet curiosity that grew into a calling.

A graduate of Acadia University, Dr. Densmore began his studies convinced he wanted to be a physiotherapist. “I thought I’d found my path, until I realized I wasn’t getting that spark I expected,” he recalls. A shift toward the sciences, a close-knit group of peers interested in health care, and a close family member’s diagnosis with diabetes opened his eyes to the impact family doctors have on patients’ lives. “Seeing the role the family physician played in managing their [referring to his family member] health, that’s what really clicked for me,” he says.

A new home in rural medicine

His new placement in Inverness, Cape Breton, turned out to be transformative. “It was the best experience I could’ve asked for,”

he says. “The community, the mentorship, the sense of purpose, it all came together there.” The experience also helped him see firsthand how rural physicians form the backbone of health care in smaller communities. “You’re not just the family doctor,” he explains. “You’re part of the community, the advocate, the problem-solver, the person who shows up for your neighbours.”

That deep sense of connection led Dr. Densmore to take on leadership roles early in his training, well before he ever arrived in Inverness. During the COVID years, he served as a community clerkship representative for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, advocating for learners across both provinces. Four years later, when he began training in Inverness, he continued this commitment to advocacy by taking on both the informal role of site representative and a formal leadership position on the MarDocs board of directors as a family medicine member at large. “A lot of program decisions were being made in Halifax,” he says. “We needed someone to remind the system that we existed, that rural training sites have different needs.”

Dr. Densmore became that voice. Through these positions, he pushed for meaningful systemic change that led to the appointment of Inverness’s first local site director and its first official chief resident. “That was huge,” he reflects. “Those positions are still in place today. It wasn’t about making things better for me; it was about making it better for the people coming after.”

Leadership in rural medicine

Now working full-time as an emergency physician at South Shore Regional Hospital in Bridgewater, and returning regularly to Inverness for locum shifts, Dr. Densmore continues to advocate for sustainable medical practice and physician wellness. “Medicine can be the most rewarding and the hardest thing you’ll ever do,” he says. “The culture needs to make room for both.”

He credits his mentors, colleagues, and the supportive communities that shaped his training for inspiring him to give back. “I want to use what I’ve learned to make things a little easier, a little better, for the next generation,” he says. “That’s what true leadership is to me.”



Thank you to our 2025 Dal Med Gala Sponsors



2026 DMAA Alumni Recognition Awards – Call for Nominations

Every day, Dalhousie medical alumni are advancing care, leading research, teaching the next generation, and strengthening our communities. The Dalhousie Medical Alumni Association Alumni Awards celebrate those whose impact truly stands out.

NOMINATE A DALHOUSIE MEDICAL ALUMNI TODAY!

Award categories and nomination forms are available at medicine.dal.ca. Please email completed nomination forms to medical.alumni@dal.ca by March 31, 2026.

Dr. Don Hill's support for collaborative research leads to lifetime achievement award

Dr. J. Donald “Don” Hill (MD ’60, LLD ’87), a renowned cardiac surgeon and innovator of mechanical circulatory support devices receives the 2025 Dalhousie Golden Eagle Lifetime Achievement Award.

A commitment to research propelled Dr. J. Donald “Don” Hill (MD ’60) to produce over 300 publications and secure 25 personal patents and a dozen grants over his 60-year tenure in medicine. Dr. Hill attributes his research success to four principles he identified over his career.

“First, you must have curiosity. Second, you need the imagination to go anywhere with any idea that you want. Third, you’ve got to find a way to visualize the end. And the fourth thing you need is reach—to ensure you have the resources and collaborators you need to do your work.”

Broadening horizons

Dr. Hill’s path to medicine began in junior high when he was assigned to create a booklet outlining his future career goals by a teacher. Unsure of what to write but knowing that he wouldn’t follow his family’s more literary leanings—his father ran a printing company and his aunt was a well-known children’s book writer—he wrote down ‘doctor.’ And this planted the seed.

Dr. Hill left high school in grade 11 and began his pre-medical studies at Dalhousie University at just 16 years old. He says that as his courses became more hands-on, his interest in medicine deepened. While initially leaning towards obstetrics and gynecology, Dr. Hill encountered a general surgeon during one of his rotations at the then Charlottetown Hospital who changed his career trajectory.

“There was a general surgeon there, Dr. Tom Laidlaw. He worked terrible, difficult hours and was totally devoted to medicine. I loved him,” says Dr. Hill with a laugh. “I did rounds with him and he let me assist him in his surgeries. At the end of my rotation, he had convinced me to become a surgeon.”

Dr. Hill then embarked on residencies in the United States and at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden. It was during this time in Sweden that his interest in cardiac surgery became solidified and he was drawn into the world of mechanical

circulatory support devices. After a year and a half of working internationally, Dr. Hill knew his next stop had to be at a cardiac surgery training program.

Crowning achievements

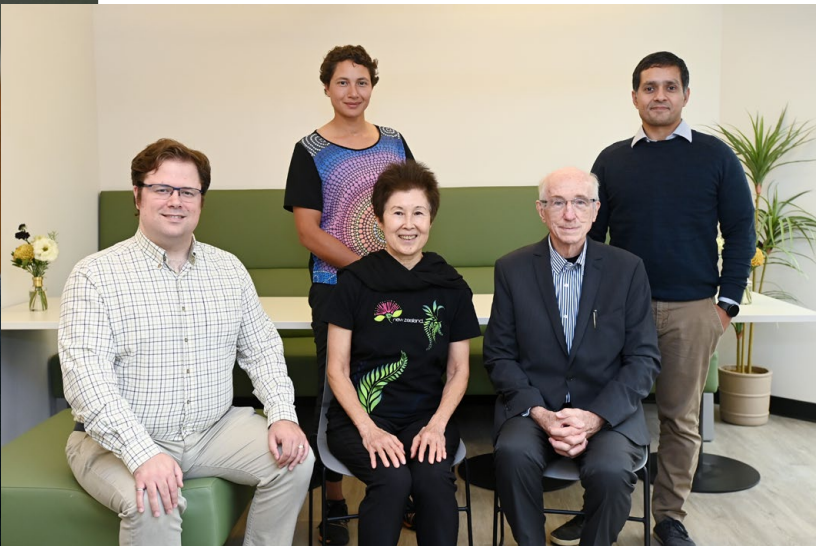
This commitment led him to San Francisco and the renowned researcher and cardiovascular surgeon, Dr. Frank Gerbode. Under Dr. Gerbode, Dr. Hill says he was given the “reach” or the freedom and support to undertake critical medical research—often collaborating with other specialists, technicians, and medical professionals in the process.

With so many accomplishments to his name, Dr. Hill is quick to note that his work with extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) and left ventricular assist devices (LVADs) are where he did his best work. In 1971, he was the first person in the world to successfully use ECMO as temporary external life support for a patient experiencing lung failure, effectively stabilizing them while the lungs healed.

“You would have people with bad pneumonia, bad lung trauma, and we would have to put the lungs at rest and have an artificial lung by the bed—like a respirator—which would take the carbon dioxide out and pump oxygen into the lung until a transplant was available,” he says. “You didn’t know it would work, until one day it did.”

In 1976, Dr. Hill founded Thoratec Laboratories which specialized in the cutting-edge development and manufacturing of implantable heart and lung assist devices. At Thoratec, Dr. Hill and his team developed numerous inventions, novel devices and surgical tools.

Additionally, in 1984, Dr. Hill performed the first bridge-to-transplant using a cardiac assist device for a patient experiencing heart failure. The results of these successful interventions were life-changing for the thousands of people who receive a second lease on life thanks to Dr. Hill’s skill and efforts.



▲ L-R: Dr. Shane Forbrigger, Dr. Nelly Amenyogbe, Jing Hill, Dr. Donald Hill, and Dr. Shero Sheikh. Shero, Nelly and Shane were/are all Donald Hill Family Postdoctoral Fellows.

Committing to positive collaboration

In 2018, Dr. Hill established the Donald Hill Family Postdoctoral Fellowships at Dal. These fellowships recognize the intellectual flexibility and financial supports needed to launch a postdoctoral career. As stipulated by Dr. Hill, the fellowships also encourage recipients to ensure that they are, “mindful of the consequences of their research to society and the world.”

Fellows undertaking research in medicine, engineering and computer science, or arts and social sciences are selected to receive full salaries a three-year term. Dr. Hill says an impetus for the creation of the fellowships came from witnessing the difficulty postdoctoral researchers had starting their careers, and from his desire to provide them with the “reach” they needed to succeed.

“I would see these people with PhDs, who had great ideas, but their careers were stuck because they were undervalued and underpaid. They couldn’t properly do their work, they couldn’t support their family, and they incurred huge debts during their studies,” he says.

Since 2018, 11 fellows have benefited from Dr. Hill’s generosity, and many have received tenured positions at universities across North America. For Dr. Hill, one of the most rewarding aspects has been seeing the fellows engage on research projects or papers together.

“[The fellows] are always amazed by how much they learn from one another. They meet and talk about their work and discover their research areas intersect or inform each other’s,” he says. “Academics shouldn’t be locked in a closet trying to do it all on their own. They need to open the doors and work together. It’s amazing to see that in action.”

While this isn’t the first time he has been honoured by his alma mater—he received an honorary degree in 1987—for Dr. Hill, receiving the 2025 Dalhousie Golden Eagle Lifetime Achievement Award provides him with a sense of accomplishment.

“I was in medicine because it was fun and challenging. To have it acknowledged [by Dal] that maybe I wasn’t really that selfish to do what I like, and I made things better for a lot of people—it’s a recognition that, in fact, I did do something worthwhile,” he says.



Class of 1985: Reconnecting, remembering, and raising \$100,000 for the next generation

When members of Dalhousie Medical School's Class of 1985 gathered this past summer to celebrate their 40th reunion, the event was about much more than nostalgia. It was a return to shared roots, a chance to reconnect, reminisce, and, as it turned out, rally together for a cause that will continue shaping Dalhousie Medicine long after the reunion glow fades.

In less than two months, the class has raised over \$100,000 to establish their own class fund, an achievement that class fund organizer Dr. Ian Campbell (MD '85) admits took him by surprise.

"When I was updating my address online, I noticed other MD class funds listed. I thought, 'What's this?' So, I reached out and before long, we had our own Class of '85 fund."

What began as a simple inquiry quickly became a powerful movement of collective generosity.

"It just made sense," he explains. "We've all gone through the

same profession, and Dalhousie Medicine played such a huge role in shaping who we are. Medicine isn't just what we do, it's part of our identity. Giving back felt like a way to acknowledge that."

Reunion bonds and renewed purpose

For Dr. Campbell, the reunion itself reinforced just how deep those shared experiences run. Seeing classmates he hadn't connected with in decades, some for the first time since graduation, made it an emotional reminder of the enduring bonds forged during those intense years of training in Halifax.

"What really struck me was how easy it was to pick up where we left off," he says. "You can be apart for 40 years, but within five seconds, you're talking like it's 1985 again."

That sense of connection became the catalyst for something bigger. Encouraged by classmates like Drs. Cindy Forbes and Colin Mann, Dr. Campbell began reaching out to others, sending updates and rallying support.

"Every reunion brings people together for a weekend, the class fund gives us a reason to stay connected in between," he says. "It keeps the conversation going."

◀ MD Class of 1985 on a group bike ride during their 40th reunion.

The power of giving back

The Class of 1985's generosity couldn't have come at a more meaningful time. Today's medical students face unprecedented financial pressures, tuition and living costs have climbed dramatically since the days when a summer job could pay the bills.

"We heard during our reunion that the average medical student debt now exceeds \$200,000," Dr. Campbell says. "That really hit home. It's just not possible anymore to go through medical school without a significant financial burden."

Knowing their contributions will help ease that pressure has given the class a renewed sense of purpose. The fund will support medical learners through bursaries and other forms of financial aid, an investment in the future of medicine and a testament to the class's gratitude for the education that launched their careers.

"I think we all feel a debt of gratitude to Dalhousie," Dr. Campbell reflects. "If we can help even one student worry a little less about money and focus more on learning medicine, then we've done something worthwhile."

A model for other classes

Beyond the immediate impact on students, Dr. Campbell sees the Class of 1985's fund as part of something larger, a growing culture of alumni engagement.

"If each graduating class had a class fund, it would become part of the Dalhousie Medicine tradition," he says. "We may have graduated 40 years ago," he says, "but Dalhousie Medicine is still part of who we are. This fund is our way of saying thank you and of helping ensure that future students can experience what we did."



The MD class of 1985 at their recent 40th reunion this past September.

Just one month later, the MD 1995 class followed suit, establishing their own Class Fund and raising over \$100,000 in just 5 weeks. Both MD 1985 and MD 1995 were recognized on November 1 at the Dal Med Gala, alongside MD 1969 and MD 1973 for surpassing the \$100,000 milestone, and MD 1970 for an extraordinary \$200,000 in class fundraising.

If your class is interested in starting a Class Fund to support future medical learners, the Dalhousie Medical Alumni Association is here to help. Reach out to medical.alumni@dal.ca, and we will connect you directly with a Development Officer who can guide you through the process.

Forward together

New associate dean, UGME, Dr. Ian Epstein’s vision for medical education

When Dr. Ian Epstein (MD '04, PGM '09 & BA '99) reflects on his professional journey, beginning as a medical student at Dalhousie and now stepping into the role of associate dean of undergraduate medical education (UGME), he speaks often about togetherness.

It’s not just a passing thought. It’s a philosophy.

“We live in a time where external forces like social media, algorithms, and politics often try to divide us,” he says. “Our work must resist that. It should bring people together.”

Dr. Epstein, who completed both his undergraduate and postgraduate training at Dalhousie Medical School, began his tenure as associate dean on July 1, 2025. It’s a role he says means a lot both personally and professionally.

“Becoming a doctor shapes your entire life; it’s more than just a profession. So, returning to serve in this capacity, in a program that shaped me, feels like an extraordinary opportunity.”

Dr. Epstein sees this new chapter not as a departure, but as a natural extension of his work as assistant dean of the Office of Professional Affairs (OPA), a position he has held since the office was established in 2022. He worked closely alongside the assistant dean, OPA for DMNB, Dr. Samantha Gray, and leadership to build the OPA from the ground up. The office works closely with both undergraduate and postgraduate medical education (PGME) on sensitive student issues. This meant Dr. Epstein had engagement with students, unit heads, clinical instructors and many others deeply entrenched in the UGME world, significantly impacting his approach to his new role. His biggest takeaway: ensuring students have the best possible learning environment must be central to the work of the Faculty.

“It’s not about perfection. It’s about being kind, supporting each other, and making hard work less difficult by treating one another with respect,” he says. “Let’s give it a bit of a family vibe. Things aren’t perfect in families, but there’s support and kindness and that’s the kind of culture I want to nurture.”

This attitude extends to how he hopes the UGME office functions internally and in partnership with others.

“I want students to feel like UGME, student affairs, OPA, CPDME, and PGME are all part of the same team. In fact, I wouldn’t mind if students didn’t even know which office does what, just that they have support no matter where they turn.”

Transformative medical education

Dr. Epstein approaches his new role with both excitement and trepidation.

“It’s a big role,” he says. “It involves overseeing hundreds of students across three campuses and distributed clinical sites in three provinces. That’s a lot of responsibility, but it also means having a wide-reaching impact.”

During his tenure as internal medicine PGME program director, Dr. Epstein oversaw approximately 200 residents for over a decade. Watching them grow, graduate, and go on to care for patients was profoundly fulfilling. In his new role, he sees an opportunity to amplify that influence, supporting even more learners as they begin their journeys in medicine.

And as he begins his own journey as associate dean, he has outlined four broad priorities that align with his collaborative approach—priorities he says are well-established thanks to the excellent work of outgoing associate dean, UGME, Dr. Evelyn Sutton, her predecessors, and the other assistant deans in the Faculty of Medicine.

With the recent UGME accreditation process behind the Faculty, Dr. Epstein’s first focus is to closely review the results when they are received in the fall and lead a coordinated response to areas for continued growth.

His second priority is accessibility and equity-related initiatives, for which he remarks on the progress made, but the extensive work that still needs to be done.

“The learning environment reflects centuries of societal baggage and while we’ve made steps toward reconciliation



and inclusivity, with admissions pathways, PLANS (Promoting Leadership in health for African Nova Scotians), and KW (Keknu’tmasiek Ta’n Tel Welo’ltimk), those are just beginnings. We need to go further. We must talk about this openly and often, even when it’s uncomfortable. It can’t be a one-and-done initiative. We must maintain momentum.”

He’s particularly committed to working more closely with Dalhousie’s community-facing units, including PLANS, KW and associate dean of serving and engaging society, Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed’s office, and ensuring diverse voices guide ongoing reforms.

Dr. Epstein’s third priority, and one that, as mentioned, encompasses his whole philosophy and also overlaps the first two priorities, is improving the learning environment.

“How was the learning environment evaluated by students during accreditation, and how does our entire community feel about it,” he asks. “The goal is to continuously improve the learning environment and create the best educational environment in Canada, and potentially the world.”

Dr. Epstein’s final priority—assessment innovation—will be an ongoing focus, recognizing that educational practices and assessment strategies are continually evolving. With entrustable professional activities (EPAs) and competency-based education recently introduced in clerkship, his goal is to continue modernizing and advancing the assessment system to better support student learning. While he is proud of Dalhousie Medical

School’s strong performance, including high Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination results and well-prepared graduates, he is committed to ongoing improvement and staying at the forefront of assessment science, particularly as tools like AI become more integrated into medical education.

He also acknowledges some of the big challenges ahead such as expanding clinical capacity across multiple provinces, faculty development, and maintaining excellence across a growing, distributed program, will require focus, alignment, and a shared sense of purpose.

“We must keep moving forward, listening to our communities, staying open to feedback and being ready to change are all vital,” he says. “This includes acknowledging mistakes, embracing new ideas, and staying humble. We don’t have all the answers.”

A culture of support and excellence

As he begins this new chapter, Dr. Epstein brings a rare combination of vision, humility, and deeply held values. His energy is infectious. His intentions are clear.

“I want us to be known as the friendliest, most supportive medical school in Canada. A place where the learning environment is a point of pride, and where we take care of our students, our patients, and each other.”

A rising tide lifts all boats: A new wave of future physicians in Cape Breton

In a heartfelt celebration at Cape Breton University's Boardmore Theatre on August 22, 2025, the inaugural class of the Cape Breton Medical Campus (CBMC) was honoured in a ceremony titled Rising Tide, or El~mpa'q in Mi'kmaq.

The celebration marked the beginning of a transformative journey for 30 future physicians, surrounded by family, friends, and community leaders.

Emceed by Dr. Annalee Coakley, CBMC's assistant dean of student and resident affairs, the ceremony reflected the values of compassion, service, and lifelong learning. Dr. Coakley extended special thanks to Doctors Nova Scotia President Dr. Shelley McNeil and eastern zone physician advisor Ryan Brown, who gifted each student a stethoscope—a symbolic welcome to the field of medicine.

Local business owners Steve and Katherine van Nostrand also contributed, donating lab coats embroidered with the CBMC logo.

"The rising tide represents the collective strength, resilience and momentum of you, our future doctors," Dr. Coakley shared. "As the tide rises, it lifts all boats. And so too, must we rise together, committed to building a health system that is accessible for all."



A lighthouse carved from resilience

A striking sculpture by Nova Scotia artisan Liam Tromans served as the ceremony's focal point. Carved from trees felled by Hurricane Fiona in 2022, the lighthouse stands as a beacon of hope and guidance for the students as they embark on their medical studies.

The ceremony also featured words of encouragement from Dr. Jennifer Hall, senior associate dean of CBMC; Dr. David Anderson, dean of Dalhousie's Faculty of Medicine; and CBU president and vice-chancellor David C. Dingwall. Each speaker emphasized the importance of community, equity, and the transformative power of education.

The event concluded with a stirring performance of Rise Again by Lucy MacNeil and her brother Stuart of the beloved Barra MacNeils. Written by Leon Dubinsky, the song—often called Cape Breton's unofficial anthem—captured the spirit of resilience and renewal that defines both the region and its newest medical students.

A vision for rural healthcare

The Cape Breton Medical Campus is more than a new academic institution—it's a bold step toward addressing healthcare gaps across Nova Scotia. A partnership between Cape Breton University and Dalhousie's Faculty of Medicine, with support from the Province, CBMC will welcome 30 new students each year, with graduates poised to serve as family doctors in rural communities across the province.

◀ 2025 Rising Tides Ceremony

▲ Dr. Jennifer Hall, Senior Associate Dean of CBMC at the Rising Tide Ceremony.



Paying it forward, one student at a time

Gratitude and opportunity

The impact of these funds goes beyond academic excellence; it's about mental and physical well-being and the ability to succeed.

"Everything is interconnected," he explains. "If you don't have to work a part-time job, you can be fresh and focused. Studying Medicine is hard work, and you can't miss a chapter. If you're bartending until two in the morning to make ends meet, you aren't going to be at your best the next morning to hit the books."

Legacy, for Dr. Embil, is rooted in gratitude and opportunity.

"To be accepted to medical school is a privilege. To graduate is a privilege. Practicing medicine is a privilege. I still don't believe I made it—I had imposter syndrome! But I'm grateful for every opportunity I had, and now we can pay it forward."

He recalls a classmate in 1988 who graduated with \$110,000 in debt—a staggering amount at the time, simply a drop in the bucket these days. Today the average student debt at graduation is \$250,000.

Philanthropy and the future of medicine

Dr. Embil believes philanthropy is essential to the future of medical education in Canada.

"We're blessed to have excellent, government-subsidized education, but it's still a struggle for many. With changing demographics—new Canadians, rural, and low-income students—we need to support the best and the brightest who deserve the chance to study medicine. They are the foundation of this country and of the practice of medicine."

Targeted funds, like the one the Embil family has created for parents, are part of, an important movement towards student diversity in medical schools which will ultimately lead to better patient outcomes, more culturally competent physicians, and research that addresses systemic health disparities, making healthcare more accessible and effective for everyone.

"We're supporting the infrastructure of the future," says Dr. Embil. "With societal changes and the push for equity, diversity, inclusivity and accessibility, people who wouldn't have had the opportunity now do."

His advice to students facing personal and financial challenges is simple: "Reach out. Use every resource available—Doctors NS, community programs, the Faculty of Medicine. Find a bank with the best rates," he laughs. "Never lose the dream. Keep focused and keep going."



Dr. John Embil (MD '89) grew up in a Halifax household steeped in science and service. His father, a Cuban immigrant, Dalhousie faculty member, infectious diseases consultant and virologist, laid the foundation for a life devoted to infectious diseases.

"I had no imagination," Dr. Embil jokes. "I followed in his footsteps."

After earning his medical degree from Dalhousie in 1989 and completing a rotating internship in 1990, Dr. Embil moved west to pursue postgraduate training in internal medicine and infectious diseases at the University of Manitoba.

He then built a thriving career in Winnipeg, where he remains today—a clinician, researcher, educator, administrator, husband, father, and passionate advocate for medical students.

A legacy of giving

Over the past three decades, the Embil family has established eight funds at Dalhousie's Faculty of Medicine to support medical research and education. Each fund reflects a deeply personal story: one honours his mother's experience with cardiac disease; another celebrates his father's legacy in infectious diseases. The latest fund is inspired by another meaningful force in Dr. Embil's life—parenthood.

This new bursary is earmarked for medical students with children, particularly single parents, who are navigating four demanding years of study with little or no income.

"It used to be mostly young, unmarried people. Now we're seeing older, mature students—some in their 40s—who have fewer years in the workforce to recoup the financial loss. Studying medicine is a full-time job. How can we lessen the burden on someone trying to succeed?"

For Dr. Embil, giving back is a way to honour the institution that shaped his career and the community that supported his journey.



Backing Black futures in medicine: A new bursary supporting Black medical students at Dalhousie

For many Black students, the journey to medical school is marked by ambition, resilience, and sometimes, isolation. The launch of a new bursary is helping to change that narrative—offering not only financial support, but a sense of belonging.

Dalhousie University's Faculty of Medicine is proud to announce a transformative partnership with the Foundation for Black Communities (FFBC), marking a significant step toward equity in medical education. Through a generous \$200,000 gift, FFBC has launched the Black Medical Students Bursary for first year medical students to receive a one time amount of \$10,000 which is a national initiative designed to reduce financial barriers for Black learners entering medical school.

This landmark gift will be distributed over four years, providing \$50,000 annually, which Dalhousie has committed to matching dollar-for-dollar, bringing the total annual support to \$100,000. The bursary is part of a broader national effort, with McGill University and Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) also participating, and Black Physicians of Canada serving as a key partner, helping inform the selection process and ensuring the program reflects the lived experiences and needs of Black medical learners.

Why this bursary matters

FFBC's Black Medical Student Bursary matters because representation matters. The launch of the Black Medical Students Bursary at Dalhousie comes at a critical time in Canadian healthcare. Despite comprising 3.5 per cent of the national population, Black Canadians remain underrepresented in medicine, with significant

◀ This year's award recipients, Nathan Barton and Aaliyah Arab-Smith

disparities in access to care, health outcomes, and representation among healthcare professionals. For example, in Ontario, Black individuals make up 4.7 per cent of the population, but only 2.3 per cent of physicians. This lack of representation has real consequences. Research shows that patients who are treated by physicians of the same racial background experience better communication, increased trust, and improved health outcomes. Conversely, systemic anti-Black racism in healthcare contributes to poorer health outcomes, mistrust in medical institutions, and barriers to care. Something Dalhousie is committed to changing.

"Representation matters for patients because it helps build trust, especially in a system where trust has been broken by historical injustices."

– NATHAN BARTON

For first year med student and one of this year's award recipients, Nathan Barton, representation is vital in healthcare. "Medicine should reflect the diversity of the community it serves, and it hasn't for a very long time. Representation matters for patients because it helps build trust, especially in a system where trust has been broken by historical injustices. When patients see themselves reflected in their healthcare provider, it helps them feel heard and understood." Aaliyah Arab-Smith, another bursary recipient, echoes the importance of representation and community. Her inspiration to pursue medicine is rooted in family, community, and the desire to make a difference. "Representation builds trust, especially in a system where medical mistrust exists. It also helps students see what's possible—when you see someone in a field, you can imagine yourself there too."

By supporting Black medical students financially, the bursary helps break down barriers to entry and fosters a more inclusive medical workforce. It also sends a powerful message: that Black excellence in medicine is not only possible, but essential. "Personally, it's a reminder that the community is behind me on this journey—the same community I hope to serve as a physician," Nathan shares. "Professionally, it gives me the freedom to concentrate on becoming the best physician I can be, without added financial concerns." As Dalhousie and its partners work to build a healthcare system that reflects the diversity of Canada, initiatives like this bursary are foundational to that vision.

Matching Funding for Future Growth

While the initial \$200,000 investment is a significant milestone, this work is only the beginning.

To deepen and expand this bursary at Dalhousie—reaching more students, increasing support services, and sustaining mentorship over the course of medical training—we invite our alumni, donors, and friends of the Faculty of Medicine to join in matching FFBC's investment.

"Thank you for your generosity," says Aaliyah as her message to FFBC and other donors. "The impact you have is huge—it's not just about those who receive the bursary, but about those we serve and the youth who see what's possible. Your support goes a long way in mental well-being, in building trust, and in contributing to equity in medicine."

Dalhousie's participation in this initiative reflects its ongoing commitment to equity and dedication to ensuring that financial barriers do not stand in the way of future Black physicians.

To learn more or contribute to matching funds, please contact medadvancement@dal.ca

Impact locally, alignment nationally

Dalhousie’s participation in the FFBC bursary aligns with ongoing inclusive pathway initiatives—such as the Inclusive Pathways to Medical Professions, Promoting Leadership in Health for African Nova Scotians (PLANS), and Indigenous Health supports—expanding our ecosystem of access, support, and community.

The bursary’s structure—financial relief plus mentoring—directly addresses real student needs like tuition, books, equipment, living costs, and the ability to engage fully in the academic and community life of medical school without undue financial strain.

“It’s about more than just money—it’s about resources, mentorship, and connections that help us navigate underrepresented spaces.”

– AALIYAH ARAB-SMITH

There is great power in community and mentorship. In his undergrad, Nathan was one of two Black students in his program, and at times, he felt isolated. But medical school has been a completely different experience—there are 30 Black medical students in the class of 2029, and through programs like PLANS, the Black Medical Student Association, and the FFBC, there’s a strong sense of community and opportunity for mentorship.

For Aaliyah, the bursary and the broader network have helped her overcome impostor syndrome and build connections. “It’s about more than just money—it’s about resources, mentorship, and connections that help us navigate underrepresented spaces.”

“The bursary reinforces that sense of belonging,” agrees Nathan. “it’s not just financial support; it’s tangible community support.”

Looking ahead, Nathan’s ambitions are rooted in advocacy and giving back. His ultimate goal is to practice medicine in Nova Scotia and advocate for equitable healthcare, particularly for the African Nova Scotian community.

“Giving back isn’t just my hope—it’s part of the reason I started this journey. I want to help address health disparities and restore trust within the healthcare system.”

Aaliyah is also committed to giving back, both in her career and through mentorship.

“I aspire to give back philanthropically one day, but giving back isn’t just financial—it’s about presence and quality time. Whether it’s participating in panel discussions, one-on-one conversations, or informal mentorships, I want to inspire youth in my community to pursue their dreams.”



Aaliyah Arab-Smith, MD class of 2029



Nathan Barton, MD class of 2029

A Glimpse into the past: Dalhousie Medicine opens Class of 2000 time capsule

During the annual graduation barbecue for the Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine Class of 2025, a remarkable piece of history was unexpectedly brought to light.

A time capsule, sealed by the Class of 2000, was discovered by Evan Starratt of the Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME) office while organizing a storage room in the iconic Sir Charles Tupper Medical Building.

It was a chance find that turned into a memorable moment for the graduating class.

The unboxing, which was livestreamed on Instagram, featured the participation of current class co-presidents Ali Abidali and Alexie Ouellette, alongside Dr. Stephen Miller, senior associate dean of medical education, and the current and former deans of medicine, Drs. David Anderson and Noni MacDonald.

“I was delighted and honoured to be the dean for the class of 2000, just as I am to be here today,” said Dr. MacDonald during the opening, who originally oversaw the capsule’s creation 25 years ago.

Inside the box were artifacts from the turn of the millennium: medical equipment, Dalhousie Medical Student Society materials, news clippings, and memorabilia that helped paint a picture of life at the medical school at the time.

Among the standout items was a guestbook from the Tupper Building, beginning with the signature of the Queen Mother from its 1967 opening. A VHS tape of the 2000 Euphoria! performance—Dal Med’s annual variety show—also drew laughs and a sense of nostalgia from the crowd.

A Message from the past

One of the most moving moments came when Alexie Ouellette read aloud excerpts from a letter written by Dr. MacDonald on behalf of the class to their future counterparts. The letter reflected pride, hope for the future, and a desire to leave an impact on those who would follow in their footsteps.

“The capsule contains items from students, faculty, and residents representing the turn of the century,” the letter read. “We were the first medical school in the country to offer a virtual tour that included stops at all teaching hospitals in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. We hope this inspires you to share a legacy of your own.”

The letter continued with a heartfelt message:

“This is a tangible connection with real people who, in the year 2000, studied, taught, conducted research, and administered and carried out the day-to-day functions of running a busy medical school. On behalf of all these people—best wishes from the year 2000.”



Class of 2025 co-presidents, Ali Abidali and Alexie Ouellette, opening the MD 2000 time capsule this year at the grad BBQ.

Alexie especially enjoyed looking through the materials and seeing familiar faces. “It was a reminder that although medical school has been challenging, the people who have taught us and the people we look up to were in our shoes at one point and one day we’ll be the ones who seem to have it all figured out!”

Reflections across time

Dr. Noni MacDonald shared a touching observation about the generational shift between the two classes. “The Class of 2000 saw that moment in time as so pivotal—something worth marking,” she noted, referencing the turn of the millennium.”

“They were struck by the differences. It’s a reminder of how much changes, and how much stays the same—like life itself.”

Current co-president of the class agrees. “I really feel like the med school experience has been mostly the same over the years,” says Ali Abidali. “It was just cool to see us all share similar fond experiences.”

Her reflections highlight the evolution of medical education at Dal and the spirit that connects generations of graduates.

The discovery and opening of the Class of 2000’s time capsule offered more than just a look at old equipment and memorabilia—it sparked conversations about how far medical education has come, and what values and traditions continue.

As the Class of 2025 steps into their future, they do so with a new sense of connection to the past, and perhaps, the inspiration to leave a legacy of their own.

Watch the moment

You can watch the full unboxing on Dalhousie Medicine’s Student & Resident Affairs Wellness Instagram account [@dalmedwell](#).



◀ Connie Wheatley, mobility research participant

Research that moves us forward: How Dalhousie is transforming mobility care

For many Nova Scotians, mobility challenges caused by arthritis, stroke, or aging can mean more than physical discomfort—they can lead to isolation, loss of independence, and diminished quality of life. At Dalhousie University, researchers are working to change that.

Leading this effort is Dr. Janie Astephen Wilson (MAsc '02, PhD '08), a proud Dalhousie alum who earned her PhD in biomedical engineering here before completing a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Cape Town. Today, she is a professor in the School of biomedical Engineering, an adjunct professor in the Department of Surgery, and leads one of the most advanced human movement research programs in Canada.

Dr. Wilson's interdisciplinary research program focuses on biomechanics and mobility for our aging population, with a strong emphasis on integrating innovative technologies into clinical decision-making.

"Mobility is about more than movement—it's about dignity, connection, and quality of life," says Dr. Wilson.

Her team's research focuses on innovation for clinical uptake of camera-based motion capture and wearable technology—devices similar to smartwatches that track muscle activation and joint movement in real time. These systems provide clinicians with objective data that goes far beyond traditional visual assessments. Instead of relying on occasional clinic visits, wearable technology offers continuous insight into how patients move in their daily lives, enabling earlier interventions and more personalized care.

Beyond the lab: Wearable tech for stroke recovery

While Dr. Wilson's work focuses on musculoskeletal health, her colleague Dr. Annemarie Laudanski is pioneering research that uses wearable sensors to improve recovery after stroke. Her team is developing technology that can detect subtle changes in muscle activation and movement patterns—signals that often indicate instability or harmful compensation during rehabilitation.

"Right now, rehab relies on visual assessments and repetitive exercises," says Dr. Laudanski. "That only captures a snapshot of a person's life. Wearable technology gives us continuous, objective data—even as patients go about their day. It means we can intervene earlier and personalize treatment."

Dr. Laudanski's vision is to integrate this data into patient health records, making it accessible to clinicians and physiotherapists across Nova Scotia—including in rural areas of the province.

"This research is about equity," she says. "It's about making advanced care available to people in rural communities who can't always travel for in-person rehab."

Connie's story: Independence restored

For patients like Connie Wheatley, the impact of this research is life changing. After five years of knee pain and limited mobility due to arthritis, Connie participated in Dr. Wilson's study that used technology to monitor her movement and recovery.

The data collected allowed Connie's surgeons to develop a personalized procedure—and meant that instead of a full replacement like was originally prescribed, she only had to undergo a partial knee replacement—a less invasive surgery meaning a better range of motion, fewer potential complications, and a faster recovery time.

Just weeks after her procedure, Connie was walking without a cane, gardening again, and planning her next trip.

"Being more active means independence," Connie says. "This research helped me get my life back."

The Molly Appeal: A tradition of impact

Since its founding in 1980, the Molly Appeal has become a cornerstone of medical research fundraising at Dalhousie University. Each year, the Molly Appeal focuses on a different area of urgent need—from cancer and neuroscience to cardiovascular health and family medicine—bringing together donors, researchers, and patients in a shared mission to improve lives. Its legacy is one of compassion, collaboration, and a deep belief in the power of community and philanthropy to create change.

This year's campaign shines a spotlight on groundbreaking mobility research led by Dalhousie scientists—including Dr. Wilson and Dr. Laudanski.

"This research is helping people like Connie get their lives back," says Dr. Wilson. "And that's only possible because of the generosity of donors who believe in the power of science to change lives."

Help us move research forward

This research has already had great impact on patients in the region—like Connie. The Wilson Orthopaedic Biomechanics Lab is equipped with state-of-the-art motion capture systems, instrumented walkways, and muscle testing devices that allow researchers to study how people move and load their joints. This work helps identify biomechanical markers that inform treatment decisions and predict recovery outcomes.

When we can identify which patients truly need surgery—and which would benefit more from personalized physiotherapy or other less invasive treatments—we can transform care delivery.

Objective data from wearable and motion capture technology helps clinicians make evidence-based decisions, reducing unnecessary procedures and prioritizing those who need them most. This means shorter waitlists, lower healthcare costs, and better outcomes for patients. It's not just about improving mobility—it's about creating a smarter, more sustainable healthcare system for everyone.

But maintaining and expanding this level of innovation requires significant resources. While the infrastructure is in place, scaling these technologies for real-world clinical use—and making them accessible across Nova Scotia—depends on continued investment. Funding supports not only the technology but also the highly skilled engineers, clinicians, and students who turn research into life-changing solutions for patients.

In the spirit of Molly Moore, if everyone gives what they can, real change can happen. To support life-changing mobility research, visit giving.dal.ca/molly and make a donation today. Every step—and every dollar—counts.

Why mobility research matters:

Arthritis affects 1 in 5 Canadians.

In 2022–2023 over 1,100 outpatient hip and knee replacement surgeries were performed in Nova Scotia—most due to osteoarthritis.

Mobility challenges impact mental health, independence, and quality of life.

Limited mobility increases risk of depression and social isolation.

Stroke is the third leading cause of death and the leading cause of long-term disability in adults.

Up to 80 per cent of stroke survivors experience mobility limitations.

Nova Scotia has one of the highest proportions of seniors in Canada.

Falls are the leading cause of injury-related hospitalizations among seniors in Canada.

Class Notes

Have a professional accomplishment you’d like to share with the alumni community? Please contact medical.alumni@dal.ca.

2000s

Dr. Ian Epstein (MD '04, PGM '09 & BA '99) appointed associate dean, Undergraduate Medical Education (UGME) for a five-year term – July 2025

Dr. Janice Chisholm (MD '00 & PGM '05) reappointment as head of the Department of Anesthesia, Pain Management and Perioperative Medicine – July 2025

Dr. Andre Bernard (MD '06 & PGM '12) appointed chair, Canadian Medical Association Board of Directors

Dr. Sarah Cook (MD '05) elected as the 72nd president of the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) – November 2025

2020s

Dr. Jasmine Mah (PhD '25) appointed MarDocs resident representative for the Dalhousie Medical Alumni Association – June 2025

Doctors Nova Scotia 2025 Awards for Exemplary Achievement

- Dr. Kenneth Rockwood (PGM '91)
- Dr. Brent Young (MD '19, MSC '15 & BSc '13)
- Dr. Sepideh Behroozan (MD '15 & PGM '17)
- Dr. Todd Dow (MD '20)
- Dr. Kenisse Trotman (BSCPH '21 BSc '16)
- Dr. Cornelis de Boer (assistant professor psychiatry)
- Dr. Laurie Mallery (PGM '91)
- Dr. Paul Murphy (MD '74)

Canadian Medical Association 2025 Award Recipients

- Dr. Noni MacDonald (professor emeritus, paediatrics and past dean of medicine)
- Dr. Neil Gibson (PGM '91)
- Dr. Jordin Fletcher (MD '25)

Stay connected. Stay involved. Shape the future.

The Dalhousie Medical Alumni Association is welcoming applications for Members-at-Large—an opportunity to stay meaningfully engaged, connect with fellow alumni, and help guide the next chapter of our medical community.

All Dalhousie medical alumni are invited to apply, including MD, postgraduate, MSc, and PhD graduates.

We’d love to have you join us!

To learn more or express your interest, contact us at medical.alumni@dal.ca.

In Memoriam

The DMAA acknowledges the passing of our alumni and faculty with sincere sympathy and gratitude for their contributions to medicine. If you know of anyone to note in this section, please contact medical.alumni@dal.ca.

Dr. Elihu Pugsley Rees
(retired faculty member)
Passed away July 10, 2025

Dr. Lisa Marie Dickson (MD '07)
Passed away September 22, 2025

Dr. Spencer Hon Sun Lee
(retired faculty member)
Passed away September 17, 2025

Dr. Ivan Woolfrey (MD '65)
Passed away October 13, 2025

Dr. Vance Geldart (MD '65)
Passed away January 19, 2025

Dr. Syed Akhtar (PGM '69)
Passed away October 22, 2025

Dr. Robert Campbell (MD '55)
Passed away April 29, 2025

Dr. Ian Fleming (MD '88)
Passed away May 4, 2025

Dr. Richard Denton (MD '74)
Passed away May 7, 2025

Dr. Richard Chisholm (MD '80 & PGM '89)
Passed away June 15, 2025

Dr. Tracy Scott (MD '91 & MD '97)
Passed away June 30, 2025

Dr. Perry Spencer (MD '75)
Passed away July 16, 2025

Dr. Fernald Wentzell (MD '74)
Passed away July 19, 2025

Dr. Donald Steeves (MD '69)
Passed July 29, 2025

Dr. Edwin Rosenberg (MD '65)
Passed December 6, 2025

Dr. Jacques Desrosiers (MD '84 & PGM '85)
Passed away July 3, 2025

Dr. Douglas Moore (MD '72)
Passed away July 9, 2025

Dr. John Keating (PGM '83)
Passed away August 19, 2025

Dr. Sylvie Argouarch (PGM '92)
Passed away August 2, 2025

Dr. Norman Shore (MD '72)
Passed away September 13, 2025

Dr. Joseph Hayes (MD '62)
Passed away September 4, 2025

Dr. Howard Parson (MD '72)
Passed away September 9, 2025

Dr. Edwin “Ted” Roy (MD '67 & BSc '62)
Passed away November 17, 2025

Dr. Jane Findlater (MD '74)
Passed away November 16, 2025

Dr. Mark Allen Edgar (MD '88)
Passed away February 22, 2025

Dr. Gordon (Gord) Blair MD'65
Passed away December 9, 2025

Reunion Recaps

MD 1970



The MD Class of 1970 gathered in Halifax at the Nova Scotian Westin Hotel, May 30 to June 1, 2025, for a most enjoyable and memorable 55th Year Reunion. The attendance was quite remarkable in view of our advancing years, with 28 classmates & a total of 50 attendees. Eighteen of the remaining ranks were unable to attend. Since our graduation in 1970, we have lost 17 members who were duly remembered at the Class Dinner with a minute of silence and reflection.

The first evening, we enjoyed a boisterous "Meet & Greet" reception with music and song, under the leadership of our talented classmate Mike Banks on the keyboard.

The next morning, all members were on deck for a class seminar which featured talks on various subjects by classmates Mike Johnsoton, Karl Misik, and Bill Stanish. As well, Dean Anderson gave a terrific presentation on the activities of our Medical School, including plans for the future. The seminar concluded with a delightful talk by author Jin Meek, who ghostwrote our recently deceased classmate Ron Stewart's autobiography "Treat Them Where They Lie."

That afternoon, we experienced one of Halifax Harbour's "greatest treats - a fog-bound cruise on the Harbour Queen from Murphy's Wharf. Thank goodness for the bar on board, as it was impossible to see more than two or three boat lengths away. The onboard foghorn kept blaring every ten minutes or so. An experience we'll all not soon forget.

Everyone recovered nicely from the cruise to attend the official class dinner that evening at the hotel's Harbour Suites. Aside from fine food and wine, we learned that the Class Endowment Fund had well surpassed the \$200K mark and received the 200K cup at the Dal Med Gala. During dinner, we were entertained by a revolving slide presentation of events spanning our time on the med school campus over 60 years ago (pre the Tupper Building) to the most recent class reunions. These photo memories were preserved by our late classmate, Bill Patterson. The evening ended with a wild Rock & Roll dance under the guidance of Class DJ, Jim Seaman.

On Sunday morning, June 1st, we all bid farewell at a buffet brunch, vowing to get together again at future Dal Med Galas and

maybe a 60th Reunion in five years' time. All agreed this was the best reunion ever, mindful that the class has gathered every five years since graduation. — *Dr. Dan Reid (MD '70), Class President*

MD 1975



The MD Class of 1975 gathered for a memorable reunion in September 2025, marked by thoughtful programming, shared laughter, and beautifully captured moments.

MD 1966

The MD Class of 1966 enjoyed another warm and memorable gathering at the Blomidon Inn in Wolfville (September 30 – October 3, 2025)—their fourth reunion at this favourite venue and, very likely, not their last. With their 60th milestone on the horizon next year, classmates are already looking ahead and wondering what special celebrations Dalhousie may offer to mark this remarkable anniversary. The excitement is building for what promises to be a truly meaningful reunion year.

MD 1965



The MD Class of 1965 celebrated its 60th reunion in Halifax, May 30-31, with a meaningful weekend of events. Classmates attended the MD Class of 2025 Convocation at the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium, where Dr. Franklin Sim (fellow classmate) received an Honorary Doctorate, followed by a reception in his honour hosted by Dean Dr. David Anderson and Dr. Stephen Miller, DMAA President at the Sir Charles Tupper Medical Building. The weekend concluded with a warm and joyful reunion dinner at the Prince George Hotel, where classmates reconnected, reminisced, and celebrated six decades of contributions to medicine and their communities.

A Night to Remember: 2025 Dal Med Gala



Big Fish playing at this year's Dal Med Gala

On November 1, the Halifax Convention Centre came alive as more than 700 alumni, faculty, staff, and medical learners gathered to celebrate the Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine community at the 2025 Dal Med Gala.

The evening was filled with laughter, music, and pride as generations of Dal Med came together under one roof, with representation from all three campuses: Halifax, Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick (DMNB), and the new Cape Breton Medical Campus (CBMC).

A highlight of the night was the recognition of our Class Cup recipients, celebrating the incredible generosity of Dalhousie's alumni. The Class of 1970 proudly accepted the 200K Cup, while MD 1969, MD 1973, MD 1985, and MD 1995 each received the 100K Cup for their outstanding philanthropic leadership.

The program also shone a spotlight on the next generation as students presented 10 student awards to peers and faculty members in recognition of excellence, mentorship, and community spirit.

Later in the evening, as the local cover band, Big Fish, took the stage, the Blue Jays playing in the World Series finale streamed in the background as guests danced, cheered, and celebrated. The celebration highlighted what it truly meant to be part of the Dalhousie medicine family.

Beyond the festivities, the Gala served an important purpose: supporting medical students. Through the generosity of alumni and friends, the Dalhousie Medical Alumni Association (DMAA) continues its long-standing tradition of enhancing the student experience and funding initiatives that provide financial support, equipment, labs, and learning infrastructure that help every learner thrive.

It was an unforgettable evening of community, celebration, and giving, and a true reflection of the enduring Dalhousie spirit.

MEDICAL CLASS 1975

Section of the 1975 reunion poem written by Lawrence Marr (MD '75 & PGM '79) for his 50th class reunion

It all started in September of '71,
When the Medical Class of '75 first begun.
The students were selected from coast to coast,
But those from the Maritimes were granted the most.

In September of 1971, a new direction was about to unveil,
To the ninety-six students gathered to carry the mail.
They were selected to be the best to complete the task,
Strangers at first would grow together at last.

Dalhousie Medical School is in a class with the best,
For those fortunate to attend, are put to the test.
The students selected, have met the standards of admissions,
And at the completion of four years will have confirmed their decisions.

The professors handpicked from accomplishments past,
The course as structured a winner to last,
The class was small 96 in all,
The Class of '75 answered the call.

The gala was made possible by the incredible support from our 2025 sponsors.





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