

# Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG) Program of Excellence Award Winners

## *Overall Award*

Roy and Lucille A. Carver College of Medicine at University  
of Iowa

### **FMIG Operation**

Our Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG) leadership structure is intentionally designed to promote engagement across all class levels, from M1 to M4, and to foster strong mentoring relationships between upper- and underclassmen. This inclusive, multi-level leadership model not only encourages diversity in leadership styles and perspectives but also ensures continuity and sustained institutional knowledge as students progress through medical school. Rather than concentrating leadership roles among upperclassmen, we intentionally prepare underclassmen to gradually assume greater responsibilities. This progressive involvement equips them with the foundational knowledge and experience needed to effectively lead the group and mentor incoming members. To support smooth transitions, each executive board member creates detailed written documentation of their role and responsibilities to be passed on to the incoming leadership team.

Our FMIG is particularly active, offering extensive programming that requires the collaborative effort of a robust leadership team. Responsibilities for each event, program, or initiative are clearly delegated to specific team members, who serve as primary coordinators and manage task distribution among fellow leaders. This structure enables efficient execution while encouraging team input that reflects the diverse priorities and needs of students at every stage of training. The large size and class diversity of our leadership team allow us to design programming that accommodates the wide range of interests and schedules across both pre-clinical and clinical years. Moreover, the numerous leadership positions available within our FMIG offer students ample opportunities to become involved early and stay engaged throughout their medical education. Leadership development is a core component of our mission, as these skills are essential for a successful career in family medicine. After years of refinement, we have found a balanced and effective model that includes both upper- and

underclassmen in key leadership roles, with annual elections held each spring to maintain this dynamic and sustainable structure.

## Goals

The University of Iowa Family Medicine Interest Group is actively committed to strengthening awareness and involvement within the field of family medicine on campus, in the surrounding Iowa City community, and across the state and country. The mission of our group is to provide a variety of programming in order to:

1. Expand medical students' understanding of and interest in family medicine
2. Increase the visible presence of the group and its programs/activities
3. Prepare medical students to be leaders in family medicine
4. Foster medical students' personal and professional development
5. Build networks and relationships to connect medical students with practicing family physicians

## Faculty Advisor

This year, our outgoing faculty advisor completed her fifth academic year of advisorship. In addition to our faculty advisor, we also receive support from other staff within the Department of Family Medicine who are integrally involved with our FMIG operations. Our outgoing faculty advisor is Dr. [REDACTED], a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Iowa. She was approved by the Board of Directors of the IAFP to serve in this role. Recently, we introduced our new faculty advisor, Dr. [REDACTED] who will take over for Dr. [REDACTED] for the 2025-2026 year. We also have support of the Director of Medical Student Education in the Department of Family Medicine, Dr. [REDACTED]. They are very accessible to both the leadership team and other FMIG members. The board has met with them regularly each semester to discuss goals and remain in constant communication about events and opportunities for students. We are fortunate to also have the assistance of [REDACTED], a support staff member within the University of Iowa Family Medicine Department. Dr. [REDACTED], Dr. [REDACTED], Dr. [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] provide assistance in a variety of ways, including finances, providing contacts for possible speakers for events, ordering materials, and coordinating communication with the IAFP and AAFP. They receive all official leadership meeting communications and assist executive officers in maintaining continuity, establishing contacts, and generating new ideas for innovative programming to further meet our mission and goals.

## Programs

### National Primary Care Week Celebration

As in many previous years, the Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG) proudly coordinated a collaborative and interdisciplinary series of events in celebration of National Primary Care Week, held annually each October. This year, our efforts were amplified through partnerships with several other student interest groups, including the Internal Medicine Interest Group, Psychiatry Interest Group, EQUAL Meds, and the Leopold Society. Together, we organized a comprehensive and engaging week that highlighted the breadth and significance of primary care across a variety of patient populations and clinical settings. Throughout the week, we hosted daily in-person lunch meetings, each led by a different interest group and centered on unique topics within the scope of primary care. The sessions covered a diverse range of themes, such as the intersection between family medicine and psychiatry, the role of internal medicine in chronic disease management, legislative impacts on the mental health of transgender youth, and the delivery of care in LGBTQ+ and OB/GYN primary care clinics. Each event provided ample time for post-presentation Q&A, giving students the opportunity to interact directly with primary care physicians and specialists in these fields. These informal conversations helped students explore the real-world applications of primary care and better understand the day-to-day experiences of physicians in various disciplines. To encourage participation and engagement beyond the lunch talks, we also ran a daily primary care trivia initiative. Trivia questions were emailed to the student body each morning, with the goal of increasing awareness about the important role of primary care while offering a fun, low-stakes way to get involved. Winners received small prizes such as \$5 gift cards, mugs, and FMIG-branded koozies, adding a lighthearted and interactive dimension to the week's events. At the heart of this effort was the FMIG Primary Care Week Coordinator, who played a critical role in planning and executing the program. This student leader was responsible for organizing meetings with partner interest groups, selecting and scheduling presentation topics, and ensuring each event ran smoothly. They also promoted the week's events widely through the Carver College of Medicine's student listservs and social media platforms, helping to maximize attendance and visibility across all class years. The ability to hold events in person this year created a vibrant and engaging atmosphere, bolstered by the inclusion of food at each lunch meeting to support participation. These gatherings served not only as educational forums but also as opportunities to foster community among students, residents, and physicians with shared interests in primary care. National Primary Care Week remains an important annual event, aligning with FMIG's broader mission to promote primary care and advocate for its role in delivering equitable, comprehensive healthcare. The goals of our programming include collaborating with other primary care-focused student groups to create a meaningful and informative week, highlighting interdisciplinary collaboration and the impact of primary care in underserved populations, emphasizing emerging topics in family medicine and the diverse career paths within primary care, encouraging mentorship and networking between students, residents, and practicing physicians. Together, these efforts underscore the central role of primary care in shaping the future of medicine.

### Winter Break Early Clinical Experience in Primary Care

In 2022, our FMIG applied to and was successfully accepted into the Primary Care Leadership Collaboration run by the American Academy of Family Physicians. We finished up this two year initiative in 2024, which allowed our FMIG to interact with mentors and other FMIG leaders across the country. Our main goals with the program was to continue to grow the size of our interest group and foster further interest in family medicine amongst our student body. This was a critical initiative given the shortage of primary care providers in our state, especially in more rural settings. The project we initiated, which was a pilot for last year included working with Iowa's Family Medicine Residency sites across the state. We offered early clinical experiences in family medicine to M1s over their winter break. They had the opportunity to spend one week at a residency program site, learning about residency at these sites and getting exposure to family medicine. This included mentorship and shadowing opportunities, as well as a chance for these M1s to practice their

patient history-taking and physical exam skills they had learned thus far in their pre-clinical education. Getting this early exposure has hopefully encouraged more students to pursue primary care specialties in the future. We have four previous student members who were appointed and took the lead coordinating the initiatives developed in the PCLC with our FMIG leadership board and family medicine faculty. Those who participated received comprehensive training in both relational leadership and advocacy which will not only strengthen their individual skills but also contribute to strong leadership within our FMIG that should carry down for years to come.

#### Iowa Residency Program Dinner Series

This was a new series implemented in 2024 that the co-presidents planned to increase awareness of Iowa Family Medicine Programs across the state of Iowa; this was an initiative that started after the University of Iowa's FMIG presentation to the Iowa Family Medicine Program Directors meeting. One of our goals for this series was to prepare students of all years (M1-M4) for residency applications and to expose them to the nuances and strengths of the various programs in Iowa. This series occurred throughout September 2024, as M4s began applying for residency, starting interviews, and planning their rank lists. Dinners occurred in person both at the medical school and at local restaurants near the medical school in Iowa City. The cost of the dinners was covered by each residency program. Each event featured a different residency program with representatives from the program, including the program director, residents, and other notable faculty. This year we had 5 out of the 8 total Iowa residency programs participate in the dinner series program. Each dinner covered topics ranging from interview preparation, personal statements, elective choices to prepare for residency, extracurriculars to demonstrate a commitment to Family Medicine, and strengths specific to that program. Students came prepared with questions for each of the programs, and we received feedback from attendees that this dinner series was extremely beneficial in terms of helping students make decisions regarding which schools to apply to, interview at, and rank. Most of the attendees were M4s applying to residency, but we also had M2 and M3 attendees, as well. The lower classmen reported that the dinners were beneficial to them in terms of building early connections with program directors in preparation for their future application seasons. Participating residency programs also expressed that the dinners were helpful both for recruiting purposes and in terms of getting an additional opportunity to get to know prospective applicants. From both a residency program and student perspective, these dinners were hugely successful and we expect it will be an annual recurrence. We hope to continue the dinner series to promote Iowa Family Medicine Residency Programs for those interested in staying in the state of Iowa for training and to encourage interest in Family Medicine. Additionally, we hope to continue to expand the dinner series in upcoming years so that every residency program in the state of Iowa participates.

#### Ward Walks

Ward Walks is a longstanding initiative that has been implemented intermittently over the years with the primary goal of providing preclinical medical students with meaningful exposure to inpatient care within the Department of Family Medicine. This program is designed to bridge the gap between the classroom-based didactic years and the clinical experiences that follow, offering students an early glimpse into the practical, day-to-day responsibilities of family medicine physicians in the hospital setting. At the start of each academic year or semester, our Membership Chair reaches out to the chief residents within the Family Medicine Residency Program to coordinate a mutually convenient schedule. The goal is to identify specific days when preclinical students are able to join the residents during their inpatient rotations. Once these dates are confirmed, they are made available to students through a sign-up sheet or online platform. Students can then select the time slots that work best for them, allowing for flexibility and accessibility to a wide range of participants. On their scheduled day, students shadow family medicine residents as they conduct inpatient rounds. This includes participating in team discussions, observing patient interactions, and seeing the diverse

array of medical cases managed by family medicine physicians. By witnessing the rounding process firsthand, students gain a deeper understanding of clinical reasoning, patient communication, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the role of family medicine in a hospital-based setting. The response from students has been overwhelmingly positive. Each year since the program's inception, we have received encouraging feedback highlighting the value of this experience. Many students report that Ward Walks has helped solidify their interest in family medicine or has opened their eyes to the broad scope of practice that the specialty entails. Others note that it has helped contextualize topics they are learning in class by seeing how they apply to real patient care. One of the unique strengths of Ward Walks is that it gives students not only clinical exposure but also a sense of the culture and structure of the Family Medicine Residency Program here at the University of Iowa. This early connection with residents and faculty fosters mentorship opportunities and allows students to envision themselves as part of the department in the future. It also helps demystify the inpatient setting, which can often feel distant and intimidating to students who have not yet started clinical rotations. Looking ahead, we remain committed to continuing and expanding this program. Our hope is that Ward Walks will continue to serve as a valuable touchpoint for students interested in primary care, offering them a tangible and inspiring look at the work of family medicine physicians in both inpatient and outpatient settings. By increasing early exposure during the foundational years of medical education in numerous arenas, we aim to cultivate a strong pipeline of students excited about the field of family medicine and its vital role in patient care.

### Procedure Clinics

This academic year, FMIG hosted several successful procedure clinics, including Casting and Splinting, Vasectomy, and Obstetrics Procedures. These events have been extremely well-attended, with particularly enthusiastic feedback about the obstetrics clinic, where students were able to practice skills they are rarely exposed to during preclinical training. FMIG's Procedure Clinics are among our most popular and highly anticipated events, consistently drawing strong interest and overwhelmingly positive feedback from students at the Carver College of Medicine. These hands-on educational experiences offer a unique and practical opportunity for students to learn and practice essential clinical procedures in a low-stress, supportive environment. Demand for these events is incredibly high—sign-up sheets often fill up within hours of being distributed with priority registration offered to FMIG members via our listserv, and waitlists are typically required to accommodate the overflow of interested students. Each clinic is co-hosted by a member of the FMIG executive board in partnership with one of Iowa's family medicine residency programs. Over the years, we've built strong, collaborative relationships with residency programs across the state, which has enabled us to recruit physicians and residents from multiple institutions including the The University of Iowa and Broadlawns Family Medicine Residency Program. These partnerships are mutually beneficial: students gain access to high-quality instruction from practicing clinicians, while residency programs are able to interact with potential applicants in an informal, engaging setting, strengthening their recruitment efforts. The primary goals of the Procedure Clinics are threefold, to provide a safe and educational environment in which students can learn, practice, and refine essential clinical procedures with guidance from physicians and residents in family medicine, create informal networking opportunities that allow students to connect with residency program faculty and current residents, fostering relationships and mentorship, and encourage peer teaching by inviting experienced students to help demonstrate techniques and support their peers during practice sessions. The logistics of each clinic are coordinated by the FMIG Vice President of Procedure Clinics. If the VP is unable to attend a particular event, another member of the FMIG leadership board volunteers to take the lead. Their responsibilities include acting as the main point of contact for the residency program, preparing the room with necessary equipment and supplies, checking in students upon arrival, distributing meals, and updating participants on FMIG activities and opportunities. Residency programs typically provide most, if not all, of the equipment needed for each session. Each event generally includes around five physicians or residents who divide students into smaller breakout groups, allowing for personalized instruction and real-time feedback as students practice various procedures.

We typically accommodate 25–30 students per clinic to maintain an optimal learning environment. Overall, these clinics represent an exceptional collaboration between FMIG and Iowa's family medicine residency programs. They offer invaluable exposure to procedural skills, enhance student confidence, and reinforce the broad and dynamic scope of family medicine.

#### Topics in Family Medicine Speaker Series

One student served as lunch meeting coordinator on the FMIG executive board this year. The student was tasked with organizing the lunch meeting talks, advertising meetings to medical students, and coordinating the purchase of food with the FMIG treasurer and support staff through the Department of Family Medicine. Diligent attention was paid to the medical school's master calendar to coordinate around exam schedules and other large interest group meetings. Each meeting consists of inviting community members, faculty physicians, health care workers, and/or senior medical students to present on topics including service, FM subspecialties, advocacy, and disparities in healthcare. Goals and objectives included educating students and also allowing them to connect with opportunities in the community, such as unique rotations, research projects, and service work. This program was set up by our FMIG VP of Lunch Meetings reaching out to various speakers as well as other campus groups to schedule the events and advertise to students. Success was evaluated by student attendance at each event (as a measure of student interest in the speaker and/or topic). Our M1 representative was also consulted to evaluate whether junior medical students enjoyed the events and also tasked with suggesting future events that would be of interest, as these events are more heavily attended by pre-clinical students. This was an existing program and has been for many years. Improvements we made this year included more collaboration with campus student organizations and inviting community members to talks including former patients/social work/healthcare staff as opposed to just physicians. This year we also included M4s in our speaker event, which allowed our senior students pursuing family medicine and participating in elective rotations/research opportunities a chance to present their capstone work with other students. This allowed our M4 to share their work and findings while providing a valuable educational opportunity, as well as share with younger students what elective rotations are available in the future. How family medicine was communicated through each initiative is listed below: Welcome Meeting and Geriatric Medicine, collaboration with the Leopold Society: At this meeting, we introduced FMIG, our goals and objectives, our executive board (elected spring of the prior year), and elected an M1 representative. We also invited Dr. [REDACTED], a family physician specializing in geriatrics, to come speak about his subspecialty, his day-to-day work, and why he pursued the fellowship. Disparities in Rural Maternity Care: M4 [REDACTED] (who has recently matched into FM and is also a member of our executive board) did a family transitions clerkship which incorporated a capstone research project investigating disparities in rural maternity care and the specific role of FM physicians in addressing this disparity. He presented his project at this meeting, which was a collaboration with the Leopold Society (OBGYN interest group) which allowed junior students interested in obstetrics to learn more about the challenges of our patients especially in our geographic area, as Iowa has many rural communities. Primary Care: A Solution for Communities, Health Systems, and the Individual: Dr. [REDACTED], 2024 president of the Iowa Association of Family Physicians and University of Iowa FM faculty, spoke at this meeting about the future of FM, including upcoming workforce projections. She also discussed the need for family medicine physicians especially in the role of addressing rising medical disparities. "Real Talk": Discussing Addiction Medicine with People Working Around and Within It - Collaboration with campus group ISHRA (Iowa Student Harm Reduction Association): this event featured a panel of one community member who is in recovery from substance use disorder, as well as two peer recovery coaches who work at our University hospital and are also in recovery. This panel explored addiction medicine from the perspective of the patient and recovery coach, addressed the role of family medicine doctors in treating substance use disorder, and also addressed issues such as stigma and lack of access to treatment. This was done in collaboration with the campus harm reduction student organization. Service Learning in Family Medicine: Dr. [REDACTED], a family physician who has



volunteered in El Salvador, will be coming to speak with students about service opportunities both at home and internationally.

#### FM Physician Mentorship Initiative

Students typically in our curriculum are unfortunately not exposed to family medicine until their clinical core year that begins halfway through M2 year. We believe that formal mentorship is one of the ways that students can be encouraged to go into family medicine, especially by reaching M1s and M2s prior to their clinical rotations. Our mentorship program has continued for the past few years. We identified several UIHC Family Medicine Department faculty that have volunteered to serve as mentors for medical students interested in gaining early clinical experience and further exploring family medicine practice. Mentors also include program directors of Iowa FM residency programs who may not be based in Iowa City, including physicians in Sioux City, Des Moines, and Mason City. Collaboration and community participation was achieved through liaising with accredited Iowa FM residency programs and connecting with University faculty. Goals and objectives: - Connect Iowa students interested in FM with practicing physicians in both the academic and community setting - Allow students to ask practicing physicians about their day-to-day work and what settings an FM physician can practice in - Give mentees a designated contact person for questions regarding career and residency applications - To enhance student understanding of and interest in Family Medicine Medical student mentees were matched with mentors based on particular interests and what they desire to gain from this relationship/experience. This was led by the Professional Development Chair on the executive board, and achieved through surveying students and faculty about their interests/areas of expertise and matching mentors/mentees accordingly. Many of our mentors have continued this role for several years and have significant experience working with students. They have been able to provide guidance to students regarding choosing a specialty, how to become a competitive applicant, what to look for in programs, and how to prepare for interviews. Our mentors also assist students by sharing with them what a day in the life of a family medicine physician may look like. Results from a feedback survey showed that students utilized this mentorship to learn more about the family medicine specialty and physician lifestyle, begin research projects, and pursue other extracurricular interests such as community service. Overall, students have been satisfied with this program and we plan to continue this moving forward. We hope that it will get more students interested in family medicine early on, especially since we live in a state that is mostly rural, where primary care is so important. As this has been an existing program for our FMIG for many years, we are also working on changes and improvements for the coming year. These include reaching out to practicing physicians in the rural communities of Iowa who sponsor students for FM core rotations (many of these physicians work in very small communities and do work of an incredibly broad scope), recruiting more mentees with diverse professional experiences (international work, service work, working with refugees), and sponsoring more in-person events such that students can speak with their mentors in settings other than Zoom. This will also hopefully allow for students to be able to work with their mentor as a preceptor if they choose to do so on core rotations.

#### Iowa Family Physician Magazine - "Student Corner" Articles

Each year, our FMIG Secretary is responsible for providing articles for Iowa Family Physician Magazine's "Student Corner". The Iowa Family Physician Magazine is published three times a year by the Iowa Academy of Family Physicians and features academy updates and articles written by members and leadership highlighting different themes related to the practice of Family Medicine. This year, three University of Iowa students interested in family medicine contributed articles on the topics of education, advocacy and physician wellness to be published in the magazine and shared with IAFP members across the state. These articles discussed a wide variety of topics: this year, these included reproductive health, the family medicine clerkship from a student perspective, advocacy in family medicine, and the broad scope of

family medicine. The “Student Corner” not only gives medical students exposure to writing and publishing but also allows students to develop their humanities and communication skills as well as reach a broader audience of health care professionals. This opportunity is also unique in that it allows students to pick a topic of their interest, and expand on that topic in a way that reflects the opinions and outlook of the newest generation of physicians. Our goals and objectives for this initiative include allowing students a chance to reach a broader audience of FM physicians in the state as well as providing an opportunity for students to publish essays on their unique perspectives and experiences in medical school. In this initiative we collaborate with Iowa Association of Family Physicians Staff, who assemble and publish the magazine quarterly. Any students who have experience in or are interested in FM are welcome to submit articles.

### Community Outreach and Service Work

The Tar Wars program is an opportunity for medical students to educate upper elementary students about the hazards of smoking, vaping, and smokeless tobacco and highlights both the negative consequences and reasons why people choose to smoke. This program focuses on the immediate, short-term negative effects of tobacco, which has been proven to be more effective with young, concrete learners than discussing long-term smoking effects. This is a long-standing program conducted by our FMIG. Goals for this initiative include: 1. Giving our FMIG members a chance to interact with young people, specifically 5th and 6th graders, and an opportunity to practice their skills as health educators and engage in community service work. 2. Providing a supportive learning opportunity for children to better understand their bodies and consequences of decisions, specifically smoking, on their health. 3. Decreasing future smoking, vaping, and smokeless tobacco rates in the community by reaching children before they start. Topics of discussion include the negative effects of bad breath, decreased endurance, hazardous chemicals in cigarettes, the harms of vaping and E-cigarettes, having less money available to purchase other things, and how to identify tobacco company advertising and motivations. Volunteers also complete activities with the students such as calculating the financial costs of smoking as well as a “breathing through a straw” exercise to demonstrate the physical effects of long-term smoking and emphysema. In addition to the Tar Wars program, we also has members attend various STEM events throughout the year, in an effort to expose young students to family medicine and the field of medicine in general and provide more exposure to careers in science. The FMIG Service Learning and Outreach Chair takes point on organizing Tar Wars events with local schools in the area as well as recruiting medical student volunteers to do the presentation and education sessions. We collaborate heavily with local schools in this initiative to find upper-elementary classes who would be willing to sponsor our presentations. Family medicine is communicated through this initiative as it allows us to educate young people about their health in a preventative manner, reach out to children who may be interested in healthcare in their future, and allows medical students to practice patient outreach and education outside of the clinical space. We evaluate success of this program by asking for feedback from teachers and students we work with, and also collect feedback from volunteers who participate to inquire if there are suggestions or other educational topics for the next year that they would like to pursue.