

# Bulletin

MEMBER MAGAZINE FOR THE POLK COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

April-June 2025



**2025-26 PCMS Executive Council**

**2024 PCMS Legislative Wrap-Up 2024**

**The Power of Engagement: Why Medical Students  
Must Embrace Organized Medicine Early**

**174th PCMS Annual Meeting**

**2025 Kathie J. Lyman Scholarship Awards**

**2025 PCMS Wild Lights**

**Coming to Full Circle:  
Returning to Columbia for My OBGYN Rotation**

**Dollars In Action: Julie Evans Memorial Fund**

**Humanitarian Surgical Mission to Philippines**

**MIND THE GAP: Taking Pause – Without Pressing  
Pause on Your Career**

# **Polk County Medical Society PHYSICIAN'S DAY AT THE IOWA STATE FAIR**

## **WHEN**

**Sunday, August 10th , 2025**

**11:00 am-1:00 pm**

**private party**

**You may enter the fair at any time/Any Gate**

## **WHERE: THE DEPOT**

(THE DEPOT IS SITUATED ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE IOWA STATE FAIRGROUNDS, 3000 E GRAND AVE., DES MOINES, IA, 50317).

**FEATURING • PCMS Private Party for PCMS MEMBERS and Immediate Family ONLY**

will be on the patio and includes free luncheon of food and beverages at The Depot. Food vouchers will be provided for free food and non-alcoholic beverages. **Cash Bar available for adults.**

**YOU MUST BE WEARING PCMS ALLOCATED WRISTBANDS provided with your tickets to enter the private PCMS MEMEBER event.**

**TICKETS MUST BE PICKED UP  
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Mon-Thurs 7:30 am - 2:30 PM  
July 21 - August 1st**

**ALL AGES  
EVENT**

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**TICKET PICK UP  
REQUIRED  
IN ADVANCE...**

**EVERYONE  
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THEIR TICKETS  
NO LATER THAN  
August 1st AT THE  
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Des Moines,  
Iowa 50309  
Phone:  
515-288-0172**

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FIRST SERVE**

Official Publication  
of the Polk County  
Medical Society

**VOLUME 97 No. 2**

Des Moines, Iowa  
April/June 2025

**2025**

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# Bulletin

APR/JUNE 2025

MEMBER MAGAZINE FOR THE POLK COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

## Inside This Issue

### Feature Articles

2025-26 PCMS Executive Council .....	4
2024 PCMS Legislative Wrap-Up .....	11
<i>By: John Cacciatore and Lon Andersen, PCMS Lobbyists</i>	
174th PCMS Annual Meeting .....	18
The Power of Engagement: Why Medical Students Must Embrace Organized Medicine Early .....	15
<i>By: David A. Connett, D.O.</i>	
2025 Kathie J. Lyman Scholarship Awards .....	25
2025 PCMS Wild Lights at Blank Park Zoo .....	27
Coming to Full Circle: Returning to Columbia for My OBGYN Rotation .....	29
<i>By: Maria Camila Payan Rodriguez, D.O. '24</i>	
Dollars In Action: Julie Evans Memorial Fund .....	31
MIND THE GAP: Taking Pause – Without Pressing Pause on Your Career .....	32
<i>By: Andy Bukty, D.O.</i>	

Global Surgical Mission: Zambia .....	33
<i>By: Praveen Prasad, M.D.</i>	

### Monthly Articles

President's Message .....	7
CEO's Perspective .....	9
Sept/Oct Birthdays .....	34
November/December Birthdays .....	36

**COVER PHOTO:** Polk County Medical Society celebrating 174 years and beyond in medicine.

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Publication design and layout by Bijou Grafix, LLC. Like us on FaceBook for more information.

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# Take Time To *Smell The Roses*

**By: Thomas Klein, D.O.**

Dear Colleagues,

As we move into the heart of summer and on towards fall, I encourage each of you to take a moment to reflect not only on your professional accomplishments but also on your personal well-being.

As physicians, we often place our own needs at the bottom of the list.

This season is a perfect time to step outside, soak up the sunshine, and reconnect with the activities and people that bring you joy. Whether it's a quiet walk in nature, a family barbecue, or an afternoon on the water, investing time in yourself is essential to the care you provide to others.

At Polk County Medical Society, we remain steadfast in our commitment to support both individual physicians and the profession as a whole in Iowa.

In the face of ongoing and rapid changes in healthcare management, PCMS continues to advocate for your ability to care for patients with the autonomy, respect, and resources you deserve.

Physician retention in Iowa remains a top priority - we recognize that preserving a strong, engaged medical workforce is critical to the health of our communities.

*continued on page 8*

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We're also proud to share that our collective advocacy has seen important successes this year, including the passage of a vital act relating to **prior authorization and utilization review organizations** at the state level.

This is a meaningful step toward reducing administrative burdens and ensuring timely care for our patients. It's a reminder of what we can achieve together when we raise our voices in unity.

Finally, don't forget to RSVP for our upcoming **PCMS social events**.

These gatherings are a great way to relax, connect with colleagues, and celebrate the shared purpose that unites us as physicians. We look forward to seeing many of you there!

Thank you for your continued dedication, compassion, and resilience. On behalf of the entire PCMS board, I wish you a safe, restful, and fulfilling summer.

Warm regards,  
Tom





# From Personal Loss to Professional Bonds:



## *The Enduring Power of Community in Medicine*

By: Paula A. Noonan, C.E.O.

The passing of a close family member recently highlighted the importance of community. During times of grief, shared experiences and assistance from friends, neighbors, and loved ones can be a source of strength and healing. Navigating loss can be isolating but knowing that one is not alone provides comfort. Community offers a sense of belonging that can help alleviate feelings of isolation.

This personal experience has illuminated the importance of community in the professional realm. For physicians, the significance of strong professional communities at the local and regional levels is paramount. Medical societies, such as the Polk County Medical Society (PCMS), offer a network of support,

education, and advocacy that benefits physicians and patients, especially at the local region level where events and support are available right in their own community where they live and work, instead of at the state or national level. Although medical societies as a whole are an important part of your profession, **it is the regional local level that enables you to receive the benefit of personalized services in all aspects of your work and personal life.**

Why are local and regional medical societies so crucial for physicians?

### • **SUPPORT AND CONNECTION:**

PCMS offers a professional support system, combating the isolation that can arise from the demanding nature

*continued on page 10*

*continued from page 9*

of medical practice. Connecting with peers fosters camaraderie and shared experience.

• **EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

PCMS is crucial for physicians to stay current in a constantly evolving field. They provide access to continuing medical education (CME) courses, seminars, and specialized training programs, ensuring members have the latest knowledge and skills.

• **ADVOCACY AND REPRESENTATION:**

PCMS empower physicians to shape the future of healthcare and ensure the best possible care for patients. PCMS advocates for physicians at the local, regional, and national levels, addressing issues such as legislative and regulatory concerns, guided by physicians for physicians – not through PACs or political organizations.

• **NETWORKING AND**

**COLLABORATION: PCMS, YOUR LOCAL AND REGIONAL SOCIETY,**

provides opportunities for physicians to network with colleagues, leading to potential collaborations, mentorships, and patient referrals. These connections can broaden horizons and strengthen the overall medical community.

• **Contribution to Public Health:**

PCMS has community source programs offered through physician member collaboration that benefit and provides specialty care for all Iowans through the Volunteer Physician Network. PCMS educates the public on health issues and promote disease prevention and patient safety. PCMS works to educate the public on their care team and their roles in providing their health services and care plans.

In conclusion, navigating personal loss has highlighted the importance of community, which has also solidified its significance within the physician profession. Local and regional medical societies, such as PCMS, provide a platform for physicians to connect, learn, advocate, and contribute to their profession and the health of their communities. Embracing the power of these professional communities can make a difference in the lives of physicians and the patients they serve.

**Be a member of PCMS, be a leader and engage, participate and support your local medical society that supports you.**

# LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP:

## 2025 Session REPORT



**John Cacciatore**  
PCMS Lobbyist



**Lon Anderson**  
PCMS Lobbyist

The Iowa Legislature officially adjourned the First Regular Session of the 91st General Assembly at 6:31 a.m. on Thursday, May 15, 2025. This adjournment was 13 days past the scheduled 110-day session.

The Polk County Medical Society made significant strides on several of the 2025 State Featured Priorities. Below is a summary of key wins and legislative highlighted interest for the Polk County Medical Society during the 2025 Legislative Session. Please note that this is the first year of the General Assembly.

**Legislation not enacted in 2025 is eligible during the 2026 session.**

### BILLS SIGNED BY GOVERNOR REYNOLDS:

**HF 303 IMPROVEMENTS TO PRIOR AUTHORIZATION** – The bill shortens the time for an insurer to approve prior authorization for both urgent and nonurgent requests and creates a pilot program that exempts a subset of participating providers, including primary health care providers, from certain prior authorization requirements. *A bill for an act relating to prior authorizations and exemptions by health benefit plans and utilization review organizations. (Formerly HSB 19.)* (5/27 signed by Gov. 4/16 Passed Senate 47-0; 4/22 Passed House 92-0; **PCMS Supported**)



*continued on page 12*

Continued from page 11

### HF 516 RESIDENCY PREFERENCE –

Requires the University of Iowa to adopt a policy requiring that not less than eighty percent of the students who are accepted at the Carver College of Medicine in the Doctor of Medicine Program, and who are accepted at the College of Dentistry at the University of Iowa be residents of Iowa or persons who were, prior to applying to such college, enrolled in an eligible postsecondary institution as defined in section 261E.2.

*A bill for an act establishing requirements relating to the residency of people accepted for admission to the University of Iowa's Colleges of Medicine and Dentistry and requiring an annual report. (6/11 Signed by Gov.; 4/14 Passed Senate 34-11; 4/22 Passed House 61-30; PCMS Monitored – Final Changed language of bill that was signed was SUPPORTED by PCMS)*



### HF 1049 HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES APPROPRIATIONS BILL

– contains \$225,000 for the Volunteer Physician Network program administered by the Polk County Medical Society. *A bill for an act relating to and making appropriations to the department of veterans affairs and the department of health and human services, and related provisions and appropriations, including aging and disability services; behavioral health, public health, community access and eligibility; the medical assistance program, state supplementary assistance, Hawki, and other health-related programs; sex reassignment surgeries or associated procedures; family well-being and protection; state-operated specialty care, administration and compliance; transfers, cash flows, and nonreversions;*



*prior appropriations; the beer and liquor control fund, and the behavioral health fund; report on nonreversion of moneys; emergency rules; and a hospital directed payment program; and including effective date and retroactive applicability provisions. (Formerly HSB 342.) Effective date: Enactment, 07/01/2025 Applicability date: 07/01/2024 (6/11 Signed by Gov.; 5/14 Passed Senate 31-15; 5/13 Passed House 63-20; PCMS Monitored overall bill, But registered PCMS SUPPORTED VPN FUNDING Portion of bill)*

### HF 972 GOVERNOR'S HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE BILL -

The bill would consolidate, and more than double to \$10 million, the funding for current state-funded student loan repayment programs. The Governor has also directed HHS, in partnership with the University of Iowa and Broadlawns, to establish a Graduate Medical Education enhanced payment to draw down more than \$150 million in federal dollars to create a projected 115 new residency slots at Iowa's 14 teaching hospitals. Over four years, it is expected to create up to 460 new residency slots. *A bill for an act relating to health care including a funding model for the rural health care system; the elimination of several health care-related award, grant, residency, and fellowship programs; establishment of a Health Care Professional Incentive Program; Medicaid Graduate Medical Education; the Health Facilities Council; and the Iowa Health Information Network, making appropriations, and including effective date provisions. (Formerly HF 754, HSB 191.) (5/28 Signed by Gov.; 5/13 Passed Senate 41-4; 3/26 Passed House 95-1; PCMS SUPPORTED)*

continued from page 12

**SF383: PBM Reform** - The bill includes a comprehensive overhaul following negotiations between pharmacies, insurers, and PBMs. Notably, the final version includes key language protecting patients by ensuring co-pay assistance counts toward out-of-pocket costs. Overall, the bill seeks to create a more equitable environment for pharmacies and improve transparency in the prescription drug pricing system. *A bill for an act relating to pharmacy benefits managers, pharmacies, prescription drugs, and pharmacy services administrative organizations, and including applicability provisions.*



**Key Provisions of SF 383:**

- *Patient Protections: Prevents PBMs and insurers from steering patients to certain pharmacies or discriminating against pharmacies that meet legal and professional standards.*
- *Transparency & Fair Reimbursement: Requires PBMs to reimburse in-state pharmacies at or above the National Average Drug Acquisition Cost (NADAC) and provide a \$10.68 professional dispensing fee.*
- *Cost-Sharing Reforms: Mandates that 100% of rebates be reflected at the point of sale and applied to reduce patient cost-sharing and health plan premiums.*
- *Co-Pay Accumulator Ban: Ensures that payments made by or on behalf of patients count toward deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums.*
- *Ban on Spread Pricing: Effective January 1, 2026, PBMs must use a pass-through pricing model, ending the practice of pocketing the difference between what they charge insurers and pay pharmacies.*

- *Appeals Process: Establishes a clear appeals pathway for pharmacies to challenge inadequate reimbursement rates, with oversight by the Insurance Commissioner.*

*This reform prioritizes transparency, fairness, and patient choice while curbing PBM practices that drive up costs or limit access to care. (Formerly SSB 1074.) 06/11/2025, Signed by Governor. S.J. 1054. Effective date: 07/01/2025. Applicability date: 07/01/2025. **PCMS SUPPORTED***

**LATEST ACTION AND DIED**

**SF 360 A CRIMINALIZING VACCINE ADMINISTRATION** - The bill provides that a person shall not provide or administer a gene-based vaccine to another person in this state. A person who violates the bill is guilty of a simple misdemeanor and is subject to a fine of \$500 per incident. *A bill for an act relating to the administration of gene-based vaccines and providing penalties. (2/18 Ref to HHS; 3/3 Sub Recs amend & Passed; died in funnel; **PCMS Opposed**)*



**HF 256 STATUTE OR REPOSE** - The bill provides a second exception to the six-year statute of repose. Under the bill, if the cause of the injury or death was concealed from the person by the physician and surgeon, osteopathic physician and surgeon, dentist, podiatric physician, optometrist, pharmacist, chiropractor, physician assistant, nurse, or hospital, or their staff, the six-year statute of repose does not apply. *A bill for an act relating to the statute of repose in medical malpractice claims. (2/6 Ref to Judiciary; 2/17 Sub Recs Passage; died in funnel; **PCMS Opposed**)*





# INVESTING WISELY FOR THE MARATHON



ROSS POLKING, CFP®, AIF®, MBA, Senior Business Development Advisor

Investing can often feel like a high-stakes game. We've all heard the stories about someone who got in early on a hot stock or nailed the perfect cryptocurrency trade. It's easy to look at those stories and feel like success is just a matter of luck or being in the right place at the right time. But just like in sports, chasing investment returns without a solid strategy and discipline can lead to disappointment, sometimes even failure.

Imagine that you're a marathon runner lining up to cover 26.2 miles as fast as possible. In the beginning, it's tempting to sprint ahead when you see other competitors charging forward. But you could burn out too quickly and not have enough gas left to finish the race.

I learned this the hard way. My first marathon was in Minneapolis, back in the early 2000's. My only strategy was to carb load the night before, with a plate of pancakes at Perkins. Other than that, I figured I would pace off the front-runners. Why not? After all, they must have known what they were doing. So, if I wanted success, chasing them made sense. I quickly realized my mistake and almost had to be carried to the car after crossing the finish line.

The same basic principle applies to investing. You might see some stocks or assets with dramatic short-term returns. The temptation to jump in and participate is overwhelming. Everyone else is doing it, right? But just because

something looks like a sure bet in the moment doesn't mean that it aligns with your long-term success. FOMO is real. However, just like in a marathon, committing yourself to a solid, pre-planned strategy will help ensure you successfully cross the finish line.

Fortunately, I learned my lesson after that first race and adapted my approach. Ultimately, this landed me at the Boston Marathon a decade later. If what other investors are doing is not part of your plan, then have the discipline to tune out the noise and stick to your strategy. Chasing short-term returns might feel rewarding in the moment, but it's often a sprint that leaves you exhausted, with nothing to show for your effort.

A disciplined, long-term approach to investing may lead to greater returns. Our team here at Foster Group is incredible at keeping clients focused on the plan and long-term goals. There is no chasing, but rather building and trusting the process. And most importantly, you won't need to be carried to the car afterward.

Stay diversified!



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# The Power of Engagement:

## *Why Medical Students Must Embrace Organized Medicine Early*



**By: David A. Connett, D.O.**

In the rapidly evolving world of healthcare, the value of organized medicine cannot be overstated. For physicians, participation in medical societies - whether at the county, state, or national level - provides a voice in policy, advocacy, and education. Yet, the foundation for this lifelong engagement must begin not in residency or practice, but during medical school.

Medical students today face an increasingly complex landscape: shifting regulatory policies, growing physician burnout, and the transformation of healthcare delivery systems. These challenges make early exposure to organized medicine not just beneficial - but essential. By

joining professional medical societies early in their careers, students gain access to mentorship, legislative insight, and leadership development. They learn to advocate not only for their patients, but for the integrity and future of the profession.

Participation in organized medicine also strengthens a student's professional identity. Engagement with multidisciplinary physician leaders - both MD and DO - broadens their understanding of the physician's role beyond the exam room. Students are exposed to the realities of health equity, scope of practice debates, graduate medical education

*continued on page 17*



# broadlawns MEDICAL PLAZA

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*All forms of insurance accepted.*

continued from page 15

funding, and public health initiatives—all through the lens of collective action and policy reform.

Here in Polk County, we are fortunate to have a strong, inclusive medical society (***The Polk County Medical Society (PCMS) is a unique regionally local medical society, who recognize physicians of Podiatric Medicine as ACTIVE full voting Members of their society and Board. PCMS also provides scholarships for Osteopathic and Podiatric Medical Students at Des Moines University***) representing a diversity of specialties and backgrounds. Our community of physicians welcomes medical students and provides opportunities for them to attend events, contribute to discussions,

and serve on committees. These interactions cultivate leadership skills and help forge professional relationships that endure throughout one's career.

Ultimately, organized medicine offers more than networking or resume building - it is a forum to influence meaningful change. Medical students who engage early will find themselves better equipped, more informed, and more connected as they advance into residency and practice. As physician-leaders, we have a responsibility to extend the ladder downward - and students must be encouraged to climb it.

Let us model the engagement we wish to see and ensure that our next generation of physicians is prepared to lead.

## News...News...News...News!

***Polk County Medical Society*** wants to know what's new with you. Have you been appointed to a board or received an award? Please take a moment to send your information and photo for the next issue of ***The BULLETIN!*** Just email information to:

Email the Editor: [pcms@pcms.org](mailto:pcms@pcms.org)  
or Mail: Polk County Medical Society  
1520 High Street  
Des Moines, IA 50309

# THE POLK COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

## *174th Annual Meeting of the Membership & Installation of 2025-26 Officers*



The Polk County Medical Society (PCMS) Annual Meeting was honored to host Hall of Fame Astronaut and Physician David C. Hilmer, M.D. at the 174th Annual Meeting of the Membership, held at the historic Wakonda Club in Des Moines, on Monday, May 5th, 2025. PCMS President, Thomas Klein, D.O., welcomed our guests and members, officially opening the evening's program.

Dr. Hilmer arrived early at a cocktail reception to casually meet with PCMS members and guests. Dr. Hilmer addressed the room speaking his amazing travels to space and exploration, on becoming a physician post this experience and his current global affairs work impacting the World and the

United States. Dr. Hilmer provided an expanse of pictures from space and his missions as well as his charitable global health missions throughout the world. He graciously allowed a questions and answer session following his oration.

The newly nominated and voted upon 2025-26 slate of PCMS Executive Council officers were elected and installed. The 2025 Kathie J. Lyman Scholarship awards were then presented to awardees.

The Annual meeting was attended by over 120 PCMS members and guests. If you did not make the evening this year, put a place holder in your calendar for 2025. We have another exciting and interesting speaker to be announced!

*Continued from page 18*

We would like to give special recognition to all who Sponsored the 174th Annual Membership Meeting - Platinum Sponsors: The Volunteer Physician Network, Gold sponsors: Charter Bank and Kidder, and Silver Sponsor: Des Moines University who continue to partner and support Polk



County Medical Society, the largest and oldest county medical society in the state of Iowa.

We would like to recognize the ongoing continued support of our HealthCare Partnership Affiliate Program Members: Broadlawns Medical Center, UnityPoint Health - Des Moines and our Circle of Friends Partners: Foster Group, Copic, and Des Moines Area Community College.



*continued on page 20*



*Continued from page 19*





*Continued from page 20*



*continued on page 22*

*Continued from page 21*





Continued from page 22



continued on page 24

*Continued from page 23*



# *Congratulations to the 2025 Kathie J. Lyman Scholarship Award Recipients!*



L-R: Keyah Levy (DMU Global Health Director), Megan Slattery, D.O. (Broadlawns Global Health Award Recipient), Larry Severidt, M.D., Kathie J. Lyman, Thomas Klein, D.O., Paula Noonan, Scott Bell (DMU), and Grant Brouwer (DMU). Each received individual Kathie J. Lyman Scholarship Awards for medical students or global health trips.

The Polk County Medical Society (PCMS) awarded the 2025 Kathie J. Lyman Scholarships for the Polk County Medical Society during the 174th PCMS Annual Meeting of the membership. This year's event was held at the historic Wakonda Club in Des Moines, on Monday, May 5th, 2025.

**Scott Bell**, Des Moines University (DMU) Osteopathic College of Medicine, was awarded \$1,000. **Grant Brouwer**, DMU College of Podiatric Medicine and Surgery and Kayla Bean, University of Iowa Carver Medical School were each awarded \$1,000 scholarships.

Global Health Mission Program scholarship awards were awarded to Megan Slattery, D.O., from Broadlawns Medical Center and Des Moines University's Global Health Student Maria Camila Payan Rodriguez, DO-24. Each institution received a \$500 Global health award from the Kathie J. Lyman Scholarship Fund to assist participants in global medical missions and education programs.





# **PCMS ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERSHIP**

## **FEATURING:**

**GUEST OF HONOR:**

**SENATOR JONI ERNST**

AND SPECIAL GUESTS:

**David C. Hilmers, M.D  
Astronaut and Physician**

## **SPECIAL THANKS**

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# POLK COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY WILD LIGHTS: *Celebrating Physicians and Their Families*

Lights, Action, Animals - both real and mythical, these were the optical spectacular (PCMS) physician members, family, guests, and sponsors enjoyed at the PCMS Night at Blank Park Zoo Wild Lights 2025 on Sunday, April 27th, 2025. Each year the displays get more incredible and interactive delighting

both the adult and the child within. This event is a staple annual favorite event and an awe-inspiring night of fun and camaraderie. Thank you to all who attended and supported this great evening! If you didn't make it this year, mark your calendars for next year!



Amelia Kruse



Webster Family



Kamhawy Family

*continued on page 28*

Continued from page 27



Kessler Family



Sixta and Potter Families



Kruse Family



Patten Family



# Coming Full Circle:

## *Returning to Colombia for My OBGYN Rotation*



By: Maria Camila Payan Rodriguez, D.O.'24

Returning to Colombia for a month-long clinical rotation in obstetrics and gynecology felt like coming full circle. Born in Colombia but raised in the Midwest, I saw this experience at Juan N. Corpas in Bogotá as an opportunity to reconnect with my roots — not only culturally, but also professionally and personally as a future physician.

From the moment I stepped into the hospital, everything felt both familiar and unfamiliar. I saw families that reminded me of my own and patients whose stories echoed those I've encountered in the U.S. At the same time, differences in clinical practices, workflows, and available resources highlighted the impact

of social, economic, and political contexts on the delivery of care.

One of the most valuable aspects of my rotation was the opportunity to work closely with local students and attendings. They welcomed me warmly and encouraged my active participation. I assisted in deliveries, participated in prenatal and postpartum care, and observed a wide range of procedures.

While many medical principles transcended borders, care delivery in Colombia often required greater adaptability in resource-limited settings. What struck me most was realizing how scarce even basic resources could be —and how many patients had limited or no access to prenatal care.

*continued on page 30*

*Continued from page 29*

Many arrived at the hospital late in their pregnancies, some for their very first visit. I saw how this lack of early care impacted their health and complicated decision-making for providers. It was humbling to witness how the team worked diligently to provide the best care possible despite these challenges.

This experience deepened my understanding of global health disparities and reinforced the importance of advocacy, equitable access, and culturally informed care — especially for underserved populations.

Outside of the hospital, the experience brought me meaningful

friendships and a renewed connection to Colombia. I reconnected with family, ate Colombian food I hadn't tasted in years, and even played *tejo*, a traditional Colombian game.

As I returned to the U.S. to complete my medical training, I carry with me renewed perspectives on global health, a deeper sense of cultural humility, and a strengthened commitment to serve diverse communities. This rotation didn't just broaden my clinical knowledge — it enriched my identity and reaffirmed my purpose as a future physician.



# Dollars in Action:

## The Julie Evans Memorial Children's Healthcare Fund

### FY 2024/25 4th Quarter

We are pleased to report that the **Julie Evans Memorial Children's Healthcare Fund assisted almost 4000 vulnerable at-risk children and families, as beneficiaries through services provided through the Volunteer Physician Network (VPN) program during FY 2024/25.**

As head into the heat of Summer, we are lined up to continue to honor Julie Evan's and her dedicated work on behalf of children and families in Iowa, through the services provided by the VPN. The Julie Evans Memorial Children's Healthcare Fund assists in providing crucial specialty care to Iowans and recognizes, perpetually, her commitment to improving the lives of the children and families through health and education.

The Polk County Medical Society Volunteer Physician Network would like to extend appreciation and thanks for the continued generous contributions made to the Julie Evans Memorial Children's Healthcare Fund, by The Evans Family Charitable Foundation.

Ongoing support through the Julie Evans Memorial Children's Healthcare Fund is a deep commitment to the VPN program allowing us to provide the **ONLY ACCESS** to much needed specialty care to children and families in Iowa who are below 200% of the federal poverty levels and ineligible for ANY other existing assistance.



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# MIND THE GAP: Taking a Pause — Without Pressing Pause on Your Career

As residency draws to a close, not every physician has a full-time position lined up—and that's more common than you might think. Some residents need more time to evaluate their options, prioritize family, or simply decompress after years of training. While taking a break is entirely reasonable, it's important to think strategically about how that time is spent. One option that offers flexibility without creating a future resume gap is working as an independent contractor through a reputable staffing organization, such as Docs Who Care (DWC). DWC partners with hospitals — often in underserved or rural areas — to fill short-term needs for physicians in emergency medicine, hospitalist, or outpatient roles. The work is meaningful, schedule-friendly, and can be tailored to fit your personal timeline. Here's why it's worth considering:

1. **Bridge the Gap Thoughtfully:** Taking a few months to travel, relocate, or spend time with family is valuable — but may raise flags with future employers, questioning gaps in clinical experience. A few well-placed shifts as an independent contractor can provide continuity and a clear explanation of how you used your time post-residency, without committing to full-time work.
3. **Maintain Momentum:** Working as a locum-style physician allows you to keep up your

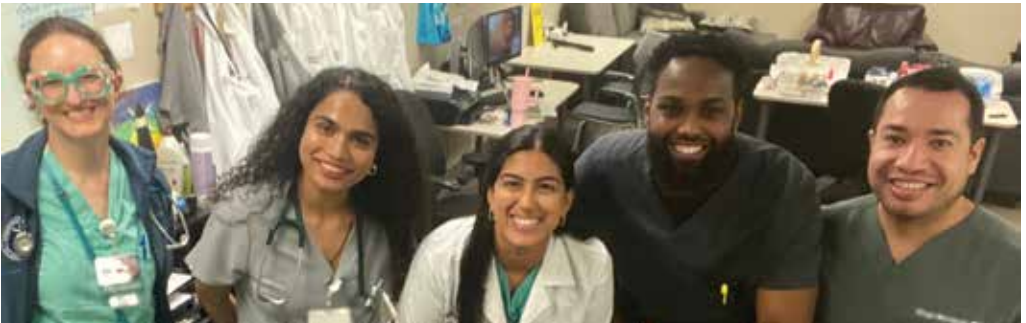
clinical skills, begin earning an attending-level income, and gain exposure to different practice settings — all of which can inform your eventual job choice.

4. **No Long-Term Commitment:** Organizations like DWC offer scheduling flexibility, often letting you choose when and where you work. This can provide the breathing room you need while maintaining a professional presence on your Curriculum Vitae.
5. **Find Meaning in Your Work:** Serving underserved communities not only makes a real difference — it also allows you to feel valued and appreciated. Physicians find this work deeply fulfilling, providing a service with your newly developed skills.

In short, taking time for yourself and your loved ones is important — but it doesn't mean disconnecting entirely from medicine. A flexible contracting role can help you transition on your own terms, with both freedom and foresight.

- **Andy Bukaty, D.O., Chief Medical Officer, Iowa Physician, Docs Who Care**

*Interested in learning more about Docs Who Care? Simply scan the QR code to schedule a brief call or visit [DocsWhoCare.com](https://docswhocare.com).*





# *A Global Surgical Mission:* **ZAMBIA**



**By: Praveen Prasad, M.D.**

The author undertook a surgical mission to Zambia in Africa in October 2024 along with a group of other surgeons/anesthesia providers/nurses and OR staff.

The surgical mission group is the International Surgical Missions based out of Colorado and is made up of all volunteer personnel, who have taken the time off to volunteer in a third world country and perform surgeries for underserved and indigent and poor personnel.

Zambia is a landlocked country in Africa, and is bordered in the north by Congo, Tanzania to the northeast, Malawi to the East, and Zimbabwe and Botswana to the south.

Zambia was a British colony till 1964 when it gained Independence and was previously known as Rhodesia.

The population is concentrated mainly in Lusaka in the South and the Copper Belt Province

*continued on page 35*

## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Ryan S. Bakke, M.D.

David C. Ball, M.D.

Bick T. Carfrae, M.D.

Stanton L. Danielson, M.D.

Janie C. Hendricks, D.O.

James W. Hopkins, M.D.

Robert C. Kitterman, M.D.

Mark Matthes, M.D.

Noreen E. O'Shea, D.O.

Benjamin S. Paulson, M.D.

Praveen C. Prasad, M.D.

Gregory Schmunk, M.D.

John U. Skoog, M.D.

Mark W. Westberg, M.D.

Robert H. Zeff, M.D.

## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Kyle J. Alliman, M.D.

Larry Beaty, M.D.

Thomas E. Benzoni, D.O.

G. Leon Berkley, D.O.

Sharon Bertroche, M.D.

Ellie L Bishop, D.O.

Robert L. Clark, M.D.

Steven M. Craig, M.D.

James M. Cummings, M.D.

Royce K. Dexter, M.D.

Michael C. Frazier, M.D.

Kent J. Hall, M.D.

Douglas Hanson, M.D.

Laurie M. Kuestner, M.D.

Theodore W. Rooney, D.O.

Teri Wahlig, M.D.

Eytan Young, M.D.

*Continued from page 33*

in the North which are the core economic Hubs of the country. We started our journey from Atlanta when we flew on a long flight to Johannesburg South Africa where we stayed overnight.

The next morning, we took a short flight to the city of Ndola which is in the North and then drove to a small town about 3 hours away in the suburbs where we conducted our mission.

We were invited by a group of Dentists from Minneapolis who have been going to this hospital for many years, and they perform dental procedures and provide dental care to the local population,

and they felt that the hospital and the local community needed a surgical team to help.

St. Dominic's Mission Hospital: We were hosted by the Dominican Sisters and worked at the St. Dominic's Mission Hospital. The Hospital is a small one with about 25 beds and has an operating theater with 2 rooms.

We were able to use one of the rooms for general anesthesia and the second one for spinal and local cases. We performed a total of 50 cases during the 5 days that we worked. These included: Thyroidectomies/hernia repairs/hydrocele excision/abdominal



The Operating room



The author with Dr. Sicoli, Nurse Josephine and Dr. Riseman.

*continued on page 37*

## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Robert Behrens, M.D.

Thomas R. Buroker, D.O.

Philip J. Colletier, M.D.

Michael A. Disbro, M.D.

Jim P. Duong, M.D.

Louis H. Fingerman, M.D.

Bart P. Jenson, M.D.

Robert A. Jerstad, D.O.

Rao Makkapati, M.D.

Jefferey M. Merryman, M.D.

Chinedu Nwosa, M.D.

Gregory J. Recker, D.O.

Louis D. Rodgers, M.D.

Kurt A. Smith, D.O.

Matthew Spitzenberger, D.O.

David G. Stilley, M.D.

Mark D. Woiwood, M.D.

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Kenneth M. Anderson, M.D.

Laurence J. Baker, D.O.

Brian C. Bowshier, M.D.

Meredith D. Crenshaw, M.D.

Richard L. Deming, M.D.

Darin L. Frerichs, D.O.

Carole A. Frier, D.O.

Joseph O. Gilg, M.D.

Holly B. Healey, D.O.

Bradley K. Hiatt, D.O.

Alan Hilgersen, D.O.

Pitayadet Jumrussirkul, M.D.

Eric N. Meek, M.D.

Kaaren Olesen, D.O.

Don Carlos Salisbury, D.O.

Yogesh Shah, M.D.

Debra Sixta, M.D.

Martin VanZee, D.O.

Jason Wittmer, M.D.

*Continued from page 35*

mass excision/hemorrhoids/Cholecystectomy and other minor procedures.

The place is very hot during the month of October and the rooms that we stayed in had power only for short periods and usually none at night.

Fortunately, the Hospital had a generator so we could perform operations in a safe environment.

The trip was a great success, and we are looking forward to another trip later this year and then we would be taking a larger team so we can undertake more cases during the mission.



Zambian patients with Dr. Prasaad



Pre Op patients

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# SAVE THE DATE....

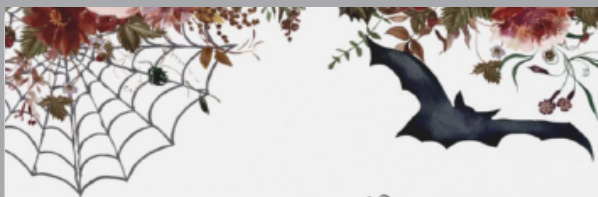


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**SEPT. 8-10, 2025**



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**HAVE FUN AND MAKE AN IMPACT**





*Save the Date*

# PCMS FALLOWEEN FESTIVAL FOR PHYSICIANS AND FAMILY

**WHEN: Saturday, October 4th, 2025**

**TIME: 10am-12 pm PCMS Member Entrance  
Time - (YOU CAN STAY AS LONG AS YOU LIKE AT  
THE FARM)**

**WHERE: Howell's Greenhouse & Pumpkin Patch  
3145 Howell Court, Cumming, IA 50061**

**FEATURING:** Food, Beverage, Wagon Rides,  
Corn Maze, Pumpkin Pad, play area, pumpkin  
patch, Farm animals, Activity Station Playground  
and Big White Barn Shopping

**(NOT INCLUDED:** Zipline, Pony Rides, Corn/  
Pumpkin Cannons and other adventure activities  
available with cash payment)

**ALL AGES  
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FAMILY**

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Physicians and family**  
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