

MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY CONNECTION

NEWS FROM THE
MIDWESTERN
UNIVERSITY
BODY DONATION
PROGRAM

SPRING 2022

Welcome from the New Director's Desk



Sandra E. Inouye, Ph.D.
*Director of Anatomical
Laboratories
and Midwestern University
Body Donation Program*

It has been a year of exciting transitions for the Midwestern University Body Donation Program. My name is Dr. Sandra Inouye, and I am the new Director of the Body Donation Program. I was honored to succeed Dr. Heather Smith, who was the successful Program Director for several years, in April 2021. I am a Professor and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs in the College of Graduate Studies. I joined the Midwestern University Department of Anatomy on the University's Downers Grove, Illinois campus in 2000 and this year, I am excited to move my home to the Glendale Campus. I have been teaching anatomy for over two decades to first-year students in Osteopathic Medicine, Physician Assistant Studies, Physical Therapy, Optometry, Dental Medicine, and Speech-Language Pathology.

I am passionate about students learning anatomy from donors. There is nothing that technology can invent that can compare to the tradition, learning, and transformational experience of hands-on studying anatomy from real people. Learning anatomy from donors transcends

the academic study of anatomy and elevates it to a humanistic one where students are given the opportunity to develop empathy and compassion taught to them by their "first patient." An experiential anatomy education is, quite simply, an invaluable part of the foundation of medical education.

Midwestern University has been adjusting throughout the year to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in 2022 we feel a renewed sense of energy, hope, and excitement as students have returned fully to the classrooms. The flowers are blooming, and spring has reminded us of renewal and rebirth. The campus has happily



resumed pre-pandemic levels of activity, while we remain mindful of COVID-19. During the pandemic, our students continued to participate in hands-on activities in anatomy education while respecting the safety of faculty, staff, and students. Even with COVID-related restrictions in place, we were not deterred

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Tomorrow's Healthcare Team

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from continuing our outreach efforts by hosting virtual educational workshops and career days for high school students from around the Valley. This gave students the opportunity to learn more about different healthcare careers and hopefully inspire them to become the next generation of healthcare professionals. However, after the past six to eight months of “adaptation,” we are excited to transition back to normal and more frequent levels of activity in the anatomy laboratories.

All of the anatomy educational activities during the pandemic and our transition from the shadow of COVID-19 is largely due to the generosity of donors like you. We truly appreciate your generosity that supports the education of our future healthcare providers. Your gift as a donor will live on as a legacy of knowledge and compassion that will be passed from our students to their future patients, and we humbly thank you for your invaluable gift and contribution towards the future of excellent, patient-centered healthcare.

Midwestern University Offers Online Master's Degree in Precision Medicine



Midwestern University is now offering a new dual-degree online graduate program in precision medicine.

Precision medicine is an emerging approach for personalizing disease treatment and prevention strategies that takes into account individual variability in genes, environment, and lifestyle

for each person. Precision medicine uses this detailed information, paired with a patient's health history, to create customized care and treatment plans. This approach is already in use in treating diseases such as cancer, neurological disorders, infectious diseases, and rare childhood disorders.

The Precision Medicine Program at the Midwestern University College of Graduate Studies (CGS) is a dual-degree program for students of osteopathic medicine, veterinary medicine, dental medicine, and optometry, offering either a Master of Science in Precision Medicine or a Post-Graduate Certificate in Precision Medicine. Starting in 2022, a stand-alone Post-Graduate Certificate option will also be available. The Program will provide current and practical knowledge of fundamental areas of genetics, genomics, biomarkers, and bioinformatics in a flexible online format.

Midwestern University Offers Online Master's Degree in Public Health



The new Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) Program is a 56 quarter-credit hour online program that offers interprofessional opportunities to join healthcare teams that link human, animal, and ecosystems health management and employ One Health principles. The program, housed in the University's College of Health Sciences, was initially offered starting in summer 2020 as a dual-degree option for the University's osteopathic medicine, dental medicine, optometry, and veterinary medicine students; a standalone degree option will be available starting this year.

The degree will empower students with public health knowledge and skills that will expand their career opportunities in traditional clinical and public health practice, global health, and government service. Typical career paths include environmental health, food safety, epidemiology, zoonotic disease and vector control, health service management, and many more. Professionals with this level of training are in increasing demand, especially in urban and rural populations that are medically underserved. It is estimated that an additional quarter million public health workers will be needed this year.

Perspectives on Anatomy: Midwestern University

Faculty and Student Profiles



Faculty Profile:
Ari Grossman, Ph.D.,
Professor, Anatomy

Dr. Grossman joined Midwestern University in 2008. Currently, he teaches primarily in the Veterinary animal anatomy course and the Dental and Optometry human anatomy course.

During his time at Midwestern, he has also taught gross anatomy in the Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine anatomical sciences course as well as the Podiatry, Physical Therapy, Physician Assistant, Nurse Anesthesia, and Occupational Therapy anatomy courses.

Dr. Grossman's Perspective: Anatomical sciences are the foundation of medicine, and cadaveric dissection is the foundation for learning anatomy. I believe there are certain essential elements for effective learning. First, the teacher's role is to act as a guide. Second, students must have access to hands-on activities. Third, students should be able to have choices and let their curiosity direct their learning. As a teacher, I try to guide my students through a hands-on journey of discovery as they learn about the body. Cadaveric dissection takes the students on an intimate three-dimensional exploration through the varied textures of different tissues and the intricacies of different systems such as the nervous and musculoskeletal systems, and it showcases the magnificent variability they will encounter as they progress in their chosen professions. While technology is an important and useful tool in education, the most profound introduction to the human body cannot be achieved in any other way but dissection. Without the incredible generosity of our donors, we would not be able to train our students to the level we currently do. Your generous choice to become the "first patient" of our students is crucial to our success as teachers and to their success as clinicians.



Student Profile: Jordan Mitchell, second-year osteopathic medical student and Master of Public Health degree candidate at Midwestern University.

Prior to attending Midwestern University, Jordan graduated from San Jose State University with a B.S. in Systems Physiology in his native California.

Jordan's Perspective: My passion for medicine and the human body began in the Anatomy Lab. Getting a chance to work with the donors and see first-hand the otherwise ethereal structures described in lecture was transformational. This opportunity arose at a time when I was uncertain of my purpose in life, and the love I found for anatomy propelled me into the healthcare field, culminating in my pursuit of a medical degree and concurrent master's degree in public health. Having been involved in several anatomy courses since then, either as a student or teaching assistant, I continue to treasure the practical time in lab the most. The chance to interact with the structures that comprise our very foundations provides an incalculable benefit in later classes when discussing the different diseases and their effect on our tissues.

I knew upon entering medical school that the chance to work first-hand with anatomical donors was going to be integral to my success. The COVID-19 pandemic created obstacles to such learning and initially limited my access. However, I persisted and took advantage of every opportunity to work in the lab, including optional review sessions, a special elective to gain more hands-on experience, and ultimately a summer position teaching other students. The opportunity to gain the insights only possible from working with a donor is what drove me to always seek more opportunities. I will always remember the donor I worked with that summer, as they formed the basis of my internal anatomical references and will contribute greatly to the treatment of every patient I interact with throughout my career. I am extremely grateful to everyone who chooses to contribute their body (such as my own grandmother) for our education to ensure exemplary training of physicians and the future health of our community.

Health Careers Institute Returns with In-Person Experiences for High School Students

High school juniors and seniors interested in healthcare were given an in-depth and hands-on look at potential careers in various disciplines at Northwestern University's annual Health Careers Institute for High School Students, which took place from July 12 – 16.

Attendees participated in 40 hours of workshops, labs, and interactive activities during the event, which was held for five days from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM each day. Forty-eight high schoolers from 32 schools – including three out-of-state schools – were selected for the program, including 40 juniors and eight seniors.



High school students at the Health Careers Institute check each other's blood pressure as part of the five-day event.

Midwestern faculty and student mentors volunteered to teach workshops in anatomy and introductory skills for various health professions, with a special focus on how to prepare for college and what to expect from each profession. Among the Midwestern student mentors were five students who attended the Health Careers Institute while they themselves were in high school.

Ninety-three Midwestern volunteers presented on career tracks and topics including Public Health, Precision Medicine, Osteopathic Medicine, Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Skills, Dental Simulation Lab, Suturing, Medical Simulation, Pharmacy Lab, Veterinary Pathology, and more.

Applicants were selected based on their interest in science and the health professions, as demonstrated by coursework, volunteer activities, and high school transcript.

The Health Careers Institute for High School Students was funded as a result of generous financial support from BHHS Legacy Foundation, which is an Arizona charitable organization whose philanthropic mission is to enhance the quality of life and health of those it serves.

The 2022 program will take place July 15-23.
For more information: www.midwestern.edu/AZHealthCareersInstitute

We hope you have enjoyed seeing just a few of the ways that Northwestern University enriches the communities we serve. Thank you for participating in our Body Donation Program, which supports our students in the detailed study of human structure (anatomy) through the ability to study the whole human body. The integral knowledge provided by this opportunity is foundational for the education of our nation's future healthcare professionals.

We recognize the thoughtful consideration that goes into the decision to donate to our program and wish to acknowledge and express our gratitude to those individuals who generously choose to invest in the future of healthcare by making this donation. To learn more, visit www.midwestern.edu/bodydonation.



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