

# Tech's Talk

Spring 2023



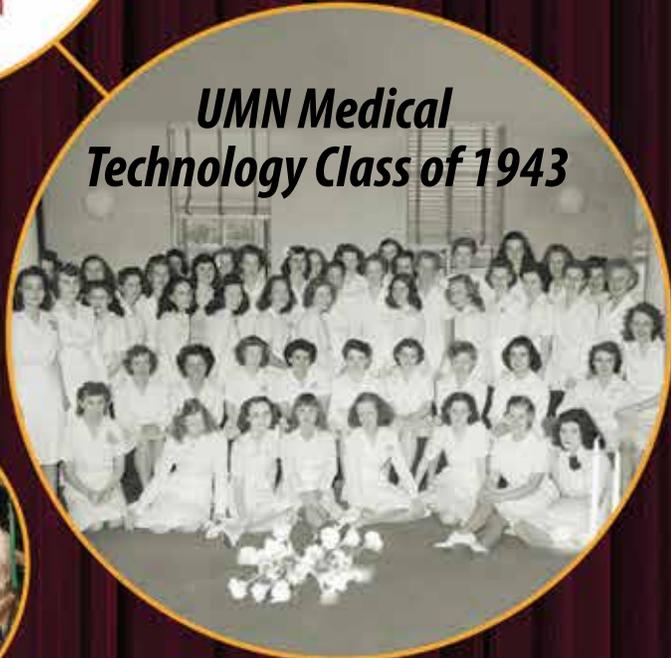
*Class of 1931*



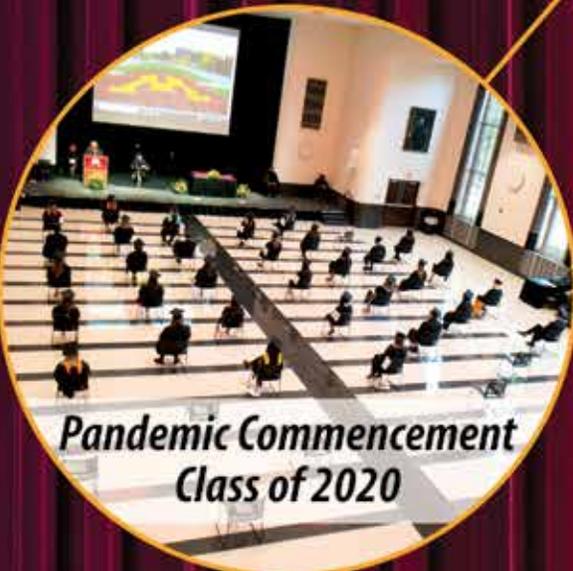
**CELEBRATING  
100**

**Graduating Classes**

MEDICAL LABORATORY  
SCIENCE PROGRAM



*UMN Medical  
Technology Class of 1943*



*Pandemic Commencement  
Class of 2020*



# Director's Notes

We are halfway through our Centennial year, and it's been an eventful one. We kicked the year off at our 2022 Alumni banquet, and we were fortunate to have former Program Directors Drs. Karen Karni and Jan Conway-Klaassen return for the event. We



were all saddened to learn of Karen's passing later in the summer, so I was grateful she was able to join us at the MacNamara Alumni Center for at least part of the evening. Another highlight of the evening was when Jan presented the Medical Laboratory Science Program with a check to create the endowed MLS Centennial Scholarship. If you would like to contribute to the Centennial Scholarship Fund, or any of our MLS scholarships,

you can go to [makingagift.umn.edu](https://makingagift.umn.edu) and search for medical laboratory sciences.

Throughout this academic year, we have also been offering monthly continuing education webinars. These webinars have included topics such as medical ethics, identification of malaria, and the basics of bioinformatics. These webinars have been recorded and are available in the "100th Anniversary Celebration" section (<https://www.alliedhealth.umn.edu/mls/program-overview/100-years>). All of these recordings will be available for free until the end of May, so take advantage of the free CE for your certification update. While you're there, you can learn more about the history of the MLS program by viewing the timeline or listening to a remake of the 1984 presentation given by former faculty Verna Rausch at the 1984 Alumni Banquet.

One of the big events that happened this year was the move of the program and the Center for Allied Health Programs (CAHP) into the College of Pharmacy (CoP). While the original

creation of the Center for Allied Health helped the program to expand our capacity, and provided us with new and greatly improved student laboratories, it also decreased our collegiate support structure for research and upper administration communication pathways. We were given the opportunity to choose which college would best align with our mission, and the College of Pharmacy was the clear favorite among faculty and staff. Dean Lynda Welage has been incredibly supportive of our program, its faculty, and staff, and we are currently working on how to best merge into the college. In attending the UMN Pharmacy Homecoming celebration, we found another connection to the CoP. Billie Anne Juni, MT Class of 1970, was present with her husband, Howard, who had just received the CoP Alumni Service Award. I know many of our program's graduates have gone on to get their PharmD degree, so I am looking forward to finding more ways to build our relationships within the college.



There will be lots of exciting changes that will happen in the program as we join with the College of Pharmacy, and I look forward to telling you more about them as they begin to take shape over the coming year!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Donna'.

*Donna Spannaus-Martin, PhD, MLS(ASCP)<sup>CM</sup>  
Professor and Program Director, Medical  
Laboratory Sciences* ■

# MLS Program Annual Report

NAACLS accreditation requires that each program report three key outcomes and provide this information to the public. We host this information on our website, in our student brochures, and now here in our alumni newsletter. In addition, the University requests that we report student demographics and other statistics related to program effectiveness.

NAACLS accredited programs must demonstrate the quality of their educational plan by meeting certain minimum student performance outcomes including student graduation (program completion) rates; performance on the American Society of Clinical Pathology (ASCP) Board of Certification (BOC) Exam; and ability to obtain employment. We are proud to say that the outcomes for graduates of our MLS program consistently exceed the minimum requirements. ■

NAACLS Graduate Outcomes	2018	2019	2020	2021
Graduation Rate (% on time)	94%	93%	97%	87%
ASCP BOC pass rate (Nat'l Mean = 80%)	98%	100%	87%	92%
Employment Rate % (6 months after grad)	100%	100%	100%	100%

Clinical Experience Rotations	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of Rotations	169	40*	154	135
Number in Minnesota	144	23**	152	134
Number in Rural Areas	25	0	15	16

Demographics of Incoming Students	2019	2020	2021	2022
Average Age (years)	26	24	24	22
Gender (F/M/O)%	75/24/1	65/25/0	66/34/0	88/12/0
Cum GPA	3.34	3.32	3.32	3.605
MN resident %	87	84	86	85
Ethnicity %				
Asian	20	27	35	38
Black/African American	8	11	14	12
Native American	--	--	--	--
Hispanic	3	3	8	--
White	69	62	46	50

*\*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, clinical rotations were suspended at all clinical affiliates. To prevent delays in graduation, clinicals for 2020 were pivoted to an alternative format of a hybrid simulation experience.*

*\*\*Students were provided the opportunity to complete a 4-day shadowing experience at Allina Health System to spend 1 day in each major rotation area (microbiology, transfusion medicine, chemistry/urinalysis, hematology/coagulation). Not all students engaged in this opportunity, but 23 of the 40 students participated.*

<https://www.alliedhealth.umn.edu/medical-laboratory-sciences>

## Share Your Stories!

Do you have memories of your time in the Medical Technology/Clinical Laboratory Sciences/Medical Laboratory Sciences Program that always make you smile? Do you want students to know what laboratory testing was like when you were in school? We want you to share those stories with us. We hope to share some good stories at the 2023 Alumni Banquet, but we need to hear from you! Please go to our 100th anniversary web page (<https://www.alliedhealth.umn.edu/mls/program-overview/100-years>) and click on the maroon "Share Your Story" button on the bottom of the page. While you're there, you can take a look at some of the program history or read some of the Tech's Talks from previous decades. ■



# Center for Allied Health Programs Joins the College of Pharmacy

The Center for Allied Health Programs (CAHP) has worked in collaboration with the College of Pharmacy, the Academic Health Sciences, and the Provost's office to move the CAHP into the College of Pharmacy. The CAHP, College of Pharmacy, and University leadership are excited about this new direction.

"This collaboration will bring forth new opportunities for all of us," said Dean Lynda Welage. "Importantly for the College of Pharmacy, it reaffirms our commitment to interprofessional education and practice while providing numerous new collaborations in our education, research, and community missions."

"This year marks the 100th anniversary of the University of Minnesota's Medical Laboratory Sciences (MLS) Program," said Donna Spannaus-Martin, PhD, MLS. "It seems appropriate, as we begin our second century, that we join with the College of Pharmacy to strengthen interprofessional education and new research collaborations. Communication between MLS and Pharmacy faculty has already resulted in ideas for possible collaborations."

Throughout her career, Dean Welage has been a passionate advocate for interprofessional practice and interdisciplinary research.

"Early on in my training I learned of the value of collaborating with medical laboratory scientists (also referred to as clinical laboratory scientists)," she explains. "During my PharmD training, my research involved setting up an assay for a new drug in development. While the chemistry part was fairly easy for me, I quickly learned from others that it is not just the test. The conditions, the quality controls, the ability to troubleshoot and, importantly, the interpretation are all critical. My research throughout my career involved pharmacokinetics, particularly in critically ill patients. This work afforded me many wonderful collaborations with my medical laboratory scientist colleagues. These early collaborations with medical laboratory scientists were, in some ways, my first exposure to interprofessional/interdisciplinary collaborations and likely shaped my view of health care and biomedical research. It is a team sport and I look forward to many future collaborations with students, faculty, staff, and alums as medical laboratory sciences joins the college."

While the College of Pharmacy and CAHP continue to outline the evolution of this collaboration, you can learn more about the College of Pharmacy by visiting their website at <https://www.pharmacy.umn.edu/>. ■

## MLS Students Help Give Kids a Smile



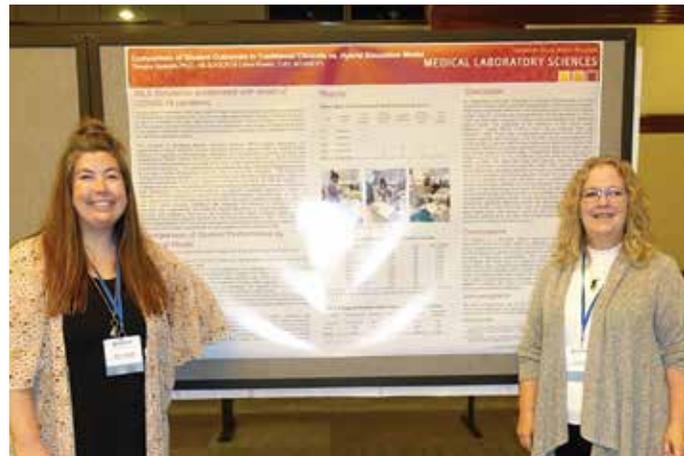
The University of Minnesota Medical Laboratory Sciences Leadership Team, including Anna Youngs, Anna Opgenorth, and Molly Schoephoerster, participated in the UMN Dental School's Give Kids a Smile event. The UMN Dental School provides free dental care to kids and creates goodie bags for them with little gadgets and pamphlet information on things regarding health through interprofessional collaboration with different health science programs. The MLS students created mock blood and plasma separation tubes with red water and oil that kids can shake and then watch separate. They included a pamphlet themed "What's in Your Blood" in which they described the different components of blood and what each component does. ■



## Faculty Activities

Dr. Lorna Ruskin and Dr. Tamera Alpaugh attended the Association of Schools Advancing Health Professions (ASAHP) Conference in Long Beach, California on October 20, 2022 where they also presented their research poster titled "Comparison of Student Outcomes in Traditional Clinicals vs. Hybrid Simulation Model." The ASAHP focuses on advancing health professions outside of medicine, nursing, pharmacy, and dentistry.

Earlier in 2022, Dr. Ruskin and Dr. Alpaugh presented at the Clinical Laboratory Educators Conference (CLEC) in Denver, CO, about the simulation they developed, along with Andy Yue. Their talk was titled "Any Program can Implement a Simulated Clinical Rotation" and was identified as a "Best of CLEC 2022" presentation. ■



## MLS and MDH Collaboration

The Centers for Disease Control recently named the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) one of five Pathogen Genomics Centers of Excellence (PGCoE). As part of this project, MDH will work with the University of Minnesota's Genomics Center, the College of Veterinary Medicine, the Medical School, the School of Public Health, and the Medical Laboratory Sciences Program to look at genomics technologies and the implementation of new technologies to respond

to emerging threats. The MLS Program is receiving a \$400,000 sub-award to work with MDH on the development of a course in genetic sequencing and bioinformatics, including a wet-lab component, which will be available to MLS and public health students, as well as practitioners across the State of Minnesota and beyond. Drs. Jennifer Brown and Donna Spannaus-Martin will be taking the lead on this project, which is expected to be completed within the next one and a half to two years. ■



## MLS Program Provides Phlebotomy Training

In 2022, Dr. Tami Alpaugh put together a phlebotomy training for research assistants at the request of the College of Pharmacy. Online modules containing learning activities were developed in order for trainees to complete the online training prior to coming to an in-person training session. MLS Program faculty Tami Alpaugh and Hannah Gartzke also facilitated training for the new Phillips Neighborhood

Clinic (PNC) laboratory volunteers to learn about laboratory safety and phlebotomy. Class of 2023 MLS students Anna Murzinova, Anna Youngs, and Alex Moldenhauer, who are current PNC volunteers, helped with the training. The sixteen new PNC volunteers trained included students from the Medical School, the College of Pharmacy, and Year 3 MLS students. The PNC also accepted 4 MMLS and Year 4 students as well for 2022. ■

## Transfusion Teaching Laboratory Update

The transfusion medicine curriculum has expanded to include "hands-on" experience with solid-phase technology. An ASCP Program Directors grant was awarded to Michelle Henry-Stanley to purchase a Capture® Workstation from Immucor. The workstation consists of a microplate incubator, centrifuge and automated washer. Purchase of the Capture® workstation will give our MLS students the opportunity to perform laboratory exercises using standard serologic techniques, gel and solid phase technology. ■



# New LIS in MLS

This past summer, the 4 new LIS computer workstations were installed in the MLS student laboratory space. The first integration of the LIS took place during the fall semester with the clinical students and current senior students in the hematology laboratory course. The fall clinical students gained experience with the LIS during their core laboratory simulation before heading out to their clinical experiences at affiliate sites. The second integration took place in the hematology laboratory course as part of John Jimenez's MMLS capstone project. John worked with Tami Alpaugh as his faculty advisor to develop the LIS simulation that took place during two hematology laboratory sessions. A video and procedure were created by John and shared with students to prepare them before the simulation activity during the laboratory session. The first part of

the LIS simulation focused on the pre-analytical phase including patient identification verification, order entry, accessioning, and label printing. And the second part focused post-analytical components including result entry, review, and reporting. Pre and post surveys were assigned to students as part of their coursework to evaluate their understanding and confidence related to the use of the LIS during the simulation activity. Overall students who participated felt confident using the LIS and looked forward to using it in future courses. The LIS was integrated later in fall semester. The CGM LabDaq LIS software, computer workstations, barcode readers, and label printers were purchased using funds from the ASCP grant awarded to Tami Alpaugh. The MLS faculty plan to integrate the LIS into additional laboratory courses in the future. ■

## 3rd Annual Clinical Networking Event

Last summer, clinical affiliates were invited to campus for our 3rd annual clinical networking event. This event, coordinated and facilitated by Tami Alpaugh, included laboratory leaders, preceptors, site coordinators, and HR personnel from our clinical affiliates across Minnesota. During the event, clinical affiliates presented

information to the MLS clinical students about their laboratories and healthcare systems, expectations of students during clinicals, and employment opportunities following graduation. Students then had the opportunity to meet with all clinical affiliates in attendance. Students and affiliates appreciated the opportunity to connect prior to the start of clinicals. Additionally, students had the chance to meet and network with more clinical personnel and health care



systems where they would not be rotating. We are grateful for the healthcare systems and clinical partners that participated in this event including: Allina Health, Children's Hospitals & Clinics of Minnesota, Essentia Health, HealthPartners, Mayo Clinic Health System, M Health Fairview, Minneapolis VA Health System, and Ridgeview. ■



# Celebrating NMLPW in 2022

National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week (NMLPW), celebrated during the last full week in April, provides the laboratory profession an opportunity to increase public understanding of and appreciation for medical laboratory personnel. During this week, the MLS Program joins in by celebrating our students, the future of our profession.

Due to COVID-19, the past few NMLPW celebration have been primarily held virtually. This past year, the MLS program celebrated in a hybrid format. A special NMLPW Canvas course site was created for the MLS students



as a place for them to connect with each other, have some fun, play some games, and win some prizes during the week. Each day, students had MLS-themed personality

quizzes and coloring book pages to enjoy. In addition, there were daily scavenger hunts where participants found items fitting the daily prompts and took pictures of them to share. Students completing the scavenger hunt were entered into a prize drawing. Finally, students had another opportunity to win prizes: matching UMN Faculty with their pets. The three students that could correctly match the most faculty pictures to their pets won prizes as well. In addition to the Canvas site, each student received a gift bag filled with treats & snacks, homemade candles, and lots of medical laboratory swag to help them celebrate during the week.

The highlight of NMLPW for students and faculty was a visit from Paws for Learning to the MLS Student Room. Paws for Learning brings dogs that have completed



training, testing, and in-person evaluation to work in public settings and support human well-being. While these sessions are not therapy, they are certainly therapeutic and part of the MLS Program's initiative to support student mental health. Students, staff and faculty all enjoyed this stress relief time, especially as it came right before final exams were scheduled to begin!

The UMN Faculty enjoy celebrating NMLPW each year with the students and are so proud of our students' hard work and dedication! ■



## New Online Master's Degree in BLS!

This past fall, the Medical Laboratory Sciences Program launched a new online Master of Science degree in Biomedical Laboratory Sciences (MS in BLS). This new degree is for laboratory professionals who already have their MLS certification but want to advance their career. Students can choose courses in a specialty area to help prepare for ASCP specialty certification, or they may choose a focus on management or education. All courses are offered entirely online to allow students to enroll full or part-time around their work schedules. We also will offer two molecular techniques laboratory courses; each as a one-week concentrated laboratory component on the Minneapolis campus.

***If you would like more information about the MS in BLS degree, you can contact [cahpinfo@umn.edu](mailto:cahpinfo@umn.edu) or go to <https://www.alliedhealth.umn.edu/mls/how-to-apply/ms-bls-requirements>. ■***

# Spotlight on Students

**YAHYE KULMIYE** was born in Somalia, but moved with his family to Kenya where he grew up. They eventually moved to Minnesota where he finished his high school education. Yahye comes from

a family of eleven with eight siblings. He has two older sisters, 4 younger sisters, and 2 younger brothers. Yahye is very active with many hobbies ranging from indoor activities to outdoor sports. His favorites include playing soccer, bowling, biking, and archery.

Yahye joined the MLS program with an Associate's degree. He has had a keen interest in laboratory sciences, investigating different organisms and how they cause diseases since he was very young. He learned about the MLS Program from a previous alumnus. Then his advisor described the program to him

in a way that helped him realize that it correlated with the direction he wanted to go in life. Yahye knew that he wanted to do laboratory work, but like many others he did not know the title of the profession or how to get there. His advisor helped him to find and enroll in the UMN MLS Program. Now that Yahye is in the MLS Program, it is clear to him that he made the right choice. Working on complete blood cell counts in the hematology teaching laboratory reminded him of when he was young, googling and trying to interpret results and figuring out what high and low values mean. Yahye initially thought that the large university setting would be overwhelming, but found that he was able to connect with his instructors and get help with any questions both in class and during office hours.

Yahye plans to work in healthcare after graduation and utilize his skills to help his community. He eventually plans to enroll in graduate school to build more skills and possibly to educate the next generation of MLS students. ■



**GABRIELLE BURK** (Gabby) is from Farmington, Minnesota. At her mom and stepdad's she gets to spend time with her hilarious brother listening to music and playing with their dogs, Piper and Janey. Gabby's mom is her best friend and the most beautiful and hard working woman that she knows. They have coffee together every morning and talk about the upcoming day. She has been the consistent support in Gabby's life, while her



stepdad is very kind and always up for listening when she needs someone to talk to. She also loves to spend time with her dad, stepmom and little sister, who is a loving, smart, and funny little girl. They have fun together watching Disney movies, coloring, and playing with Barbies.

Gabby loves to cook which feels a lot like being in the laboratory to her with recipes and steps to follow. Gabby is a big foodie in general, so if she's not cooking, she loves trying new and unique foods around the Twin Cities. One of her favorite things to do is walk her dogs in the summer and fall. She also loves admiring and snapping pictures of nature, especially trees and flowers.

Gabby attended the University of Minnesota, Duluth for three years and double majored in Biology and Biochemistry before transferring to UMN Twin Cities to complete her B.S. in Medical Laboratory Sciences. She took a microbiology course at UMD as a junior and fell in love with the subject and the laboratory work. While searching online, she discovered the MLS field and the UMN Program online. Gabby has always preferred learning in a laboratory setting with hands-on and visual stimulation. She thinks it is amazing to have tools like a microscope and chemical tests to see what is happening inside a person. She has always wanted to help others and impact the world, but like most MLS professionals she prefers to work behind the scenes with a team rather than be in the spotlight. Now that Gabby has made it halfway

*(continued on the next page)*

## Spotlight on Students (continued)

through the program, she absolutely loves the community of like-minded, genuine people she is surrounded with. She feels like MLS is her home and she's excited to be a part of a community filled with brilliant and selfless people.

After graduation and passing the certification exam, Gabby plans to work in a hospital within the Twin Cities, and work on her generalist skills in all of the MLS disciplines. She is more drawn to microbiology, so her dream would be to work for the state or federal health department handling crazy and unique microbiology cases. ■

**KAE XIONG** was born in Thailand, but has grown up in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She is the youngest in her family and her parents' work ethic is something that has really stuck with her. Kae enjoys crocheting and trying new foods. She always finds it a delight to try out something completely new to her.



Kae took a forensics science class in high school which caught her interest. She had friends attending the University of Minnesota so she searched the potential list of majors to find something she would like. Medical laboratory science was the closest

thing she could find to forensics at UMN. After taking prerequisite courses, she has taken more interest in clinical laboratory work than in forensics. She greatly appreciates the range of possibilities available to her with an MLS degree. Aside from the forensics course, taking human physiology is what made her sure that she wanted to be a medical laboratory scientist. This course is where Kae had her first glimpse at the scope of information that can be acquired from laboratory work. Understanding patient test results in correlation with information learned from the class was a very satisfying feeling which gave her a sense of achievement.

After graduation, Kae plans to work in a clinical laboratory as a generalist to see how she likes the different disciplines. If she finds something she wants to specialize in or develops an interest in a specialty laboratory, she will look further into those opportunities. ■

**BRIELLE MEISCH** is from Altura, Minnesota which is just East of Rochester. Her father raises beef cattle on their family farm and she is very grateful for the experience of growing up there. Her mother served in the military for twenty years and currently works at Mayo Clinic. She has a younger brother who joined the Air National Guard and attends college. She has admired all of their work ethic and has been blessed by their love and support. In her free time, Brielle enjoys watching and playing sports, weight lifting, and spending time with her family, friends, and dog.



Brielle was not familiar with the field of MLS in health care before starting college. When she was exploring majors as a freshman, her advisor mentioned the program. She took the Introduction to Medical Laboratory Sciences course the following Spring along with an orientation to health careers course where MLS was also discussed. MLS is the perfect fit for Brielle because of her analytical and detail-oriented nature. She has always enjoyed science and problem solving. She also likes the idea of working behind the scenes, but still having a vital role in healthcare. She is loving what she is learning in the program and that makes her excited for a career in the field.

Throughout Brielle's time in the UMN MLS Program she has grown a deeper appreciation for the work of MLS professionals and the impact that they have on providing high quality patient care. She is passionate about increasing awareness of the profession so that people can understand the contribution medical laboratory scientists provide to healthcare and hopes that more students will be drawn to pursue a career in Medical Laboratory Sciences.

After graduation Brielle wants to work in a laboratory and she is looking forward to the clinical experience part of the program where she can get a feel for the sizes of laboratories and the different disciplines to help guide her in choosing her first position in the field. ■

# The Power of Giving

Alumni play a huge role in supporting our students through generous donations to our program. Each year donations to our scholarships make it possible for students to afford textbooks needed for classroom success, meet the increasing cost of tuition, or to find temporary housing during clinical rotations in rural Minnesota. Many students would find it difficult to begin their new careers as medical laboratory scientists without such support. We want to thank everyone who generously donated in 2022 and continue to ask for your help in 2023 – no matter the size of the donation. **Below is a listing of the students you have helped through your scholarship donations in 2022.** ■

## **Alumni Fund Scholarships**

- Gabrielle Burk
- Alison Davis
- Ashlee Halgrimson
- Rachel Johnson
- Xinnie Mai
- Alexandra Moldenhauer
- Anna Murzinova
- Brianna Phernetton
- Sophia Sandekian
- Pachia Yang

## **Constance Bakken Scholarship**

- Brianna Phernetton

## **Grace A. Byers Scholarship**

- Farha Ismail
- Xinnie Mai
- An Pham
- Ghalya Qasem

## **Yvonne Chenoweth Cooke Scholarship Fund**

- Gabrielle Burk
- ## **Gonyea-Stewart Scholarship Fund**
- Alexandra Moldenhauer

## **Karen R. Karni Scholarship Fund**

- Sophia Sandekian
- Molly Schoephoerster

## **Audrey Lapeyrouse Scholarship Fund**

- Ashlee Halgrimson

## **Abner M. Neeley Scholarship**

- Roda Abdi
- Alex Dougherty
- Danielle Gannon
- Farha Ismail
- Taylor Janssen
- Brittany Mingo
- Ghalya Qasem
- Ho Anh Thu Tran
- Vannara Um
- Christina Waselk
- Melanie Watson
- Anna Youngs

## **William A. O'Brien Scholarship Fund**

- Anna Murzinova
- Vannara Um

## **Ruth Stavitsky Scholarship**

- Rachel Johnson

## **Pathways Scholarship**

- Hamdi Abdi
- Tina Chi
- Kirsten Dieu
- Joshua Glass
- Nina Heur
- Yahye Kulmiye
- Yacob Menghistu

- Alexandra Moldenhauer
- Lam Nguyen
- Tam Phan Thanh Nguyen
- Grace Parsons
- Miski Said
- Hashim Sharif
- Annika Smith
- Sarra Suphavong
- Calla Swenson
- Chakrya Ty
- Anh Vu
- Kae Xiong

**If you would like to donate, you can find the link on our web site, [alliedhealth.umn.edu/mls](http://alliedhealth.umn.edu/mls)  
Click on the gold Give Now button in the upper right hand corner.**

## Benzurah Faculty Development Endowment

Fran Lebahn, Class of 1974, knew she wanted to give back to the University of Minnesota's Medical Laboratory Sciences Program. At first, she thought about starting a scholarship fund for MLS students. However, Program Director Donna Spannaus-Martin asked if she would be willing to consider a different type of endowment. "When I met with Fran, I asked her to consider an endowment that would benefit the faculty of the program" Dr. Spannaus-Martin said. "Our alumni and recent grant funding have provided us with some great scholarship opportunities for our students, but I had always hoped some day we would have a faculty development fund that could be used to send faculty to conferences or support pilot research projects." Fran agreed to endow the Benzurah Faculty Development Fund.



Fran stated her parents, Benton and Sara Press, had high regard for education and learning. They encouraged her to do her best in school and inspired her to do what she enjoyed. After vacationing with her mom in Hawaii for many years, her dad, Benton, wrote a book he dedicated to his wife, Sara. He titled it "Adventure Hawaii/Quest for the BenZurah Idol." BenZurah was his way of combining his name and his wife's name into one. Fran said she chose to give this endowment to MLS in memory of her parents, borrowing Benzurah from the title of her dad's book. ■

**Turn to page 18 to learn about two new endowed MLS scholarships!**

# Thank You for Your Generous Contributions to the Medical Laboratory Sciences Program in 2022

## **\$5,000 and up**

- Mary J. Colson-Burns
- Janice M. Conway-Klaassen
- Glen D. Lorenz

## **\$1,000 to \$4,999**

- Joanne S. Arvid
- Ann D. Claesgens
- Unknown Donor
- Brian T. & Miriam H. Ebeling
- Stephen J. & Susan K. Fautsch
- David R. Jacobson
- Todd C. & Mary E. Jacobson
- Nancy J. Jensen
- Billie Anne & Howard A. Juni
- Francene H. & Lonny R. Lebahn
- Karin J. Libby
- John C. Okada
- Toni D. Okada
- Debra C. Rodahl
- Ella M. Spanjers
- Todd C and Mary E Jacobson Charitable Fund
- Donna J. Wieb

## **\$500 to \$999**

- Jenna Amundson
- Anonymous Donor
- Robert A. Dahl
- Mardie G. Geiser
- Robert P. Hirte
- Karen K. Huff
- Judy T. Kingsberg
- Barbara J. Moser
- Elberta L. Prestegard
- Verne E. Weiss
- Andrew R. Yue

## **\$100 to \$499**

- Patricia A. Ackerman
- Melissa L. Aitken
- Dennis P. Barrett
- Priscilla M. & Gerald J. Bormann
- Mary & Michael Bower
- Karen E. Bowman
- Marilyn T. Budge
- Kimberly A. & David W. Butler

- Michael & Suzanne Campbell
- Sheila M. Clough
- Sharon M. Deml
- Robin L. Donner
- Mary J. Eaves-Raich
- Deborah A. Evans
- David J. & Julie M. Fanger
- Claudine E. Fasching
- Richard J. Feist
- Catherine L. & John W. Foster
- Linda L. Fredrickson
- Reggie L. Gausman
- Marjorie E. Giesen
- Kathryn H. Glen
- Joyce A. Gunderson
- Marilyn J. Halonen
- Jacquelin A. Heggernes
- Henry V. & Mary L. Holec
- Julie A. Jacobs
- Phyllis M. Jacobs
- Cheryl A. Kaup
- Barbara M. Koblinski
- Koblinski Family Fund - ROF Charitable
- Usha R. Kota
- Barbara Krier
- Carol J. Lahti
- Gayle A. Lancette-Gable
- Vickie L. Larson
- Brian L. Lauber
- Mary H. Lazarus
- Linda A. Lewis
- Connie R. Luck
- Connie J. Luebke
- Marilyn J. Lueck
- Jane E. Mayer
- Betty L. McMartin
- Brian J. Meline
- Mary Lou G. Mohn
- Beverly R. Ness
- Alicia C. Nguyen
- Patricia L. Norgren
- James R. & Sheryl F. Olson
- Sandra V. Pearson
- David J. & Mary Jo Pennington

- Mary L. Petersen
- Marba L. Pogue
- Jennifer L. Prasek
- Thelma J. Purcelli
- Joan A. Radtke
- Barbara J. Reinhardt
- Karen L. Ringsrud
- George R. Roedler
- John L. Roesler
- Ann M. Roth
- Gregory P. Rynders
- Melanie Shirley
- Cheryl D. Swinehart
- Michael A. & Rita J. Tischler
- Nicole A. Trites Wiering
- Judtih V. Tschida
- Mary K. Ulness
- Aija K. Vikmanis
- Kent D. & Marcia K. Wall
- Nettie M. Warwood
- Marilee M. Welliver
- Kristi L. Werdin
- Anthony B. Williams
- Nancy A. Witstine
- Joan Z. Woods
- Xcel Energy Foundation

## **Up to \$100**

- Jacquelyn C. Battis
- Aimee Broten
- Karen V. Busch
- Karol J. Carlson
- Norma J. Cashill
- Yuqing Chen
- Wanda E. Clark
- Joanne G. Deden
- Timothy E. & Carolyn E. Donovan
- Sylvia A. Dorsey
- Debra A. Dvorak
- Mary L. Dyrhaug
- Donna E. Dzubay
- Lorilee B. Echternach
- Arthur T. & Kay E. Emmons
- Leanna L. Erickson
- Carol I. Evans
- Tim & Abby Foss
- Harriet D. Fritts

- C L. Gerber
- Collin & Alison Gravalin
- Naomi M. & James M. Hanson
- Michelle J. Henry-Stanley
- Mark C. Hove & Leslie A. MacKichan
- Elizabeth A. Ivascu
- John R. Jerhoff
- David E. Johnson
- Terry K. Kallin
- Arla K. Keckeisen
- Marci Kirchoff
- Phillip M. Korkowski
- Carol A. Ladwig
- Cheryl J. Luckow
- Marvin L. & Cynthia A. Menken
- Karen J. Meslow
- Patricia L. Miles
- Rene A. Nelson
- Ronald G. Nelson
- Dorothy L. Ness-Everett\*
- Patricia A. Nistico
- Howard A. Ostrem
- Sherrill M. Patnode
- Marilyn J. Plummer
- Diane K. Rappe
- Pamela J. Robinett
- Bonnie M. Rolig
- Sandra L. Sauer
- Lois J. & Peter M. Smith
- Patricia L. Solum
- Donna J. Spannaus-Martin
- Nancy A. Stanaway
- Pamela D. Swanson
- Constance C. Verre
- Jerome F. Weaver
- Thomas L. Weaver
- Judith A. & Dale D. Winter
- Sharon E. Wurst
- Nicole E. Zahnle
- Sandra Zeiss

\*Deceased

If you wish to make a contribution, please visit: <http://alliedhealth.umn.edu/mls>  
or call: UMN Foundation at 800-775-2187



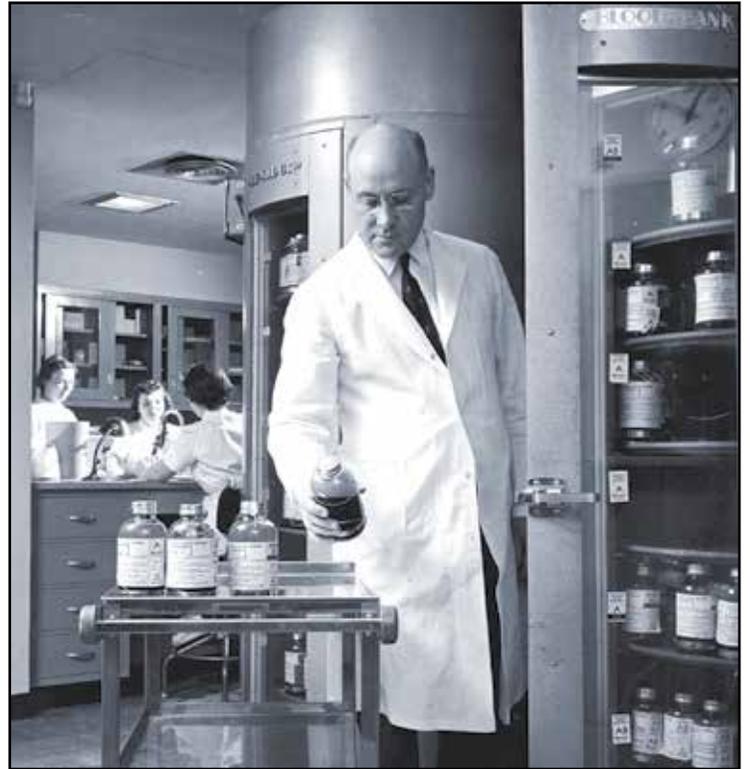
*Elliot Memorial Hospital, where the UMN Medical Technology Program began in 1922.*



*1940's Student Chemistry Laboratory*



*Kathryn Francis  
The first graduate  
of the Medical  
Technology  
Program*



*Dr. Ziegler in the  
University Hospital  
Blood Bank*



*Dr. William O'Brien at his desk in the  
University Hospital's medical laboratory in 1925*



*UMN Medical Technology faculty Esther Freier  
and Verna Rausch receive recognition for the  
first laboratorian-authored paper on quality  
control in the clinical laboratory.*



1950 UMN Microbiology Laboratory was housed in a temporary building as the Mayo Building was being built.



Chemistry Laboratory in the University Hospital, Mayo Building showing autoanalyzers



1949 Class Pin



University Hospital Laboratory "He Who Sloppeth, Moppeth"



MT Faculty, Late 1970s



Students Performing a Bleeding Time

# Focus on Faculty & Staff

## Welcome to New MLS Faculty



**JENNIFER BROWN**, PhD, MLS(ASCP)<sup>CM</sup> joined the MLS program as an Assistant Professor in July 2022. A 2007 graduate of our program, she has held roles in research and medical laboratories. Before joining the Medical Laboratory Sciences Program, she worked as a Toxicology Technical Specialist for nine years at Regions Hospital in St. Paul, MN. Jennifer earned her Doctorate of Philosophy in Molecular, Cellular, Developmental Biology and Genetics from the University of Minnesota, where her research project focused on investigating how three-dimensional protein structures organize. She will be teaching Clinical Chemistry and her toxicology experience should provide her with some great opportunities to collaborate with our colleagues in the College of Pharmacy. Jennifer enjoys gardening, keeping up an old house, and spending time outside in her free time. ■



**DIANE HUTCHINSON**, BS, MLS (ASCP)<sup>CM</sup> joined the MLS program as the Clinical Education Director in February 2023. A 2006 graduate of our program, Diane began her laboratory science career at Allina Health in Microbiology, Hematology, Coagulation and Urinalysis departments. She then spent 10 years at Regions Hospital learning Flow Cytometry and held a position as a Technical Specialist for Hematology and Urinalysis. Prior to joining the MLS program, Diane served as the Hematology, Coagulation and Urinalysis Technical Advisor for the Allina Health system which involves overseeing regulatory compliance, instrument and software implementations, competency, hematology simulation lab, and training content for those disciplines for more than 60+ sites. Diane enjoys participating in continuing education activities, with her most recent effort to complete a Masters degree in Regulatory Science degree from St. Thomas University. She also enjoys spending time with her husband and two daughters, reading, hiking, rowing, cooking and camping. ■

## Staff Changes at the Center for Allied Health Programs (CAHP)



**SHERI BECK** (she/her) is excited to work with future OTD students in her role as Admissions and Recruitment Coordinator. Sheri has worked in Admissions and Advising at the University of Minnesota since 2002. She lives in North Minneapolis with her spouse, Ken, who teaches middle-school math, two grown sons, a lab-hound mix, and three cats. Sheri enjoys traveling, biking, swimming, baking, and spending time with family, and can often be found curled up with her cats and a good book. ■

**ALLY BRANDT-FITZGERALD** received her Bachelor of Arts from the College of Saint Benedict in psychology. Wanting to learn more about business and marketing she continued her education at St. Cloud State University and received her MBA. Ally enjoys many aspects of marketing and events but has found her passion in designing and creative content and developing events that allow people to make meaningful connections. Ally previously worked in the hospitality industry for four years in marketing and events and started her new role in April 2022 as Marketing & Communications Specialist at the University of Minnesota. In her spare time, you can find Ally attending concerts or training for her next race. ■



**SUSAN VANG** joins student services as the Student Services Administrative Specialist. Susan joins us from the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resources Sciences (CFANS). She received her Associates Degree in Business Computer Systems and Organizational Management from North Hennepin Community College. Susan is a mom of 5 (ages range from 2 to 13), who loves volunteering, data, and reading. ■

# Remembering Dr. Karen Karni

Former Program Director and MLS faculty, Dr. Karen Karni (MT Class of 1963) passed away on July 26, 2022. Born in Soudan, Minnesota, Karen was a proud Iron Ranger. She graduated as co-valedictorian of her 1959 class at Tower-Soudan High School and graduated with distinction from the University of Minnesota's Medical Technology Program in 1963. She then graduated with a Master's in Education in 1969 from the University of Buffalo in New York and worked as a medical technologist in Bar Harbor, ME, Virginia, MN, and Buffalo, NY. Following several years on the faculty of the University of Buffalo, Karen returned to the University of Minnesota in 1970 as an instructor in the Medical Technology Program teaching transfusion medicine. She earned a PhD in Education from the University of Minnesota and rose to the rank of tenured full professor. She was the author of textbooks, and had many published articles regarding MLS education. She served on the Medical Technology faculty for thirty years and as the Director of the

Medical Technology Program for 16 years, retiring in 2000.

Karen served as President of the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science from 1997-1998, and represented the University of Minnesota at the International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science. Upon hearing the news of her passing, many alumni and colleagues commented on how she had been a valued mentor to them, and how she was a true professional. She took every opportunity to advocate for our profession, and did so with joy and laughter. Karen will be missed, but her legacy will live on in the students she taught, the professionals she mentored, and in the Karen Karni Scholarship started by her good friend, Connie Bakken. If you would like to donate to the Karen Karni Scholarship Fund, you can go to <https://www.alliedhealth.umn.edu/mls> ■



# Celebrating the Life of Jan Lorenz

Janet Rosalie Luck Lorenz, a dedicated teaching assistant in the hematology course in the MLS program for many years, died April 11, 2022. Jan attended Monroe High School in St. Paul where she was in the top 10 students of her class. She then attended Moorhead State to get a degree in Medical Technology, interning at St. Lukes Hospital in Fargo. Her first job was at Northern Pacific Hospital in St. Paul, and later in the special hematology laboratory at the University of Minnesota Hospital for many years.

Jan taught for many years in the Medical School's Laboratory Medicine course and in our student hematology laboratory. She was an amazing morphologist and would spend hours at the microscope helping students learn the blood cells. The students often expressed their appreciation for her patience and skill. Jan was always very professional and was the perfect example for the students, as professionalism can be a difficult concept to teach.

Jan excelled at many of her outside interests. She tried out for the 1958 Olympics as a speed skater. She won second place in singles and first place in doubles tennis at the Minneapolis Aquatennial. After retiring Jan learned to play the piano. Hiking at the Dodge Nature Center brought her peace. She and her husband Glen also loved going to their lake home on Lake Superior for 27 years.

Jan's family is establishing the Janet Luck Lorenz Scholarship for Medical Laboratory Science Scholarship at the University of Minnesota to honor her life and memory. This endowment will be used to help support disadvantaged medical laboratory science students. ■

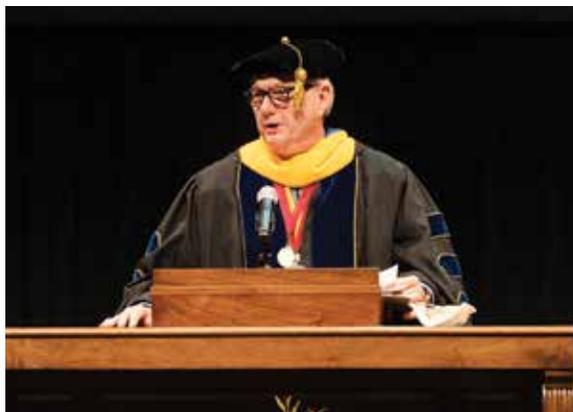




## Congratulations 2022 MLS Graduates!

The Medical Laboratory Science program at the University of Minnesota held their 2022 graduation ceremony on Friday, September 16th at Northrop Auditorium. The ceremony included both programs within the Center for Allied Health Professionals which includes the Occupational Therapy Program. The Medical Laboratory Sciences Program celebrated an important milestone. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the MLS program at the University of Minnesota!

The ceremony included opening remarks from the two program directors, Dr. Peggy Martin (OT) and Dr. Donna Spannaus-Martin (MLS). The ceremony's commencement speaker was Dr. Michael Osterholm, who is an internationally recognized and highly decorated epidemiologist, researcher, and author. Dr. Michael Osterholm shared with our graduates lessons from his life and inspired them to achieve greatness in their own careers. He stressed the importance of both professions towards a better future.



Christina Waselk, a graduate of the MMLS Program, was the MLS student speaker. Christina stated, "When you look back on why you decided to pursue this career path, I hope you remember the importance of the work that you do. Medical laboratory scientists are vital to the healthcare system and each of you should be proud of the contributions you will make in your future careers." Christina also spoke about being the 100th graduating class. "As the one-hundredth graduating class from the University of Minnesota's medical laboratory program, I know this graduating class is special. It has been a subject of conversation amongst many of our professors throughout the program." ■

**Congratulations to the  
MLS Class of 2022!  
We are so proud of you!**

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENCES GRADUATES**

Roda A. Abdi  
 Tam Phan Thanh Nguyen  
 Kyle Anderson  
 An Thien Tran Pham  
 Dominic M. Barrett  
 Rukia Z. Qassem  
 Danielle A. Gannon  
 Marina K. Richter

Dawit L. Gurmu  
 Jennifer L. Rose  
 Delaney J. Hakes  
 Erik Samuelson  
 Nina Heur  
 Jack E. Schulze  
 Farha Ismail \*\*\*  
 Jarome Smith

Jerry Lee  
 Sarra Suphavong  
 Adrianna N. Martinez  
 Pachia Yang  
 Isabelle M. Nguyen

\*\*\*With honors



**PROFESSIONAL MASTER'S OF SCIENCE IN MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENCES GRADUATES**

Tyler D. Colgan  
 John E. Jimenez  
 Long N. Dang  
 Brittany C.T. Mingo

Alex Dougherty  
 Hly Vang  
 Taylor C. Janssen  
 Christina M. Waselk



# Faculty Offer Free Continuing Education

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the UMN MLS program, faculty have been providing monthly continuing education presentations throughout the 2022-2023 academic year. Each presentation is given virtually, and can be attended at their scheduled time via Zoom or accessed and watched after the recording. These live and recorded presentations are available for free on our web site until the end of May, and each presentation will earn attendees one PACE credit.

Faculty have presented topics within their areas of interest, such as wellbeing and resilience for the medical laboratory professional, the

history of the UMN MLS program, and the value of simulation for MLS students. The recent presentation, "Introduction to Medical Ethics" fulfills the new ethics requirement for ASCP certification or renewal. Upcoming continuing education opportunities include discussions on an introduction to stem cell transplants and on interprofessional practice in the medical laboratory professional. To see the full schedule of free CE talks hosted by the MLS Faculty, to register for upcoming talks, and for access to previously recorded sessions, please visit the UMN MLS program website at: [www.alliedhealth.umn.edu/mls/events/continuing-education](http://www.alliedhealth.umn.edu/mls/events/continuing-education). ■

# Incredible Generosity Supports MLS Students

The MLS Program has always been fortunate to have generous alumni and friends of the program. However, this past year, we have had an incredible increase in donations and establishment of endowed scholarship funds. A couple of years ago, you may remember reading in Tech's Talk that Drs. Janice Conway-Klaassen and Donna Spannaus-Martin had received a \$3.2 million Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) five year grant that could provide full scholarships for MLS students. This grant provides the funds for our Pathways Scholarship which supports students from economically disadvantaged or historically underrepresented/underserved populations. Knowing there is no guarantee of renewed funding for this grant when the five years expires, Dr. Conway-Klaassen announced at last year's Alumni Banquet that she was establishing the Centennial Scholarship in honor of the 100th anniversary of the program. She hopes this scholarship will grow and continue provide full scholarships for these MLS students.

Another endowed MLS scholarship was recently established by Mary Colson-Burns. Mary received her medical technology degree in 1975 from Mankato State University. She worked at United Hospital for 20 years and at Allina Health Laboratory for 25 years. While working at United, not only did Mary receive her microbiology specialist certification, but

she attended night school to obtain a law degree from William Mitchell School of Law. She practiced law for a short time, but realized her love for the laboratory surpassed her interest in the law. She continued working in microbiology at Allina until she retired in 2020. Although she is not an alumna of the UMN MLS Program, Mary is passionate about supporting this MLS program in particular. She was always thrilled to work with UMN MLS students in the lab, noting that UMN students had a strong theoretical background knowledge, which made them stand out. Mary stated "If we are going to ensure future lab scientists, this is the program that needs to be supported." So with that, Mary has created a scholarship fund aimed at promoting the MLS program and providing aid to students who might not otherwise have the opportunity to enroll.



***Our thanks to Jan, Mary and our many generous alumni! If you would like to donate, you can find the link on our web site, [alliedhealth.umn.edu/mls](http://alliedhealth.umn.edu/mls) and clicking on the gold Give Now button in the upper right hand corner. ■***

# Please Join Us For The 2023 Medical Laboratory Sciences 100th Graduating Classes Event!

This event is the end to our yearlong 100th anniversary celebration and will be held at the Huntington Bank Stadium Indoor Club on the University of Minnesota East Bank Campus on Saturday, April 29th. Cocktail hour (cash bar) will begin at 4:30 p.m. with dinner served at 6:00 p.m. and with a brief program to follow. There will be a special recognition of the Classes of 1948, 1973 and 1998. We encourage all alumni and friends of the MLS Program to attend!

## 100th Anniversary Class of 1923

Anh Cross\* Ann Knowlton\* Katherine Stahmann (Francis)\*

## 75th Anniversary Class of 1948

Barbara Ahnmark (Skonseng)*	Colleen Cunningham (Gray)	Elizabeth Hayward (Peterson)*	James McCormick (Huffman)*	Kathryn Schwarz (Kinney)*
Barbara Barham (Fasbender)*	Cynthia Davey*	Elizabeth Hill (Fink)*	Janet Mickle (Oleson)*	Kimberly Scribner (Schneider)*
Bernadette Beck (Rath)*	Cynthia De Giambittista (Lewis)	Ella Hoyer (Stuhlfauth)*	Janice Misjuk*	Kristine Shaw (McCord)*
Bradley Berg (Bruner)*	Daniel Demopulos (Bougas)*	Emily Hulbert (Smaltz)*	Janice Nelson (Manolis)*	Leonette Spanjers (Spanjers)
Brian Boyd (Edelson)*	Debra Downing (Mlekoday)	Evelyn Ingersoll (French)*	Jason Neslund	Lisa Spanjers (Schlosser)*
Carlo Bradburn (Andrews)	Diane Economon (Scherven)*	Gail Johnson (Schellbach)*	Jessie Peterson (Grantman)*	Mardie St Cyr*
Carol Bredemeier (Tanem)*	Donna Elert (Theissen)*	Gayla Johnston (Marsh)	JoAnn Reilly (Eveslage)	Margaret Swenson*
Carolyn Bricker	Doreen England (Lienna)	Gertrude Kelsch (Lund)*	Judith Rundle (Gartland)*	Marilee Thiele (Brunsdale)*
Cheryl Byfield (Eide)*	Edward Frensko (Harrigan)*	Gobind Kerns (Nelson)*	Karen Sakamoto (Munekata)*	Marilyn Treanor (Rohr)*
Christine Champion*	Eleanor Grandchamp	Inessa Kohlmeyer (Dallman)*	Kathleen Sawyer (Smidt)*	Mary Waller (Glavon)*
Claire Chapman (King)*	(Swensen)*	Jacqueline Koppes (Dreesman)*		

## 50th Anniversary Class of 1973

Mary Adams (Christeson)	Narad Field (Gregory)	Paul Johnson (Nelson)	Susan Long (Hilliker)	Artemis Thornquist (Devorak)
Mary Beth Anderson	Nestor Foran	Penny Johnson (Marcum)	Susan Marolt (Grotte)	Barbara Van Heel (Weiss)
Max Bintz*	Nigussie Fung (Siu-Kau)	Rosemary Julkowski (Langdon)	Susan McLean (McDermid)	Bernice Viste (Goldberg)*
Michelle Boettcher*	Nikole Geiser (Geiser)	Ruth Kappel*	Suzanne Nelson	Betty Vogt
Michelle Bragstad (Olson)	Nina Gray (Ulrich)	Ruth Kasper (Trandem)	Terry Olsen (Mikkison)	Beverly Welliver (Huisinga)
Misty Cahoon	Pamela Hansen	Sammy Keller (Hlavac)	Therese Olson (Fisher)	Blanche Welsh (Charlton)
Molly Casey (Lakin)	Pamela Hero (Miggler)	Sharon Koblinski Waldkirch	Todd Rogers (Paris)	Charlotte West (Jensen)
Monna Chin	Patricia Hickey (Charlton)	Sheryl Kochevar	Trang Senn	Elizabeth Wetter (Slominski)
Mustefa Daigle	Patricia Hoffman	Sheryl Kost (Bollman)	Tuyetlan Shade (Kneeskern)	F Williams-Jensen (Gordon)
Nancy Dailey	Patricia Johnson (Johnson)	Steven Larson (Christensen)	Vickie Skare (Dean)	Florence Wilmuth (Frisbie)
Nancy Elliott (Rose)	Patricia Johnson (Elander)	Sumiko Larter	William Skoog (Hawkinson)	Florence Zeiler (Weiss)*
			Xiao-Zheng Swinehart (Demien)	

## 25th Anniversary Class of 1998

Gloria Boonstra	Jeul Felema	Joyce Martin	Marie Nacionales	Mary Rahn	Roland Strand	Sharon Wako
Gloria Bothun	Joan Fitzenberger (Derks)	Julie Martin	Marjorie Nguyen	Mary Rappe	Ruth Tarchand	Shirley Wigton
Jean Christ	Joan Jokhulall	Leone Mattson	Marjorie Oldakowski (Holm)	Mary Ricci	Ruth Tran	Tena Yim
Jean Ditlefsen	Joann Larson	Louise Maurer	Marlys Peterson	Phyllis Sahr	Ruth Trinh	Verna Yoneji
Jean Do	Joyce Lit	Marian Meng	Marian Molodan	R Silbernagel (Kinneberg)	Sally Vincent	Zelda Zwart
Jean Emery	Joyce Martin					

To register online, go to [www.alliedhealth.umn.edu/event-type/mls](http://www.alliedhealth.umn.edu/event-type/mls). **Registration due by April 17, 2023.**

To register by mail, please include this form and your check payable to **Regents of the University of Minnesota.**

Address to: Medical Laboratory Sciences Program, University of Minnesota, MMC 714, 420 Delaware St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455 (Attention Todd Gitzlaff)

Please contact Todd Gitzlaff with questions at 612-626-5517 or [gitzl002@umn.edu](mailto:gitzl002@umn.edu).

**Yes! I will attend the 2023 MLS 100th Anniversary Finale Event on April 29, 2023.**

Please check your entrée selection (salad and dessert included):

- Chicken Ballotine with MN Wild Rice served with Dijon Cream (stuffed chicken) ..... \$45.00
- Baked Walleye with Beurre Blanc ..... \$45.00
- Mushroom Ravioli with Sage Cream Sauce..... \$40.00

Check enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for a total of \_\_\_\_\_ dinner/s

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation Year \_\_\_\_\_ Former name \_\_\_\_\_

Do you need an accessible parking space reserved for you?  Yes  No

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