REIMAGINING the CURRICULUM THROUGH the LENS of ANTI-RACISM

Academic initiative addresses social, cultural, and structural inequities in the curriculum

School of Healthcare Leadership Launches
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Alum Brings New Voice to Trustees
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Recalling Move to Navy Yard
PAGE 21
Because of you, the IHP is innovating.
With the launch of the new School of Healthcare Leadership, we will be able to expand our Continuing Professional Development opportunities that will focus on advancing knowledge and skills for current practitioners.

You supported students during a challenging time.
When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the IHP Student Emergency Fund was created to support the most vulnerable members of our community. To date, we have provided almost $51,000 to 90 students. And, thanks to a generous gift from the Webster Foundation, the fund is now a permanent source of support for our students.

You are transforming lives.
By investing in our students through the MGH Institute Fund, you are investing in their success and helping to provide an education that will create future health care leaders making a difference in an increasingly complex health care world.

Thanks to your remarkable generosity this year, the MGH Institute is stronger and working harder than ever to educate the health care leaders of tomorrow.

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MGH Institute of Health Professions Magazine
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Reflecting on the Purposes of Higher Education

Over the last couple of years, I have been reflecting on the issue of campus free speech and the purposes of a university. This comes naturally, given the number of stories we’ve seen about restricting speech around political views and critical race theory. I grew up in the 1960s, so while the topics being discussed today are different, free speech on campuses is an important issue now just as it was then.

As always, this magazine is filled with exciting stories about the innovations, successes, and personal accomplishments of our faculty, staff, and students. The IHP is a highly engaged academic community whose members are conducting research, teaching students, and transforming communities. Our people engage in intellectual discussions about new ways of providing health care, the injustices they see in the world and in their practices, and the challenges they face as individuals and as new and seasoned health care providers. Ours is a community that embraces the opportunities to have important discussions about the world—and our place in it.

I have spent most of my adult life in academia, and what I’ve always loved has been the opportunity to explore issues with colleagues, experiment with new ideas, and define new paradigms that guide my thinking. I know I have learned more from engaging in dialogue with those people who think differently than I. Most people view colleges and universities as a place where people search for “the truth.” However, I recently have been introduced to a different reality about our purpose, where we focus on critical inquiry and knowledge, as Amna Khalid and Jeffrey Aaron Snyder recently pointed out in a *Chronicle of Higher Education* opinion column. Sometimes that inquiry leads to the truth, but more often it provides a platform for dissecting the daunting problems we face in today’s complex world.

As I think of the social and ethical problems facing society, where else but in higher education can we use critical inquiry to wrestle with competing information and world views to help create a clearer picture of a path forward? Really listening to others with divergent views and trying to understand a world view that is different from our own is what makes these discussions so powerful.

*Really listening to others with divergent views and trying to understand a world view that is different from our own is what makes these discussions so powerful.*

As president, I will continue working to foster an environment where everyone has a voice, where all voices are heard in the spirit of critical inquiry, and where each of us can organically develop our own views that evolve over our lifetime. I pledge to protect the right to free speech on campus and will encourage diversity of thought and ensure critical inquiry is a model for our growth as health professionals. There are very few problems we have in health care delivery where there is a clear yes-or-no answer—where we are seeking “the truth.” Our lives are filled with nuances, and these kinds of conversations help us to learn how to make better decisions.

I hope you are as encouraged as I am about the increasing frequency of warmer days in which the sun sets a little later. I now get to walk home most evenings in twilight, compared to the darkness of a couple of months ago. I am also heartened by the changes in COVID-19 restrictions, which will allow us to see each other’s faces and enjoy each other’s company while sipping a glass of wine or a cup of coffee together without having to be six feet apart. And just recently, Mass General Brigham allowed people on campus to be maskless in some settings with others who are vaccinated, without having to social distance—welcome news we’ve been waiting to hear for two years.

I wish you a safe and healthy spring. And as always, we would be happy to welcome you to campus if you are in Boston.
Kenneth R. White, Dean of the School of Nursing

Kenneth R. White, PhD, APRN, FACHE, FAAN, began as Dean of the School of Nursing in July 2021. Dr. White previously served as the Associate Dean for Strategic Partnerships and held an endowed professorship at the University of Virginia School of Nursing. He recently began a two-year term as president of the American Academy of Nursing, the first man to hold that office.

Congratulations on your appointment as Dean of the School of Nursing. What do you see as your priorities?

Ken White: Thank you. I’m honored to be here. I have long admired the Institute for the outstanding, caring community that exists here and its stellar record of innovation and scholarship. So one of my top priorities will be to continue strengthening that special culture, while also ensuring we have the needed resources to grow and innovate. A strong community with proper resources makes for a healthy working and learning environment, which is paramount to me. I want to make sure the IHP continues to be the sort of school where courageous conversations take place.

Can you give an example of what you mean by “courageous conversations”?

KW: The Institute’s JEDI initiative is an excellent example of this. Read their public statement on equity and anti-oppression, which is one of the best statements I’ve ever seen on EDI. To actively change the power imbalances in health care is inspiring. It’s also a powerful way to improve health care for patient and practitioner alike. As dean, I want to make sure we are weaving justice, equity, diversity, and inclusivity into all of our teaching and research. I also want to make sure we do it “out loud”—which is another way of saying I want to raise the visibility of the Institute, which is another of my priorities. The IHP has been described as the “best-kept secret” in graduate school nursing education, but it shouldn’t be a secret. Our stories need to be told and celebrated. We need to amplify our successes and do so in a way that will elevate our scholarship and create better opportunities for our students and faculty.

Is focusing on IHP scholarship initiatives another priority?

KW: Absolutely. I define scholarship broadly. Scholarship can be an important new scientific discovery that literally changes treatment. Or it might be a teaching innovation that allows students to learn in powerful new ways. Or it might be evidence-based research that changes clinical practices. Ensuring we have the needed infrastructure, funding, talent, and support to continue to do outstanding scholarship in all its forms is another top priority.

How do you go about achieving that?

KW: The IHP is fortunate to have so many deep connections. We have many successful alumni, friends, and donors, a very strong affiliation with Mass General Brigham (MGB) as the system’s only degree-granting affiliate, existing relationships with outside healthcare organizations and hospitals—all of these relationships inherently bring new ideas, new opportunities, and new resources to the Institute. We just need to actively grow them. Nursing is a people-centric profession. Most nurses get into the profession to help other people. So it’s important we empower our people with skills to forge new friendships and partnerships. I also want to make sure that our faculty, staff, and students have a seat at the table, both inside and outside the Institute. The IHP is fortunate that leadership is deeply woven into our DNA.

Given all you hope to accomplish, where do you start?

KW: There are so many opportunities at the IHP: Clinical placements, mentorship, showcasing stellar faculty, recruitment and retention, governance—the list goes on and on. Fortunately for me, there are many talented people here. Part of my job is to make sure they are empowered to do the great work they are educated and experienced to do, then stay out of their way. It’s all about deepening our connections with each other and with strategic partners at MGB and elsewhere. Then we just need to continue providing our students and faculty with the right resources and support so they can be their best selves.
Filling a void in an increasingly complex healthcare system, the MGH Institute has launched a new school in leadership and new degree programs spanning nursing, administration, and data analytics—all to help improve how health care is delivered, and perhaps strengthen the workforce development pipeline with Mass General Brigham.

In March, the Institute formally announced the launch of the School of Healthcare Leadership and within that, two new degree programs: Master of Health Administration and Master of Science in Healthcare Data Analytics.

“The new school and degree programs are an expansion of the Institute's academic profile and represent an alignment of our existing clinical service delivery categories with a move into leadership, informatics, education, and data,” said President Paula Milone-Nuzzo. “These areas are where there is great demand in the healthcare workforce. Our students will come away with a set of skills and leadership abilities that they can take and implement immediately into the workplace.”

The new School of Healthcare Leadership joins the IHP's School of Nursing and School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. The only degree-granting affiliate of Mass General Brigham, New England's largest healthcare provider, the IHP is now in its 45th year.

“The opening of a new School of Healthcare Leadership aligns quite well with our other programs that focus primarily on clinical service delivery,” said Dr. Alex Johnson, provost and vice president for academic affairs. “While we imbed leadership principles into all of our academic programs, these new degrees provide valuable content for those wishing to advance their careers in health care.”

Concurrently, the Institute’s School of Nursing is planning new academic degree programs in nursing education and nursing administration. These programs will align content, faculty, and coursework with students from other healthcare disciplines. The new school and the new academic programs are part of a growth initiative that will increase the student population by 40%, to more than 2,300 over the next few years.

“This is the most significant transformational change that we have implemented in the 45 years of the IHP,” said Dr. Milone-Nuzzo, who sees the Mass General Brigham affiliation as a draw for interested students. “Our students are part of the MGB system, and they will have experiences within the MGB system that are part of their education.”

The Data Analytics program will focus specifically on healthcare analytics to prepare analysts to not only understand the statistics and produce a presentation, but go beyond the numbers and tell the story of what the numbers mean to a variety of audiences—be they administrators, nurses, or other clinicians.

“When you look at the Health Administration and Data Analytics programs, these are some of the services that wrap around health care delivery,” said Milone-Nuzzo. “These are the things that support what physicians, therapists, and nurses do, and will provide them information they need as leaders.”

A Focus on Interprofessional Collaboration and Leadership

A significant part of all the programs is the interprofessional aspect—the idea of
having students from different fields and professions collaborating with others in the classroom and with simulations and case studies.

“We’re broadening the experience and bringing together the clinicians, the people doing the data analytics, and those in administration,” said Milone-Nuzzo. "Students in the MHA and the MS program in Data Analytics need to understand what’s happening in the clinical settings, because they are going to be making policy decisions or data decisions about these clinical settings. It really does expand the Institute’s breadth of interprofessional education and allows these students to have experiences that they would never have in another setting.”

She continued: “What we’re building is in recognition of the complexity of how healthcare teams work today, and it’s going to get even more complex. Clinicians, administrators, and data managers can’t exist in silos. They must be able to communicate effectively and work collaboratively to improve health care.”

The Data Analytics and Health Administration programs are part-time, online offerings that should take about two years to complete. The online component provides convenience for students with full-time jobs and families, who won’t have to commute into Boston, and the opportunity to have experts from anywhere in the world serve as faculty and connect with students virtually.

“Not only are we preparing competent clinicians at the Institute, but we also want them to always have their eye on leadership and improvement, and that’s the IHP differentiator,” said Johnson. “This is living that destiny—we’re going deeper into this area of leadership, operational delivery, and use of information to really emphasize leadership in a way we haven’t done before.”

The new programs can help solidify the workforce development pipeline with Mass General Brigham, not only helping to fill vacancies but preparing today’s employers for a new type of employee.

“This is a generation that wants to explore and will be looking at moving from one job to the other because they are looking for challenges,” said Jeanette Ives Erickson, chair of the Institute’s Board of Trustees, Nurse Emerita at Massachusetts General Hospital, and an affiliate professor at the IHP. “So we the educators can help to prepare the employers to create internal flexibility, to celebrate movement, to celebrate careers. A person should not have to be in a job for life.”

The Institute is changing the way it teaches to reflect the changing expectations and, said Ives Erickson, hiring IHP students shortens the onboarding time, which saves time and money.

“If I have a student who is rotating with me for a semester, my onboarding time is not the same as if it were somebody from a different college,” she said. “This student knows the staff in the practice setting as well as a lot about the hospital policies and procedures. There is a cost savings impact here.

“Given how busy our organizations are, we need less and less onboarding time,” she continued. “We need people taking care of patients. It’s a no-brainer. This should be a partnership that starts on day one.”

Hiring IHP students shortens the onboarding time, which saves time and money, says Jeanette Ives Erickson.
Commencement Is a Virtual Success Redux

For the second year in a row, the MGH Institute held its graduation ceremony virtually due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

The 2021 Commencement featured 583 graduates—the largest class in the graduate school’s history—and talks by Institute leaders, the awarding of an honorary degree, recognition of two alumnus’s accomplishments, and a moving keynote address by a graduating student.

It also included a virtual conferring of degrees and certificates, messages by then Massachusetts General Hospital President Dr. Peter Slavin and MGH Institute Board of Trustees Chair Dr. Jeanette Ives Erickson, and insights from several recent alumni who told the Class of 2021 about the IHP’s 9,000-member alumni community they will be joining.

President Dr. Paula Milone-Nuzzo congratulated the new graduates for persevering during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Over the past year and a half, you have lived with incredible uncertainty—how the pandemic would play out, where you would be living, how you would be learning—all the while trying to ensure your safety and that of your family,” she said. “And throughout all this, you have been extraordinary. You have inspired us by showing the true IHP spirit of leadership. The lessons learned in adapting during this time will serve you well in the future as a health care professional.”

Milone-Nuzzo also spoke of the country’s stark racial, health, and economic inequities. “You can contribute to the solutions of these systemic problems by continuing your commitment to act against racism, standing up for social justice and equality wherever you see it, and supporting those who have experienced oppression and marginalization based on the color of their skin,” she said.

Keynote Address on Injustice and Resiliency

In his keynote address, John Paul Bonadonna spoke of how the pandemic has disproportionately affected Black and Latinx residents, immigrants, the homeless, the disabled, the incarcerated, and other vulnerable populations.

“To practice business as usual is to be complicit in a system that provides different levels of care depending on the color of your skin, how much money you make, your disability status, your immigrant status, and so on,” he said. “So how will we choose to let the challenges of the past year shape us? What kind of health care providers will we choose to be?”

Bonadonna, who graduated with a Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree, was vice president of the Student Government Association, founded the annual Cultural Science Day at Harvard-Kent Elementary School and the IHP Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity chapter, and co-founded the IHP Mentorship Program for Underrepresented Groups in Healthcare.

Honorary Degree, Alumni Awards Presented

Ann Caldwell, president of the MGH Institute from 1997–2007, received an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, the sixth honorary doctorate in school history.

Her fundraising excellence helped the school receive a $2 million gift from the Catherine Filene Shouse Foundation during her tenure as president to purchase Building 36. Another $2.5 million in funding the oversaw allowed the Institute to create a state-of-the-art health care education facility and a permanent home for the IHP while stabilizing its finances and launching several new programs that reinvigorated the Institute’s commitment to interprofessional education. (Read more on her recollection of those times on page 21.)

Melissa Agrimanakis, DPT ’10, received the Bette Ann Harris Distinguished Alumni Award, the highest form of recognition awarded to a graduate. As a clinical specialist PT on the spinal cord injury inpatient unit at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, Dr. Agrimanakis often combines her skills as a competitive ballroom dancer and former ballerina with her infectious, light-hearted personality to motivate her patients.

Dr. Agrimanakis has worked with STAND: The Haiti Project since 2016, traveling to Port-de-Paix several times a year to provide pro bono care in a clinic for individuals with chronic and acute wounds and neurological diagnoses.

Tesiah Coleman, MSN ’19, received the Emerging Leader Alumni Award, given to an alum who graduated within the past 10 years. Coleman’s leadership in Students for Racial Justice in Healthcare connected many IHP students both socially and professionally.

Following graduation, Coleman used data from the IHP on structural, institutional, and societal racism to publish “Anti-Racism in Nursing Education: Recommendations for Racial Justice Praxis” in Educational Innovations.
Anthony Fitzgerald Paredes plans to advocate for the needs of students and recent graduates as the newest member of the MGH Institute’s Board of Trustees.

Paredes, who graduated in 2020 with a Master of Science in Nursing degree, recently began a three-year term as the board’s inaugural alumni trustee, while being the board’s youngest-ever member.

Being involved with a governing body is nothing new for Paredes. He served as president of the Student Government Association, where he had the opportunity to work closely with President Paula Milone-Nuzzo. “We developed a great relationship very quickly,” he said. “I’m looking forward to working with her again as well as also learning from other trustees and collaborating with them to achieve the Institute’s goals.”

Having graduated less than two years ago, Paredes joined its Academic and Student Affairs Committee. “I wanted to continue to be involved with student affairs and bring to life the voices of IHP students,” he explained. He also joined the Nominating and Governance Committee to be part of how the board operates and help develop its future direction.

“The most exciting part for me is that I have the opportunity to see the future unfold and become a part of the IHP’s history, both as an alum and as a trustee.”

– ANTHONY FITZGERALD PAREDES

Paredes was drawn to health care as a teenager living in Queens, New York, where his family settled after emigrating from Ecuador. “I remember going to the doctor’s office with my grandfather, who only spoke Spanish, and we waited in line for hours with other Spanish-speaking families who were waiting to see the one medical provider who also spoke Spanish,” Paredes said. “I realized then that I wanted to help people in underserved communities.”

After graduating with a biology degree from Syracuse University, where he worked at a neighborhood health clinic serving primarily underinsured and/or non-English-speaking patients, Paredes enrolled in the Master of Science in Nursing program in 2017.

While an IHP student, Paredes worked as a part-time RN at Casa Esperanza, Inc.’s Conexiones CSS program, the state’s first bilingual/bicultural clinical stabilization services program that provides addiction treatment and stabilization services for people in early recovery from substance-abuse disorders. After being hired as a full-time nurse practitioner upon graduation, he created a medical intake department to identify patients with common co-morbid conditions and integrate medical care into their recovery plans.

In addition, he helped the organization land two grants worth $182,500 to purchase new medical equipment for its Roxbury and Tewksbury campuses. “We are so pleased with Anthony and his innovative approach to integrated care,” said Shannon Barrett, the program director at Casa Esperanza’s Tewksbury division.

Paredes sees his job as a continuation of his drive to provide comprehensive care to all people. “The patient population we see are primarily Spanish-speaking individuals who might not have seen a medical provider in years—or maybe even ever,” he said. “I’m a big believer in second chances and giving people opportunities to turn their lives around.”

He recently hired Dimitri Lamisere, BSN ’21, to work at the clinic and has plans to enable current nursing students to work there or get clinical experience—yet another IHP connection he’s developing. “The most exciting part for me,” Paredes said, “is that I have the opportunity to see the future unfold and become a part of the IHP’s history, both as an alum and as a trustee.”
Study Suggests Nursing Home Care Recommendations

A new study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association Internal Medicine (JAMA IM) and co-authored by Dr. Ruth Palan Lopez found several factors—including staff assumptions about minoritized groups—may play a role in the variability in the quality of care provided to U.S. nursing home residents with advanced dementia.

“Nursing Home Organizational Culture and Staff Perspectives Influencing Variability in Advanced Dementia Care: The ADVANCE Study” identified organizational factors and staff perceptions at nursing homes that may drive known variability in the type of care provided to nursing home residents with advanced dementia.

“The study identified several factors that nursing homes could target to improve delivery of goal-directed care to all residents. One is to improve provider knowledge and communication skills that less aggressive interventions may be more in line with the residents’ wishes and best evidence,” said Dr. Lopez, the School of Nursing’s associate dean of research.

Prior research has shown Black residents (versus white residents and those in facilities in the southeastern part of the United States) get more aggressive treatments that do not benefit people with advanced dementia, which include greater use of feeding tubes and hospital transfers.

More equitable care may be achieved by addressing factors including staff biases toward Black residents. Other solutions include increasing support and funding for low-resourced facilities, standardizing advance-care planning, and educating staff and families about evidence-based care and goal-directed decision-making in advanced dementia.

Dr. Susan L. Mitchell of Hebrew SeniorLife co-authored the study, which is supported by the National Institute on Aging of the National Institutes of Health.

Finances Trending in the Right Direction

In Fiscal Year 2021, the MGH Institute achieved strong financial results and improved its fiscal condition despite the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the year, which ended September 30, 2021, income from operations was $2.3 million and the operating margin was 3.5%—an improvement over the previous year, when both of those figures were at the break-even point. As higher operating costs were incurred to maintain the campus and for robust COVID-19 health and safety standards, planned growth opportunities and expansion efforts were delayed. However, higher than expected enrollment in several programs—Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Communications Science and Disorders, and Health Professions Education—provided $1.3 million of additional revenue.

“A strong performance on the enrollment side went a long way in helping the Institute advance its ENRiCH growth initiatives,” said Atlas Evans, vice president for finance and administration, referring to the school’s growth initiative. “It increased our financial strength and resources, so we were able to move forward with the new programs that we had envisioned.”

On tap for this June are two new programs recently approved by the Commonwealth Board of Higher Education: Master of Health Administration and Master of Science in Healthcare Data Analytics. Meanwhile, the School of Nursing is planning new academic degree programs in nursing education and nursing administration.

Overall, the Institute’s key financial metrics have been on the upswing. Here’s a snapshot:

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<th>FY 2017</th>
<th>FY 2021</th>
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<td>Total Net Assets</td>
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<td>$115 million</td>
<td>63%</td>
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“We’ve certainly seen significant growth over time in some of our more important financial areas,” said Evans. “That’s attributable to our overall strategy, enrollment growth, and a growing endowment due to a strong market performance in the areas in which we’ve invested. The Institute’s financial results are trending in the right direction.”
When people think about cancer recovery, most often the focus is on the physiological: Is the cancer under control? Have symptoms and side effects been reduced as much as possible? A new research lab at the MGH Institute will investigate the effect of rehabilitation on cancer recovery.

Kathleen Lyons, ScD, OTR/L, is heading up the Cancer Rehabilitation (CaRe) Lab, one of just a small number of research labs in the country focusing on the topic.

“Rehabilitation research for cancer patients is a wide-open field at the moment,” said Dr. Lyons. “We don’t have those large-scale controlled studies that show how it might help certain cancer patients recover faster. The CaRe Lab has the potential to be a game changer in that regard.

“Rehabilitation isn’t always integrated into oncology, in part because not every cancer patient needs it,” she noted. “But there is a subset of cancer survivors who really struggle to resume their lives and their work. The goal is to figure out when rehabilitation could accelerate recovery from curable cancers and when it could help maintain individuals’ ability to function when living with incurable cancer,” said Lyons, who has published several papers on the subject.

Psychology is a big part of any patient’s recovery and has been a significant part of Lyons’ career as well. “Occupational therapists and psychologists often play in the same sandbox,” she said. “Behavioral therapies aim to improve a patient’s mood, partly by helping them to engage in valued activities that make life worth living. OT brings an additional toolkit to behavioral therapy, by teaching people to adapt activities or modify routines or environments to make it easier to function, or by reducing impairments caused by cancer and its treatment. Cataloging these successful OT approaches for cancer patients is a big part of our research.”

The lab already has several research studies underway—Lyons has received funding from the American Cancer Society, the National Cancer Institute, and the American Occupational Therapy Foundation—but she and her team will gather research and data from the front lines as well.

“The CaRe Lab won’t just announce a hypothesis, do a study, and then publish the results,” she explained. “We want to know what rehabilitation is being done right now with cancer survivors, what’s working, what evidence we have for that. OT, PT, and speech-language pathology clinicians working directly with patients have a vast resource of knowledge we want to tap into.”

Lyons is a big believer in applied research, which benefits patient and clinician alike. Working together with clinicians comes easily to Lyons, who spent six years as a practicing clinician in geriatrics. But her passion for evidence-based practice led her into research. Prior to coming to the IHP last fall, she was a senior scientist at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center and an associate professor of psychiatry at Dartmouth’s Geisel School of Medicine. During her time there, Lyons had the good fortune to work on a groundbreaking study on palliative care, the results of which helped move palliative care more into the mainstream of oncology treatments.

“I think the research from the CaRe Lab can have a similar effect,” said Lyons. “Right now, rehabilitation research for cancer patients is years behind palliative care research. But the CaRe Lab will help us close that gap, and that’s exciting.”
SLP Researchers Find Common Bond

Three speech-language pathology researchers who found a common bond are also finding recognition and receiving grant money to fund studies aimed at improving the lives of people with language disorders.

“We all wear different hats. We all bring different things to the table,” Dr. Lauryn Zipse said of herself and her colleagues, Dr. Yael Arbel and Dr. Sofia Vallila Rohter. All three are faculty in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders who also serve as co-directors of the MGH Institute’s Cognitive Neuroscience Group (CNG). They are researching how learning, language, and cognitive skills evolve to help clinicians better plan treatment for people with language disorders.

“It’s taken a lot of persistence and determination to grow our research programs,” said Arbel. “Seeing results and the growing research community we’re contributing to at the IHP is extremely rewarding.”

Arbel, Zipse, and Vallila Rohter formed the research lab in 2015. “We came together around complementary interests and a shared drive to carry out research,” Vallila Rohter said, reflecting on the early days of their collaboration. “In those days, the IHP was still in the initial phases of research growth and space for collecting data was somewhat limited. We decided to find ways to make it work and set up labs in our offices.”

The results speak for themselves: The three researchers have received nearly $3 million in grant funding.

“The CNG also represents how research initiatives are positively impacting the school’s student body. Each year, the researchers mentor approximately two dozen graduate students at the master’s, doctoral, and post-doctoral levels. "Students in our group become part of an exciting research community at the IHP," Arbel said. "They learn to collect and analyze data and interpret results. We see these skills translate over to their decision-making in clinical practice with many of them going on to pursue PhDs."

The group also has hosted internship programs and research experiences for students at universities with more limited research or no exposure to clinical populations. “In our research, we work with people who have real need for effective treatment and thoughtful care,” said Zipse. “Part of our mission is to expose undergraduate students to our field so that they might be inspired to contribute.”

Vallila Rohter, who has research collaborations with Brigham and Women’s Hospital and Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, added, “The Institute has such strong clinical partnerships that enhance the potential to carry out meaningful research. As our research continues to grow, I look forward to continuing to increase connections with our clinical partners and seeing patients benefit.”

“As our research continues to grow, I look forward to increasing connections with our clinical partners and seeing patients benefit.”

~ SOFIA VALLILA ROHTER

The CNG Lab is a great example of how research aligns with the IHP’s mission to advance scientific understanding, educate the scientists of tomorrow, and improve health care delivery and health outcomes across the globe,” said Dr. Nara Gavini, the associate provost for research.
Dr. Teresa Kimberley, director of the Brain Recovery Lab and director of the PhD in Rehabilitation Sciences program, received the 2022 American Physical Therapy Association’s Academy of Neurology Excellence in Neurologic Research Award.

The annual award is presented to a member of the Academy of Neurologic Physical Therapy (ANPT) who demonstrates continuing excellence in research related to neurologic physical therapy science, theory, practice, or education.

“Dr. Kimberley is an exemplary researcher who has contributed significant knowledge to the field, including improving our understanding of neuroplasticity and being a leader in using neuromodulation approaches,” said Patrick Sparto, the ANPT’s director of research.

Kimberley, who has received more than $2 million in NIH grants, focuses on understanding the pathophysiology of motor impairment and develops novel rehabilitation interventions for neurologic disorders such as dystonia and stroke. Her research helped to pioneer the use of neuroimaging and non-invasive brain stimulation in the investigation of rehabilitation-related areas.

Dr. Teresa Kimberley runs the Brain Recovery Lab.

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**Truong Named to Power 50 CDO List**

Dr. Kimberly Truong, MGH Institute’s chief equity officer, has been named to Color’s inaugural Power 50 Chief Diversity Officers list for her accomplishments as a diversity, equity, and inclusion leader.

Truong, director of the school’s Office of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, also received the 2021 DEI Champion - Publisher’s Award last year from Color, a Boston-based event producer focused on empowering professionals of color.

Over the past year, Truong also has received the inaugural Rising Star Award from the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education, and Get Konnected! named her as one of the 50 most influential people of color in higher education.

She also is a member of the DE&I Council at Mass General Brigham and a faculty affiliate of the Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Cross-Cultural Student Emotional Wellness.

“My role is to lead the MGH Institute in fulfilling its mission to advance care for a diverse society,” Truong said. “My vision is for faculty, students, staff, and alumni to thrive and succeed free from systemic barriers so they can develop skills and knowledge to lead organizations and make them more equitable.”

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**Project Aims to Boost Research Participation**

A project co-led by Dr. Ariel Schwartz, an assistant professor of occupational therapy, aims to help individuals with developmental disabilities affecting cognition contribute fully to community-engaged research.

Research Ethics for All will be used to work with people with developmental disabilities affecting cognition, researchers, and Institutional Review Board members to create and make freely available a new research ethics training that can be used by community research partners with developmental disabilities (for example, adults with intellectual disability and autistic adults).

“When it’s really exciting that more people with developmental disabilities are participating in community-engaged research, and patient-centered outcomes research in particular, most universities and academic medical centers aren’t set up to ensure that these research partners receive appropriate research ethics training,” said Schwartz, who is partnering with Katherine McDonald of Syracuse University.

The two-year project is supported by a funding award through the Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Awards program, an initiative of the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI).

Dr. Ariel Schwartz is the project’s co-director.

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**Kimberley Receives Neurology Award**

Kimberley Receives Neurology Award

This is the latest recognition for Dr. Kimberly Truong.

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Aiming to Increase Diversity in the Health Professions

Reversing barriers to financial aid for graduate students so the health professions more accurately reflect the nation’s demographics is Tiffany Passie’s goal.

Passie, a second-year student in the Master of Physician Assistant Studies program, has been named one of 20 Health Policy Fellows across the country—and the first IHP student so honored—by the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA).

She will advocate for the Physician Assistant Higher Education Modernization Act of 2021 (HR 2274) in the U.S. Congress, which would allow all graduate students to receive subsidized Stafford federal loans.

“I am particularly devoted to changing the PA profession’s trajectory in improving its diversity of providers and to improving the accessibility of PAs in providing care to all patients in all settings,” said Passie, who is a director of the Physician Assistant Students for Leadership, Equity, Anti-Racism, and Diversity (PA-S LEAD), a national student group whose mission is to promote leadership equity, anti-racism, and diversity in the profession.

In 2018, only 3% of certified PAs identified as Black or African American, down from just 10% in 1999. And a 2018 study among 40 different health professions showed that the PA profession has the highest yearly decrease of Black providers, even though the recruitment of minority applicants has increased. “Research has shown when minority patients are cared for by minority providers it leads to more culturally competent care, so having more minorities in professional health care roles would improve advocacy for vulnerable patient populations, which, in the wake of COVID-19, is required to combat the systemic racism in medicine,” she noted.

Passie also is one of 15 students to receive a Future Educators Fellowship from the PAEA for the 2021–2022 academic year. Two alumni, Jennifer Gerard, PAS ’17 and Aubrey Fiacco, PAS ’21, are past Future Educator Fellows.

Inzana Envisions a Virtual Wave of the Future

Students could gain valuable clinical experiences using virtual reality (VR) technology if a new pilot study by Rebecca Inzana, an assistant professor in the Center for Interprofessional Studies and Innovation, goes as hoped.

Inzana will use a grant from the Interprofessional Task Force of the Association of Schools Advancing Health Professions to explore using VR simulation technology to present anti-oppressive, interprofessional clinical education opportunities across all the Institute’s programs.

While the technology is being used in physician and nursing training, scenarios are not inclusive of, being created for, or marketed to other health professions, she says.

“I’m curious to know if and how our faculty might consider using VR, with a particular emphasis on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion,” Inzana said, noting the technology can present learners with diverse patient and care-team scenarios they may not be able to experience in hospital or other clinical settings.

In her study, teams of faculty participants from each of the school’s programs will experience immersive learning scenarios and provide feedback around their impressions on the potential utility of VR simulation in their teaching practices to achieve course, program, and institutional learning objectives.

If the results are favorable, she envisions writing a larger grant application to accelerate the possibility of incorporating the technology. VR currently is not used at the Institute.

Inzana’s interprofessional research team includes Dr. Mary Knab, the IHP’s associate provost for interprofessional education and practice; Dr. Midge Hobbs, IMPACT Practice curriculum director; Gregory Moore, senior instructional technologist and application specialist; Denis Stratford, chief operating officer; and Dr. Callie Watkins Liu, associate director of JEDI curriculum, pedagogy, and faculty support.

Virtual reality headsets can offer a wider variety of experiences, says Rebecca Inzana.
BSN Student Uses IHP Education to Care for Gunshot Victim

It was around 10 a.m. on January 24, and Kezia Pereira was just going into a break in her online public health class when she heard a gunshot in her Revere neighborhood.

Seeing a man face down and screaming in agony on the sidewalk across the street, the 24-year-old Bachelor of Science in Nursing student immediately threw on a jacket and shoes, grabbed towels, and ran to his aid.

“I wanted to get to the person as soon as I could because he was in so much pain,” said Pereira, noting that she didn’t even have time to consider whether she was putting herself in danger. “My priority was trying to save the person’s life.”

Although she had yet to have a clinical rotation in emergency or trauma care or been in a situation in which she had to treat a severe injury, Pereira used the knowledge and skills she learned since beginning the BSN program last May. She turned the man over on his back, applied pressure with a towel to the gunshot wound in his abdomen, felt his pulse, and checked his heart rate while telling him to hold on.

“I knew the paramedics would want to know the situation,” she said, noting that the man’s breathing went from rapid to shallow in a matter of minutes. “I saw right away he was severely injured, so I tried to do the best I could under the circumstances.”

When the police arrived, they cut the man’s clothing so she could better put pressure on his wound until the paramedics arrived to take over.

The 31-year-old victim was taken to Massachusetts General Hospital, where he was pronounced dead. Police arrested Andre Tripp, who was charged with murder and possession of a firearm without a license.

The entire incident took less than 15 minutes. Pereira returned home and texted her classmates, who had begun a virtual breakout session to discuss an assignment. “I didn’t want them to think I wasn’t paying attention,” she said. “But once they heard what had happened, they all were very supportive and thanked me for being a Good Samaritan and that they had my back.”

Dr. Kathy Sabo, who was teaching the class and is Pereira’s academic advisor, said she didn’t know what had happened until Pereira sent her an email after class. “It was amazing what she did, applying what she has learned at the IHP,” said Sabo. “Her selfless and brave act exemplifies what it means to be a nurse.”

“Kezia’s actions are a shining example of compassionate care that we instill in our nursing students,” said Dr. Ken White, dean of the School of Nursing. “She reacted instinctively by rushing out to assess the situation and help the person until paramedics arrived. We couldn’t be more proud of her heroic actions.”

Even though the man didn’t survive, Pereira has no regrets. “I certainly didn’t wake up thinking I would be trying to save someone’s life, especially a person not in a hospital,” she said, “but I’m learning to become a nurse, and this is just one part of what nurses do.”

Olayinka Receives Leadership Award

Dr. Oluwatominis (Tomisin) Olayinka, an assistant professor of nursing, has been awarded the Leadership Award by the New England Regional Black Nurses Association.

Since arriving at the MGH Institute in 2018, Olayinka has developed a reputation as an energetic, visionary leader in prelicensure nursing. She has led critical initiatives in the redesign of the School of Nursing’s Public Health nursing course and in the integration of core principles of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in the school’s prelicensure curriculum.

“It’s a real honor to be recognized by NERBNA because they are dedicated to investigating, defining, and determining the health care needs of Black people throughout New England,” she said.
The MGH Institute has long been committed to inclusion, but in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, an increase in racial injustices, and the insistence of students, the school has embarked on weaving justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion into the curricula in all its programs.
While some programs are further along than others, all are making impressive strides to incorporate principles that will result in students and graduates who are better prepared to care for an increasingly diverse population.

“This is transformative work that has to happen through collaboration and partnerships,” says Callie Watkins Liu, the IHP’s first director of curriculum, pedagogy, and faculty support in the Office of Justice, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI). “It’s about supporting everyone so they can step into leadership roles and add their voices to this work.”

Watkins Liu has taken a customized approach to address the needs of every program. She meets with faculty members to review their syllabi and case studies. She joins faculty meetings to discuss issues or develop plans. She helps students, faculty, and staff process emotionally challenging JEDI issues. She designs and runs workshops. She works with student JEDI Fellows, who are embedded in programs to assist efforts. And she fosters conversations so faculty and staff can become resources for each other.

“The goal,” she says, “is to move the whole institution forward so it can become a place of deep, anti-oppression leadership and practice.”

In the School of Nursing, students have been vocal advocates for change, which has led to creating a JEDI Curriculum Task Force that includes faculty, students, and JEDI Fellows.

“We started with a needs assessment,” Dr. Patricia Reidy, the associate dean of academic affairs and program innovation, says. “We asked students where they saw gaps in the curriculum. We asked faculty if they were incorporating JEDI concepts into their courses. Based on the feedback, we provided resources and faculty development programs to integrate JEDI content in all our nursing programs.”

Corliss Kanazawa, a JEDI Fellow and a Master of Science in Nursing student, proposed that three workshops—on critical race theory, implicit bias and microaggressions, and intersectionality—be integrated into the curriculum for students in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

Kanazawa helped run the intersectionality workshop, which featured a case study about a female, Latina, cisgender patient with COVID-19 who is an immigrant and a member of the LGBTQ community. In the scenario, the patient and her girlfriend face eviction. While at an urgent care facility, she is treated differently than white patients. “It was a chance for people to talk about why people with different skin colors aren’t trusted when they describe their complaints,” she says.

Integrating nursing and JEDI content can be demanding, Kanazawa explains, but well worth the effort. “This will help students become providers who understand more about their roles and who are better able to help patients,” she says.

Nursing faculty are also actively involved in this work.

“We’ve had a lot of faculty development on JEDI topics,” Dr. Rebecca Hill, the program director for the nursing school’s prelicensure program, says. “Our faculty and students of color have been brave in sharing their experiences, which helps us all think about our own biases. It’s hard work, but our experts in the JEDI Office are always telling us, ‘You have to be comfortable being uncomfortable,’ and that’s what we’re doing.”

“We cannot be innocent bystanders,” notes Dr. Margie Sipe, the director of the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program. The program asks the working nurses in the program to share the challenges they see at work, providing real-life examples on which they can work together to practice best ways to address them using principles of justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

DNP students also study population health, so they think about challenges such as people’s access to food, public transportation, and the negative effects of climate change.

“Our students are tackling these issues as leaders,” Sipe says, “and what we’re hearing from them is, ‘We never learned about this before. People didn’t talk about it.’”

The Department of Physician Assistant Studies has been incorporating JEDI principles into its curriculum since the first day of classes began in 2015.
“We have a course in the first semester that covers implicit bias, racism and health care, health inequities, and social determinants of health,” says Lisa Walker, the department chair. “But when we started, it was a one-and-done class.”

So the department formed a committee of faculty and students, conducted a survey of students, faculty, staff, and alumni, and rewrote its mission and goals to ensure inclusion principles are incorporated every semester.

Walker also asked faculty members to bring in JEDI content that could be integrated more broadly. The result was change across the curriculum. “Most of the images we were using featured white skin, so our dermatology course coordinator brought in a physician from Mass General whose expertise is dermatology on skin of color, and he did a session for students which was of great value,” she says.

“In our cardiovascular course, we teach students about the health inequities around revascularization versus amputation,” she adds. “If someone has a blocked artery or vein in their leg, revascularization lets you create new blood flow. This procedure is offered more frequently to white patients, while Black patients are more likely to undergo amputation. By raising our students’ awareness of these health inequities, we hope they will become aware of their own biases and advocate for their patients of color.”

When the pandemic prevented students from their fieldwork clinical placements, the department created a virtual clinical rotation on the social determinants of health. Students raved about it. So even after a virtual rotation was no longer required for social distancing, faculty incorporated the content into on-campus seminars. The course has students focus on the impact of social determinants on the patients they see during their clinical placements and strategize approaches to address those social circumstances that impact patients’ health.

“Learning this content has to be ongoing so students understand what it means to be aware of their own biases as they practice, how to practice in an unbiased way, and how to continually assess their interactions with patients,” Walker notes.

“Our faculty and students of color have been brave in sharing their experiences, which helps us all think about our own biases.”

– REBECCA HILL, DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING’S PRELICENSURE PROGRAM

The department also prepares students to be leaders and advocates, with many attending national meetings and meeting with members of Congress. “What they’re experiencing,” Walker says, “is that they can take what they’re learning and advocate for real change on the state and federal levels.”

“Our program has cross-curricular threads, elements that are in every course, like professionalism, evidence-based practice, and clinical decision making,” says Keshrie Naidoo, director of curriculum and coordinator of the Clinical Residency in Orthopaedic Physical Therapy program.
Last summer, the department added a social justice and health equity thread to the Doctor of Physical Therapy curriculum. Faculty use patient case studies that students follow throughout each course. Each case, she says, highlights social determinants of health so students learn about the medical and nonmedical factors that influence patients’ health. Over time, the cases grow more complex and include more information about different aspects of how patients’ identities intersect.

“Students think about the effects of racism, social capital, and political contexts on health,” Naidoo says. “They think, ‘I’m not a politician. How am I going to make changes in my patient’s life?’ So we introduce structural competencies, asking them to start at the interpersonal level and then think about change at the community level, in research, and in policy.”

The department also has created professional development content to increase faculty awareness of the inequities in the classroom. While some students live in high-priced housing near campus and can walk to school, others must commute for two hours and/or take public transportation. Another example: Students from minoritized backgrounds have unique needs as they experience bias and discrimination.

“It’s a way to increase faculty members’ awareness of individual students’ experiences,” Naidoo says. “It isn’t just the responsibility of faculty of color to support students from minoritized backgrounds. It’s the responsibility of all faculty members.”

“The Occupational Therapy department is showing students how OTs can address social and structural inequities, says Chair Regina Doherty.”

“The department is threading anti-oppression principles through its foundational courses and thinking more critically about how to assess whether students are learning these concepts. “We are shifting from an implicit curriculum to an explicit one,” she explains. “It’s not just that students should use JEDI concepts, it’s that they must.”

Annika Chan, an OTD student and a JEDI Fellow in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, has been working closely with leadership within the SHRS Anti-Oppression task force to design JEDI initiatives. She points to several JEDI-infused classes, including one taught by Dr. Sarah McKinnon, as examples of how this work is making a difference. “The class helped us uncover our own biases,” says Chan. “We also learned about the systemic racism that exists in our professions and in health care. It was a very safe space where we could challenge ourselves.”

To create more of these opportunities, the department is developing additional content for its upcoming summer and fall classes as well as providing faculty with more resources. “We’re building a bridge that links theories and concepts to what JEDI competencies look like in practice,” Doherty says. “We want students to see how occupational therapists can address social and structural inequities, especially since we work with persons with disabilities, who can be vulnerable to the intersection of racism and ableism. We want our students to understand that to deliver true client-centered care, they must deliver just client-centered care.”

The Master of Science in Genetic Counseling program began in Fall 2019 with a focus on JEDI principles.

Every semester, students take a seminar course with both cohorts and faculty in attendance; the courses have been designed with JEDI principles as the framework, with modules including LGBTQIA+, disability justice, linguistic equity, accessibility, economic justice, neurodiversity, and the intersection of racial and disability justice. First- and second-year students are paired to present articles and share clinical cases connecting to the module theme of the week. By bringing
everyone together, says the program’s chair, Maureen Flynn, the course draws on and shares lived experiences, while taking a deep dive into the dark history of medical injustice and eugenics.

“A lot of students don’t know the history of medical eugenics, and how it is not just history, but is ongoing today,” she says. “This is the path forward: If you pause, think, and ask the right questions, you will inevitably find systemic racism and oppression. If you don’t ask the right questions, you don’t get answers and you can’t make change.”

This approach, she notes, inspired one student to ask a sweeping set of questions: When genetic counselors work with nonbinary and transgender patients, how can they address the fact that the name of “maternal fetal medicine” departments overlooks the array of patients’ gender identities? How are inclusive spaces created? What changes need to be made in clinical genetics and medicine overall?

For Flynn, some answers and signs of success will have to come from measures of patient satisfaction. “Data would need to demonstrate that patients feel included in their care, that services were delivered equitably, and that there were no differences based on socioeconomic status, race, disability, gender, language, ZIP code, or education level,” she says.

The field of speech-language pathology has a problem,” says Lesley Maxwell, associate chair of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. “It is a mostly female, white, historically privileged population, with only about 8% of our practicing clinicians identifying as diverse. That has to change.”

Over the past 10 years, the CSD department has worked to recruit and support students from diverse backgrounds. Faculty and students have joined to support anti-oppressive practice by making significant changes to the program’s curriculum, teaching, and research practices. Faculty have participated in focused readings and professional development programs on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Student-faculty task forces have evaluated and redesigned curriculum, hiring, communication with the speech-language pathology community, and faculty and preceptor education.

The work prompted Maxwell to change her approach in a class for early reading specialists she has taught for several years. “I’ve reframed conversations, which can be as simple as switching from ‘achievement gaps’ to ‘opportunity gaps’, she says. “At the end of the semester, when I ask students what they’ve learned, they now say, ‘I thought I was going to learn how to teach people to read better. Now I know I need to be an advocate and deal with oppressive systems that cause people not to be able to acquire literacy.’”

Innovative work in anti-oppressive curriculum development has been led by instructor Indigo Young, CSD ’14. Topics include forms of bias, systemic racism, oppression, cultural competence and cultural humility, deficit versus strength-based models, inclusion, and ableism.

“We’re coming to this work with an understanding that it’s a lifelong process,” says Dr. Marjorie Nicholas, the department’s chair, describing an attitude that’s prevalent across the IHP, “and we are coming to it with humility.”
Move to Navy Yard 20 Years Ago
Secured Institute’s Future

It was January 2002, and Ann Caldwell couldn’t help but smile.

Caldwell, halfway into what would be a decade-long tenure as president of the MGH Institute, had just pulled off something few people had believed possible.

She was standing inside 36 1st Avenue in the Charlestown Navy Yard—the school’s first permanent home, 25 years after its founding.

“Having our own building was a major milestone and set the Institute on a path for the growth and success that has occurred over the past 20 years,” recalled Caldwell of that moment.

A secure future was anything but a given when she arrived in 1997. The school’s finances were teetering. Fewer than 500 students were enrolled in the nursing, physical therapy, and speech-language pathology programs, a very small number even for a specialty school. The Institute was housed on several floors in the office building at 101 Merrimac Street, near the old Boston Garden.

Although an upgrade from the early days when classes were held at Ruth Sleeper and Bartlett halls at Massachusetts General Hospital, the location was full of challenges. The rent was over $1 million, an enormous financial drain. Each day, students spilled into the corridors, waiting for one class in a makeshift office to end, dodging their classmates and study carrels as well as the employees of adjacent businesses. The only meeting room was several floors up, near her office. Faculty and administrative staff were shoehorned into extremely tight spaces.

“It was the strangest place I’d ever seen for an academic institution,” she said. “I know a lot of alumni from those days remember Merrimac Street fondly, but that environment was hardly conducive for the Institute to be a respected graduate school.”

The Institute was the only degree-granting affiliate in the newly formed Partners HealthCare (the precursor to today’s Mass General Brigham). Some of the system’s leaders mandated that the Institute separate from the system and partner with another local university, thinking it no longer could operate independently. But there were reasons for optimism. The school had recently signed a comprehensive clinical affiliation agreement with Massachusetts General Hospital, with support from James Mongan, then MGH president, and Jeanette Ives Erickson, the hospital’s chief nurse and current chair of the IHP’s Board of Trustees, a big help for securing clinical placements. The school’s accreditation was renewed in 2000. And Caldwell and her team had stabilized the budget.

“Having our own building was a major milestone and set the Institute on a path for the growth and success that has occurred over the past 20 years.”

– ANN CALDWELL

Importantly, the Merrimac Street lease was coming up for renewal at the end of 2001. Caldwell proposed buying a building instead, using tax exempt financing to fund it. And she had a good idea for the ideal place.

“The Navy Yard was not developed like it is today,” she recalled. “Partners had just a small footprint there and many of the buildings were empty. Not only was Building 36 perfect for what we needed, but the Navy Yard had a campus feel to it.”

Mary Lentz of the real estate company McCall & Almy identified the old joiner’s building, where wooden ships were once built, as being available. With four floors and over 35,000 square feet, it would give the school both breathing room plus space for future expansion. Caldwell, who had been a fundraising officer at several area colleges before coming to the Institute, successfully landed a $2 million grant from the Catherine Filene Shouse Foundation and raised an additional $2.5 million to jumpstart the purchase. (The building is now named in honor of the philanthropist, who was a member of the family that owned the now-defunct Filene’s department store.) She then worked with Atlas Evans, the current
vice president of finance and administration, who had just begun at the Institute, to secure a loan to finance the rest of the building’s cost and pay for a complete renovation. All told, the final price tag was $20 million—in retrospect, a small price to pay for ensuring the Institute’s future.

“On the day we dedicated the renovated building,” Caldwell said, “I had the rare privilege of giving tours to many of the school’s founders, like the family of John Hilton Knowles, to Charles Sanders, and Nancy Watts, who said, ‘For the first time, I really believe the Institute will survive.’” When Caldwell left the Institute in 2007, the enrollment had grown to 800, new academic programs were being launched, and the first online courses were underway. To recognize her efforts, the Institute bestowed upon her the title of President Emerita, awarded her an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, and created the annual Ann W. Caldwell President’s Lecture: Interprofessional Rounds.

Today, Caldwell looks back with pride on what her leadership set in motion: a thriving graduate school with more than 1,700 students, a campus with 176,435 square feet of space across seven buildings, a robust and growing research initiative, several new direct-entry and post-professional programs, an alumni population that has more than tripled since she stepped down in 2007, and solid financial footing. “I’m like a proud parent, being able to see how the Institute has matured since I’ve left,” she said. “It’s a great feeling.”

The Shouse Building is on the National Register of Historic Buildings.
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IHP Student Emergency Fund Grows

When Betsy Cox first heard about the IHP Student Emergency Fund created during the early days of the pandemic, she knew exactly what it could do.

“My family member who attended the IHP waitressed so I understand how critical it is to help find new ways for students to support their living expenses as their side jobs were put on hold,” says Cox, the IHP’s associate director of continuing and professional development.

More than 425 people—56% of whom are alumni—have donated over $81,000; it includes a $25,000 gift from the Webster Foundation to create a permanent endowed fund. A total of 90 students have been assisted by the fund.
IMPACT OF YOUR SUPPORT

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IMPACT OF YOUR SUPPORT
Dual Pandemics Spur Positive Connection Between MGH Institute and Boston Scientific

For Boston Scientific CEO Michael Mahoney, the dual pandemics of racial inequalities and COVID-19 presented the potential to develop something positive from the unrest that has shaken the country over the past two years.

One of the results is a partnership with the MGH Institute in which the Cambridge medical technology company has funded a scholarship endowment to assist students of color.

The collaboration and ways to reverse inequalities were discussed at the Institute’s annual fundraiser. The virtual event, entitled “Growth Through Adversity: The IHP Today,” featured Mahoney speaking with MGH Institute Trustee Dr. Michael Jaff, vice president of clinical affairs, innovation, technology, peripheral interventions at Boston Scientific.

The event raised $300,000 to support student scholarships, surpassing the goal by more than 9%.

While Mahoney had previously recognized the country’s growing economic gap, the 2020 killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis by police in a neighborhood in which many of the company’s employees live was a call to action.

“I think the disparities and the social unrest forced us to, rather than just talking a lot, put in more specific action plans and strategies and measurements that actually drive more action,” said Mahoney. “Whether it be on our clinical trial work, our employee mix, the flexibility we offer, or the disparity in pay that sometimes you see by country or across race … [It] really just escalated the need for us to put stronger action plans in place.”

Jaff, who had recently joined Boston Scientific after being president of Newton-Wellesley Hospital, had been struck by the Institute’s commitment to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion from his first day as a trustee. It led him, as the leader of the company’s Close the Gap initiative, to propose the scholarship program to Mahoney as a way of merging the two institutions’ passion and dedication to making the world a better place.

“[Healthcare] workforce challenges are more real now more than ever,” Jaff said. “What the IHP brings [to this challenge is] making sure we highlight the values of working in health care and then [earning] these degrees to be experts back in their own communities.” Added Mahoney, “This is just a terrific strategy that aligns with our core beliefs.”

The first four scholarship recipients also will spend time shadowing employees at Boston Scientific, further cementing the relationship between the company and the school. “It’s about mentoring, exposing these students to additional career opportunities,” said Mahoney, who noted that some of the recipients may land a job at his company in the future.

The event featured remarks from President Paula Milone-Nuzzo and Trustee Maddy Pearson, both of whom spoke of the importance of supporting the school’s continuing efforts to provide scholarships to students so they can pursue a career in health care.

Katie Regan, a second-year student in the Master of Science in Genetic Counseling program and a recipient of the Charles A. and Ann Sanders Interprofessional Scholarship, also spoke.

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Class Notes

Class Notes are compiled through a variety of sources, including information sent in by alumni, hospital publications within Mass General Brigham and beyond, and public information released by various organizations.

Communication Sciences and Disorders

Rachel (Miller) Sakofs, CSD ’07, has founded BrainWorks Therapy in Jacksonville, FL, specializing in speech, language, and literacy skills for children ages 2 through young adulthood, with a focus on clients who have both oral and written communication needs. “I am excited for this next endeavor and couldn’t have done it without all the training and support from the IHP!” she writes.

Alexandra Merlino, CSD ’15, is featured in the Philadelphia Inquirer article, “For Long COVID-19 Patients With Brain Fog and Other Neurological Symptoms, a Penn Program Seeks Answers,” which features the tools and activities she is using to help assist patients.

Preeti Rishi, CSD ’21, has been awarded an Academy of Aphasia National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders Young Investigator Travel Fellowship in recognition of her thesis work.

Health Professions Education

Komal Bajaj, MS-HPEd ’16, was interviewed in “How to Implement a Clinical Debriefing Program at Health Systems and Hospitals,” published in Health Leaders.

Nursing

Virginia Capasso, PhD, SON-CAS ’94, nurse scientist in the Yvonne L. Munn Center for Nursing Research at MGH, has been selected to be a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing for her contributions to health and health care. She was inducted at the AAN’s Health Policy Conference in October.

Kathleen Belmonte, MSN ’96, MBA, was promoted to chief nursing officer and senior vice president for clinical services for Fresnius Kidney Care.

Kathleen Burns, MSN ’08, co-authored “Helicobacter Priori: Foe; Sometimes Friend;” published in the Townsend Letter. She is a senior technical associate at ProThera Inc.

Alumni Couple Take the Road Less Traveled

Sylvia Brandenberg and Dan McGuire have taken to the road in pursuing their careers as physician assistants.

The 2018 graduates are traveling the country and living in an Airstream trailer after deciding that spending their lives in one place was not for them. Recently, they’ve been exploring in the American and Canadian West.

“We’re in a time when there’s a lot more flexibility,” said McGuire. “The pandemic opened avenues for telehealth, making remote work more available.”

Their Airstream is decked out with solar panels and two propane tanks and can carry 40 gallons of fresh water. After stocking up with groceries, they can stay on the road for about a week. And while the trailer may have a very small living area, it gives the couple a freedom that was largely impossible before COVID-19.

Brandenberg, who spent her first three years after graduation working in the emergency department at the University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center, now also works remotely for Cityblock Health, a Brooklyn start-up that provides primary and emergent care via telehealth. McGuire has kept his job treating medical and surgical critical care patients for MedStar Washington (D.C.) Hospital Center, with a twist—he drives or flies to the hospital to pick up a week’s worth of shifts every month or two.

“We have no map or plan for where we’re going. We’re learning what works for us as we drive around the country,” said Brandenberg. “We don’t have a date where we have to be anywhere specific, and it’s been great.”
Catherine Alexander, DNP ‘15, was co-author of two recent publications in the Journal of Nursing Care Quality: “Building a Reliable Health Care System: A Lean Six Sigma Quality Improvement Initiative on Patient Handoff” and “Development of the Nursing Quality Improvement in Practice Tool: Advancing Frontline Nursing Practice.”

Ugne Aleknaite, MSN ‘16, received the 2021 Seinfeld Hartman Compassionate Care Prize from Nantucket Cottage Hospital’s oncology program. The clinical leader was recognized by family members of patients for providing exceptional care during their loved ones’ final months of life.

Lauren Buckley, BSN ‘19, received a Daisy Award for Extraordinary Nurses for the care she gave to a mother and her child on Blake 13 at Mass General Hospital.


Occupational Therapy
Amirra (Johnson) Condelee, OTD ‘19, received the 2021 Outstanding Clinician of the Year award from the Arizona Occupational Therapy Association. The owner of Marvelous Miracles Pediatric Therapy, she is an executive board member for the Arizona OT Association and helped establish its justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion ad hoc committee.

Physical Therapy
Colleen Kigin, DPT ‘02, presented the 52nd Mary McMillan Lecture, “Innovation: It’s in Our DNA,” during the APTA’s centennial celebration.

Lisa Scialla, DPT ‘03, recently opened Boston Chiropractic and Physical Therapy in South Boston.


Naseem Chatiwala, DPT ‘04, a lab instructor in the IHP’s PT Department, received the Outstanding Achievement in Clinical Practice Award from the American Physical Therapy Association of Massachusetts. The award gives public recognition to physical therapist and physical therapist assistant members who are outstanding clinicians, dedicated to their patients and their professions and to sharing their knowledge with others.

Kevin Wilk, DPT ‘05, co-presented “Strategies to Manage Mental Health Issues” as part of the APTA Fit for Practice series, which offered tools and resources to address emotional well-being in personal and professional lives.

Marilyn Moffat, DPT ‘06, was interviewed in “10-Minute Run Improves Brain Function and Mood” in Medical News Today, about a small-scale study in Japan that looked at the benefits of running to an individual’s brain activity and executive functions.

Jesse Resari, DPT ’08, completed the Orthopedic Manual Therapy Fellowship training course at Regis University and subsequently was named a Fellow of the American Academy in Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists.

Christopher Bise, DPT ’10, an assistant professor at the University of Pittsburgh and clinical analyst at the UPMC Health Plan, weighed in on research on alleviating back pain in “Aquatic Exercise May Be Better for Chronic Back Pain than Physical Therapy” in Healthline.


Roberta Brehm, DPT ‘15, is featured in the VAntage Point blog, “Physical Therapist Heals With ‘Just Her Hands and Some Hope.’” Brehm recently completed a VA residency program and currently works at the Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans’ Hospital in Missouri.

Valerie Rucker, DPT ‘15, is one of just 100 physical therapists named a 2021 Centennial Scholar by the American Physical Therapy Association. Rucker, who works at Capital Physical Therapy in Maryland, is participating in the 12-month program that develops future leaders in the profession.

A Literary Use of a Nursing Degree
A reflective writing assignment while Jennifer Hanlon Wilde was a Master of Science in Nursing student at the MGHI was the spark to led her to becoming a novelist.

“I wrote a poem about meeting a Holocaust survivor who had a valve procedure,” recalled Hanlon Wilde, MSN ‘95. “I spent several hours with the patient and wrote down all the bits of wisdom he gave me. It really stayed with me.”

She first developed the idea for her mystery, Finding the Vein, in 2013 when she was working as a camp nurse. The book, which took several years to write, was rejected several times until 2020, when it won an award and Ooligan Press—which previously had turned it down—took a chance on the unknown author. The book is a finalist for the 2022 Lambda Literary Award in mystery fiction.

Set in a summer camp for adopted international children, the story follows police sergeant Mike O’Malley—a former emergency room nurse—as she investigates the sudden death of a counselor, which eventually leads to uncovering a series of sinister secrets.

Hanlon Wilde said her IHP education, along with 23 years working as a nurse practitioner in Oregon, played a big role in the book’s development: “Nurses are really like detectives because we’re always trying to figure out things and ask questions to get the right diagnosis—which all are critical to solving a mystery.”
Here are some comments I’ve heard from children lately:

“It’s her fault she got COVID. She took too long eating lunch without a mask.”

“Who cares if I get on a flight with COVID? I’m already sick.”

Such comments aren’t typically malicious, but they do show a failure to care about other people and to see their perspectives—two key components of empathy. That’s why, as a speech pathologist and a mom of two school-aged kids, I believe it’s time to focus far more on empathy education in our schools and our homes.

Since the pandemic started, there has been so much blaming, shaming, and superstition about COVID-19, which can destroy relationships. Honing kids’ empathy skills is key to counteracting that. But showing empathy can be especially hard for kids because their emotional understanding is still in development. Especially in times of stress and upset, they may retreat to focusing more on themselves—as do we adults.

These days, many of us are managing grief or trauma and struggling to model empathy due to compassion fatigue. Still, we have daily opportunities to help children develop empathy based on the conversations we have with them. That starts with understanding what empathy truly is.

Empathy doesn’t develop all at once, and it doesn’t arise out of a vacuum. The skill develops in bumps and flashes, over time. Even many 1-year-olds are capable of noticing other people’s feelings, and many 2-year-olds are capable of taking basic actions to help others feel better.

As psychologists Paul Ekman and Daniel Goleman argue, empathy has three parts: cognitive empathy, or perspective-taking; emotional empathy, or deeply sharing another person’s pain or happiness, almost as if the emotions are our own; and compassionate empathy, or taking action as a result of such sharing. Our conversations with children can help them develop each of these three elements.

For example, to foster cognitive empathy, encourage kids to shift between perspectives. If a teenager asks why he can’t travel when he tests positive for COVID, saying, “I don’t see the problem,” ask him to take the perspective of an older woman on a plane sitting next to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. During the plane ride, nobody is the wiser; the woman doesn’t know, and her seatmate doesn’t tell her. She is unknowingly at higher risk of catching the virus, however, which could have life-threatening consequences.

You can then practice flipping perspectives, taking the viewpoint of a pilot who has a family at home and needs to fly daily with many potentially infected people.

Quality conversations can support children’s understanding of the emotional side of empathy as well. Say your middle-school child has a friend diagnosed with COVID-19 who feels fine but needs to quarantine. The friend has to miss out on school and social events and may feel truly lonely and isolated. Helping your child understand her friend’s feelings can support their in-the-moment interactions over the phone or online, as well as over the longer term.

Conversations are also key to developing compassionate empathy or feeling moved to meet another person’s needs. Perhaps your child who can’t visit her sick friend in person can still ease the friend’s loneliness. Maybe they could play an online game together, or your child could send a virtual card. However, it’s important not to assume what someone needs and wants in general, but to think about each person specifically. If your children aren’t sure what their friends need, encourage them to ask.

Teaching empathy is tough when you’re struggling as a parent. In the act of teaching empathy to others, the most important element is compassion for yourself: There is no “perfect” parenting. There never was.

Recognizing that we’re all in this together is key. In the words of the writer John Steinbeck, “You can only understand people if you feel them in yourself.”

Rebecca (Givens) Rolland is a speech pathologist and the author of “The Art of Talking with Children,” published in March from HarperOne. She is a lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Harvard Medical School.
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Support Team IHP at the Boston Marathon

A current student and a recent alum comprise this year’s Team IHP, who will run the 2022 Boston Marathon to support the MGH Institute.

Callie Albers, a member of the Doctor of Physical Therapy’s Class of 2023 (left), is running to support the Charles A. and Anne Sanders IMPACT Practice Center. Dana Koehn, who graduated in 2021 with a Master of Physician Assistant Studies, is running to support PAS scholarships.

To join an initiative that has raised more than $160,000 since 2011, please visit mghihp.edu/2022-marathon-runners.
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