

Advancing a  
Healthier Wisconsin Endowment

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

For the period of July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024



**AW** ADVANCING A HEALTHIER  
WISCONSIN ENDOWMENT



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# ABOUT AHW

***We provide funding and resources to researchers, organizations, and communities devoted to improving the health of the people of Wisconsin.***

The Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment (AHW) is Wisconsin's largest health improvement philanthropy. We invest in promising health-focused research, support public and community health initiatives, and help build the health workforce needed in Wisconsin.

AHW is part of the Medical College of Wisconsin. It is the only health philanthropy in the nation stewarding public funds while embedded in a private medical school.

In 1999, Blue Cross & Blue Shield United of Wisconsin converted from a nonprofit to a for-profit corporation. The Medical College of Wisconsin received half of the funds resulting from the conversion, with the other half going to UW-Madison's School of Medicine and Public Health. Leveraging the generous gift to serve as a resource for health improvement efforts across Wisconsin, AHW issued its first funding awards in 2004, building momentum and increasing its impact on the state's health ever since.

## **OUR MISSION:**

Working with our partners, AHW will serve as a catalyst for positive change in the health of Wisconsin communities.

## **OUR VISION:**

Advancing Wisconsin to be the healthiest state in the nation.





“The way AHW shares expertise and resources makes not just for a better research effort, but also for better outcomes for the community.”

**Al Castro**  
Director of Health Research  
United Community Center/  
Centro de la Comunidad Unida



“What AHW has allowed this initiative to do is to be creative, to take the time needed to build trust, to address misunderstanding and to innovate. And I believe that in the end, this will have a tremendous impact on cancer across the state.”

**Melinda Stolley, PhD**  
Co-Leader, Community and Cancer Science Network  
Associate Director,  
Medical College of Wisconsin Cancer Center

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Partners in health,

The Medical College of Wisconsin received an extraordinary gift in 1999 when Blue Cross & Blue Shield United of Wisconsin converted to a for-profit company. That gift—\$309 million directed separately to each of the state’s two medical schools—was the genesis of the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment (AHW). It became our charge from that day forward to steward this transformational gift received by the Medical College of Wisconsin on behalf of the people of our state to improve health in communities throughout Wisconsin. AHW issued its first grants for health-focused projects in 2004, growing thereafter to become **the state’s largest health philanthropy, investing more than \$350 million into 752 health improvement projects** over the next 20 years.



I am so proud to share these reflections with the many partners and stakeholders throughout Wisconsin that share our mission of maximizing the health of the people and communities we have the pleasure of serving. In **fiscal year 2024, AHW awarded a record 109 grants totaling \$13.2 million**, building upon 20 years of impactful health philanthropy in Wisconsin.

Delivering upon our core principles of **collaboration** and **transformation**, we’ve adapted our funding formula over the years to reflect the flexibility our partners have asked for to **fuel new ideas, advance promising initiatives, build upon successful programs**, and **coordinate large-scale health-focused strategies**.

Notable enhancements we’ve made to our grant offerings in the past year include the expansion of our Seed Grant funding opportunity to include MCW post-doctoral researchers and the introduction of a new community-academic partnership model for Seed Grants that allows independent applications from community organizations, who, upon funding approval, are matched with an appropriate MCW faculty partner. We also awarded a **record 24 Learning Event Support Grants** to build knowledge, skills, and connections among Wisconsin’s health workforce. With these changes and growing awareness of AHW’s resources, we are reaching new populations in Wisconsin, addressing both long-standing and emerging health challenges in our state and beyond.

This year also saw AHW organize and host the **Black Men in White Coats Youth Summit** in Milwaukee, a collaborative effort with wide-ranging local partners, and the **Advancing Health for ALL Wisconsin Conference**, celebrating the history and impact of AHW and our partners at historic Lambeau Field. In addition to showcasing outcomes and lessons from AHW investments, the Lambeau event effectively laid the groundwork for **AHW’s 2024-2028 Five-Year Plan**, including an announcement of a \$50 million investment in three **Landmark Initiatives** focused on **childhood behavioral health, hypertension control**, and **health workforce well-being**.

With this successful track record, I can only look forward to AHW’s next 20 years with confidence and optimism. Thank you for your interest in and contributions to AHW’s past and future success.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. M. Ehrenfeld".

Jesse M. Ehrenfeld, MD, MPH, FASA, FAMIA, FCPP  
Senior Associate Dean and Director  
Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment  
Professor, Anesthesiology  
Medical College of Wisconsin



## Year in Review

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Recognizing the broad perspectives needed to develop and implement effective health improvement strategies for the people of Wisconsin, AHW identifies **collaboration** as one of its four guiding principles, along with **transformation; stewardship; and equity, diversity, and inclusion**. Through collaboration, AHW broadens the impact of its investments throughout the state, at the same time raising awareness of and interest in the resources it provides. AHW has effectively expanded its reach through partnerships across Wisconsin, investing **more than \$350 million into 752 health improvement projects** since 2004. And with a **record 109 new awards in fiscal year 2024**, our work continues to connect with new geographies and populations, improving lives along the way.

This report covers the transition period from AHW's previous Five-Year Plan to a new strategic framework that began in January 2024 and runs through 2028. With input and feedback on our vision and role in advancing health statewide, AHW will continue to invest in initiatives centered in three focus areas: **public and community health improvement; health workforce education and development; and health-focused research**.

Investment highlights from fiscal year 2024 include:

- Grants to support 24 learning events throughout Wisconsin focused on advancing the state's health workforce
- Expansion of the pool of investigators and projects receiving AHW Seed Grant funding to include 13 post-doctoral researchers with faculty supervision, thereby developing Wisconsin's future health-focused research workforce
- A \$50,000 investment in a community-led project focused on increasing BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) representation in healthcare professions
- A \$50,000 grant to MCW's regional campuses to address rural health disparities and suboptimal civic health in an increasingly diverse central Wisconsin

- Seed Grant funding for an MCW research project aimed at improving language health in stroke survivors with aphasia
- An investment of \$2.3 million in an MCW research project to create a program dedicated to developing new methods for diagnosing and treating genomic diseases in children
- Funding support totaling \$50,000 for a project that will match veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder with suitable mentors



### Total New Investments

Fiscal Year 2024

- Public and Community Health Improvement: **\$6,161,154**
- Health Workforce Education and Development: **\$740,796**
- Health-Focused Research: **\$6,327,385**

In addition to this financial assistance, AHW helped its partners increase their effectiveness and reach with capacity building programs, including:

- Connecting AHW nonprofit partners to pro bono services through Catchafire, a national organization matching skills-based virtual volunteers with nonprofit entities, to strengthen their work and increase impact
- Driving successful outcomes for community-based organizations, community coalitions, and community-academic partnerships through engagements with respected organizations and individuals who provide content expertise and experience to support funded projects as part of AHW's Technical Assistance Provider Program
- Funding, organizing, hosting, and participating in Grantee Learning Events to support partnerships through information sharing and relationship building, including the Advancing Health for ALL Wisconsin Conference held in conjunction with AHW's 20th anniversary

## FISCAL YEAR 2024 BY THE NUMBERS

**\$13,229,335** in new funding  
**109 New Projects**

**256 Active Projects** representing  
**\$112,122,214** in funding

**117 Projects** closed

# Celebrating 20 Years:

Advancing Health for ALL Wisconsin Conference Highlights AHW's History and Impact



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**The Advancing Health for ALL Wisconsin Conference, held on June 20, 2024, at Lambeau Field in Green Bay, marked AHW's 20th anniversary of stewarding funds gifted to the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) from the conversion of Blue Cross & Blue Shield United of Wisconsin into a for-profit company. The event celebrated the collaborative efforts of AHW's academic and community partners while setting the stage for future initiatives to improve the health and well-being of Wisconsin residents.**

The conference included various impactful sessions throughout the day, highlighting AHW's commitment to addressing key health challenges across the state, bringing together experts, stakeholders, and community leaders to reflect on past achievements and strategize for the future.

In the morning, attendees learned about AHW's Advancing Behavioral Health Initiative, an eight-year program working in 10 communities to improve behavioral health through systems changes. This session shared impact results and lessons learned about coalition work to achieve broader population and systems change.

Attendees spent the afternoon participating in their choice of 31 breakout sessions showcasing a range of AHW-funded projects and their impact on Wisconsin's health landscape. These sessions included presentations on health workforce projects, health-focused research, and public and community health initiatives, offering attendees valuable insights into transformative work across the state.

Among the afternoon sessions was the Wisconsin Health Workforce Well-Being Forum, a discussion on the challenges facing the state's health workforce. Moderated by Michael Stadler, MD, chief medical officer at Froedtert Hospital, the forum included insights from MCW President and CEO John R. Raymond Sr., MD, and Wisconsin Department of Health Services Secretary-Designee Kirsten Johnson. The sessions and forum underscored the importance of collaboration and knowledge sharing in advancing public health efforts in Wisconsin.

A highlight of the conference was the announcement of AHW's landmark investment in three key health challenges: hypertension control, childhood behavioral health, and health workforce well-being. AHW Director Jesse Ehrenfeld, MD, MPH, announced that \$50 million would be allocated to these areas over the coming years. This investment reflects AHW's commitment to addressing some of Wisconsin's most pressing health issues and creating sustainable, long-term improvements.

"The Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment is uniquely positioned to address a number of long-standing and growing health challenges in our state. This Landmark Investment aims to significantly move the needle and create positive, sustainable change in several areas with the greatest opportunity for impact over the next five-to-ten years," said Dr. Ehrenfeld.

The evening portion of the event featured the 2024 AHW Excellence Awards program, which recognized individuals and organizations for outstanding contributions to public health in Wisconsin. Awards were presented in three categories: collaboration, transformation, and health equity. The ceremony celebrated the achievements of these leaders and their role in advancing AHW's mission over the past 20 years.

The Advancing Health for ALL Wisconsin Conference brought together 220 attendees to celebrate two decades of impactful work while emphasizing the need for ongoing collaboration and innovation to tackle the state's health challenges. The event fostered dialogue, recognized excellence, and set the stage for AHW's future efforts to enhance health equity and well-being across Wisconsin.

## 2024 Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment Excellence Awards

### Collaboration

- Excellence in Community Partnership Award: NEW Mental Health Connection, Healthy Teen Minds and Project Zero focused on mental health and suicide prevention
- Collaborative Research Excellence Award: Melinda Stolley, PhD, MCW

### Transformation

- Community Impact Award: Wisconsin Literacy, Inc.
- Translational Research Excellence Award: John Meurer, MD, MBA, MCW

### Health Equity

- Community Health Equity Award: United Community Center
- Academic Health Equity Advancement Award: Joan Neuner, MD, MPH, MCW

# ENGAGING OUR PARTNERS

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“AHW is a great grants program, and we are lucky to have access to the funds which help improve the health of Wisconsin residents and which support scientific advancement.”

AHW 2024 Partnership Survey Response

“The individual consultations, meetings, and email contacts were **EXTREMELY** helpful in this process, and I cannot share enough appreciation for the guidance provided by your team.”

2024 Momentum Grant Applicant Survey Response

**AHW continuously seeks to improve its operations and investment outcomes based upon input and feedback from those we serve and from stakeholders who share our goal of maximizing the health of all Wisconsinites.**

In addition to regular check-ins with grantees throughout the year, AHW taps the perspectives of funded partners in an annual survey that invites reflections on their experience working with AHW staff and drawing upon AHW resources.

AHW's 2024 Partnership Survey drew 86 responses, with good representation from both MCW and community project team members. Survey results confirm that AHW partners value the tools, resources, and funding support they receive from AHW.

**93%**

of funded partners felt that the AHW funding model encouraged collaboration that advances project goals.

**98%**

of funded partners felt that AHW staff were professional.

**93%**

of funded partners felt that AHW staff provided the support they needed to be successful in the funded project.

**91%**

of funded partners felt supported by AHW to engage with their partner and carry out their work.

Source: AHW 2024 Partnership Survey

## National Advisory Committee

Building upon the successful inaugural meeting of its National Advisory Committee in Milwaukee in September 2023, AHW added two new members to the body of experts providing insights and input on health philanthropy best practices. In the second annual meeting of the committee in September 2024, participating scholars, organizational leaders, and public health leaders from across the nation discussed AHW's recently adopted Five-Year Plan, including the Landmark Initiatives AHW has launched to achieve measurable statewide health improvements in three focus areas: hypertension control, childhood behavioral health, and health workforce well-being.



*National Advisory Committee members spent three days with AHW in September, sharing their vast knowledge relating to trends in health science, public health, and philanthropy.*

### **Howard Bauchner, MD**

Professor of Pediatrics and Public Health, Boston University Chobanian and Avedisian School of Medicine; Former Editor in Chief of JAMA

### **Morgan McDonald, MD, FACP, FAAP**

National Director for Population Health and Health Equity Leadership, Milbank Memorial Fund

### **Elizabeth Ofili, MD**

Professor, Department of Medicine; Director and Senior Associate Dean, Clinical Research Center and Clinical and Translational Research, Morehouse School of Medicine

### **Asaf Bitton, MD, MPH**

Executive Director, Ariadne Labs, Brigham and Women's Hospital and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health; Associate Professor of Medicine and Health Care Policy, Harvard Medical School and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

### **Sheila Mikhail, JD, MBA**

Serial Biotech Entrepreneur

### **Dwayne Proctor, PHD**

President and CEO, Missouri Foundation for Health

### **Kemi Doll MD, MS**

Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of Washington School of Medicine; Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Health Systems and Population Health at the University of Washington School of Public Health

### **Brian Miller, MD, MBA, MPH**

Assistant Professor of Medicine, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

### **Beth Resnick, MD**

Assistant Dean for Public Health Practice, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

### **Atul Grover MD, PhD**

Executive Director, Association of American Medical Colleges Research and Action Institute

### **Judy Monroe, MD**

President and CEO, CDC Foundation

### **Siobhan Wescott, MD, MPH**

Dr. Susan and Suzette La Flesche Professor of American Indian Health; Director, American Indian Health Program, University of Nebraska

### **Octavio Martinez Jr., MD, MPH, MBA, FAPA**

Executive Director, Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, University of Texas-Austin

### **Julie Morita, MD**

President and CEO, The Joyce Foundation

### **Sandra L. Wong, MD, MS**

William N. and Bessie Allyn Professor of Surgery and Chair, Department of Surgery, Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center and Geisel School of Medicine, Dartmouth College

The AHW National Advisory Committee serves as an advisory group to AHW's leadership, providing both formal and informal counsel on strategic goals and major activities.



# AHW FIVE-YEAR PLAN

AHW's 2024-2028 Five-Year Plan defines overarching goals and areas of focus to maximize the impact of AHW's work and to build and deliver core competencies across the state's health ecosystem that will most effectively achieve broad and lasting health improvements.

## Areas of Focus:



**Public and Community**  
Health Improvement



**Health Workforce**  
Education and  
Development



**Health-Focused**  
Research

## Overarching Goals:

- Achieve and inspire positive, sustainable change
- Translate new knowledge to results-orient action
- Increase strength, agility, and performance of partner networks

For each focus area, we've identified key strategies that will help drive impact. These strategies, all of which were developed, drafted, and refined with input from wide-ranging and diverse stakeholder groups, provide guidance on the best paths to success for each of our primary functions.

We also received very specific directional input from our partners and stakeholders about operational best practices that we should adopt to ensure the best possible outcomes for our investments. We have codified these good ideas into the plan as foundational principles upon which we will prioritize, build, and deliver the very best health improvement solutions for the people and communities we serve.

## Landmark Initiatives

The plan spells out specific avenues to achieving our goals, including building signature initiatives focused on targeted health areas.

At the Advancing Health for ALL Wisconsin Conference, AHW Director Dr. Jesse Ehrenfeld announced plans to invest up to \$50 million over the next five to ten years in three Landmark Initiatives:

- Hypertension Control
- Childhood Behavioral Health
- Health Workforce Well-Being

These initiatives leverage AHW's unique capacity to tap both state and national experts, convene stakeholders, and provide support for large-scale health improvement projects. They will require coordination among many stakeholders, all of whom will contribute to the planning necessary to effectively build, implement, and evaluate the impact of such substantial collaborative endeavors made possible with AHW funding and other operational support.

## BROAD AND INCLUSIVE PERSPECTIVES

**Any plan focused on health in Wisconsin must recognize and honor the histories, traditions, and belief systems of people who share state borders but have vastly different lived experiences.**

From urban centers to rural and agricultural communities and self-governed tribal nations, we are committed to maximizing the health of ALL Wisconsinites and developing programs, partnerships, and knowledge-sharing opportunities aimed at achieving health equity, which the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines as “the state in which everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their highest level of health.” We recognize and strive to overcome disparate societal and environmental factors affecting the health and well-being of people, communities, and populations throughout Wisconsin.

Correcting the structural inequities that disproportionately affect the health of underserved and underrepresented populations is a primary focus of AHW's work.



# AREAS OF FOCUS

AHW advances health and health equity in Wisconsin by investing in promising biomedical research, supporting community health initiatives, and building the health workforce needed by Wisconsin. In addition to grant funding, we develop and deliver resources that add value to the partners we serve, building capacity within Wisconsin's health ecosystem to maximize opportunities for people and communities throughout the state to thrive.



## PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

- Deepen our understanding of the drivers of public health in Wisconsin
- Affect measurable improvement in targeted public health markers
- Innovate through system-level change and social impact investing strategies



## HEALTH WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

- Nurture a diverse and multifaceted health workforce responsive to Wisconsin's needs
- Implement effective recruitment, retention, and continuous learning strategies to optimize current and future workforce
- Maximize purpose, resilience, and fulfillment among health workers across disciplines



## HEALTH-FOCUSED RESEARCH

- Align funded research with Wisconsin's health priorities
- Embrace AHW's unique mission to fund truly visionary projects
- Enhance funded partners' ability to disseminate and apply new knowledge
- Build and sustain a strong trained investigator pipeline





# PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

AHW's Public and Community Health Improvement focus area is dedicated to advancing public health in Wisconsin by deepening our understanding of the factors that influence it, driving measurable improvements in key health indicators, and fostering innovation through system-level change and social impact investing strategies.

## CLOSED PROJECTS

- Promoting Wisconsin Influenza Vaccine Equity through Pharmacy Engagement
- Integration of Hepatitis C Diagnosis and Treatment into a Mobile Harm Reduction Unit
- Improving Mental Health of Milwaukee's Latinx Population through Increased Neighborhood Engagement
- Implementing a Health Outcomes Measurement System in Wisconsin's Free and Charitable Clinics
- Reducing Medication Errors: Adopting Evidence-Based Directions for Use on Prescription Labels
- Increasing Integrated Behavioral Health in Primary Care Settings through Team Training
- Collaborative Work Groups to Reduce Wisconsin's Breast and Lung Cancer Disparities: Phase One
- Frequency of Student Proximity to Adverse Incidents: Incidence, Impact, and Intervention
- Water Lead Testing Feasibility Project to Identify At-Risk Persons for Lead Poisoning and Referrals
- Marathon County Minimum Legal Drinking Age Compliance Checks
- CA:tCH: Expanding Shared Data Systems for Coordinated Community Crisis Response
- Growing Rural Health Equity with the Help Me Grow Model
- Assessing Suicide Risk and Preventing Suicide Among Black Students in Milwaukee
- Adult Vision Health Program
- Recovery Residences That Work: Building Quality through Accreditation Standards Statewide
- Integrating Advocates within a Healthcare Setting to Strengthen Intimate Partner Violence Screening
- Leveraging Trusted Relationships Between Community and Farmers to Increase Healthy Food Access
- System Change for Health Integration in the Delivery of Diabetes Prevention
- Advancing Alcohol and Violence Research: Developing New Partnerships and Sharing Learnings
- Sustaining a Behavioral Health System in Marathon County
- Mental Health Matters: Promoting Resilience for Chippewa Valley Youth
- HCAT Behavioral Health Project
- Advancing Behavioral Health Initiative Phase 3: Supplemental Funding for Communications Consultant
- Improving Children's Mental Health through School and Community in Racine
- Advancing Access to Improved Mental Health in Rural Southwestern Wisconsin
- Using Food Hubs to Improve Community Health by Getting Better Food to More People
- Building a Healthy Family Caregiver System through Early Identification and Right-Time Support
- Peace at Home Hotline
- Health and Wellbeing Environmental Assessment for Lasting Healthcare Workforce Resiliency in Wisconsin
- Implementation of Community-Led Diabetes Education in Hmong and Hispanic Populations in Central WI
- Eliminating Low Value Care in Wisconsin to Improve Quality, Safety, Health Equity, and Cost Efficiency
- Behavioral Health Crisis Response Transformation in Douglas County
- Project Zero: Every One Matters
- A Veggie Chop Shop to Support Milwaukee's Most Vulnerable
- Creating a Municipal Inventory for Alcohol Policy in Calumet County
- Building Equitable Access to Wholesale Markets for Hmong Farmers in NE Wisconsin
- REDIRECT (Research in Early Child Development to Improve Resiliency and Equity)

# \$6.2 Million Funded in FY24

- COME ALIVE MILWAUKEE: Community Empowerment and Lifestyle Intervention for Ethnic Minorities
- Impact of Alcohol Policies on Health in Rural Northern Wisconsin
- Clinical and Community Solutions to Lead-Free Children
- Clean Air Interventions for Milwaukee Child Care
- Reducing Opioid Overdose through Coordinated, Multisectoral Response

Find descriptions of each closed project with a summary of outcomes at [ahwendowment.org/fundedprojects](http://ahwendowment.org/fundedprojects)

## NEW INVESTMENTS

PROJECT NAME AND AWARD	PROJECT AIM	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS AND PRIMARY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION
<p>Community Perspectives on Addressing Food Insecurity</p> <p>\$49,042 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Improving community health through developing an understanding of food insecurity and its root causes</p>	<p>Constance Gundacker, MD, MPH, MCW Department of Pediatrics</p> <p>Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin</p>
<p>Wisconsin Clubhouse Coalition: Expanding Services for People Living with Mental Illness</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Creating a coalition offering safe spaces and resources for people with mental illness</p>	<p>Michelle Broaddus, PhD, MCW Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine</p> <p>Grand Avenue Club</p>
<p>Mentor Matching for Veterans with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Introducing a mentor matching system providing personalized and effective experiences for veterans</p>	<p>Zeno Franco, PhD, MCW Department of Family Medicine</p> <p>Marquette University</p>
<p>An Assessment of Nutrition Security Among Residents in Rural Eau Claire County</p> <p>\$49,988 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Developing community resources</p>	<p>David A. Nelson, PhD, MCW Department of Family Medicine</p> <p>Eau Claire City-County Health Department</p>
<p>Community Living Room</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Reducing social isolation and loneliness for adults in Winnebago County</p>	<p>Sara A. Kohlbeck, PhD, MCW Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine</p> <p>Winnebago County Health Department</p>
<p>Building and Reinforcing a Community-Based Nutrition Collaborative</p> <p>\$46,455 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-11/30/2024</p>	<p>Empowering Rock County communities to create equitable systems change and increase food access country-wide</p>	<p>Christopher Simenz, PhD, MCW Department of Institute for Health and Equity</p> <p>Rock County Public Health Department</p>

PROJECT NAME AND AWARD	PROJECT AIM	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS
<p>Public Health Issues of Loneliness and Isolation in Metcalfe Park</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Improving individual and community well-being and promoting health equity in Metcalfe Park, Milwaukee, and Wisconsin</p>	<p>David A. Nelson, PhD, MCW Department of Family Medicine</p> <p>Metcalfe Park Community Bridges, Inc.</p>
<p>Strategies to Improve Mental Health of Independent Living Youth</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Providing peer mentor support and facilitating mental healthcare for youth with severe mental health needs</p>	<p>Leslie Ruffalo, PhD, MS, MCW Department of Family Medicine</p> <p>Workforce Resource, Inc.</p>
<p>Taking Controlz</p> <p>\$49,992 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Educating children and teens about healthy social media use to support their mental health</p>	<p>Matthew Jandrisevits, PhD, MCW Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine</p> <p>SSM Health Treffert Center</p>
<p>Building Pathways for Caregiver Support</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Providing opportunities for support and connection to caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias</p>	<p>Leslie Ruffalo, PhD, MS, MCW Department of Family Medicine</p> <p>TimeSlips</p>
<p>STRYVtime: Community-based Train-the-Trainer Model</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Piloting an innovative program to train individuals working with youth outside the classroom setting</p>	<p>Constance Gundacker, MD, MPH, MCW Department of Pediatrics</p> <p>STRYV365</p>
<p>Improving Health Awareness Among Incarcerated Wisconsinites through Information and Self-Empowerment</p> <p>\$46,960 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Providing incarcerated adults with educational materials about common health conditions to help them take ownership of their health</p>	<p>Laura Hawks, MD, MPH, MCW Department of Medicine</p> <p>The Community</p>
<p>Seeds for Strong Futures: Nurturing Youth Wellness through Caregiver-Focused Education</p> <p>\$49,242 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Providing mental health training and workforce development opportunities for caregivers of youth in the greater Milwaukee area</p>	<p>Christopher Simenz, PhD, MCW Institute for Health and Equity</p> <p>Herzing University</p>
<p>Reaching Caregiving Youth: Creating Access through Expansion of WisconSibs Programming</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Addressing health challenges for sibling caregivers of people with disabilities</p>	<p>Jessica Foley, PhD, MCW Department of Pediatrics</p> <p>WisconSibs, Inc.</p>

<p>Connecting the Dots: Building a Fall Intervention Team in Kenosha County</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Creating a system to address the growing number of fall-related incidents in Kenosha County</p>	<p>Thomas Grawey, DO, MCW Department of Emergency Medicine</p> <p>Aurora Medical Center – Kenosha</p>
<p>Food for Healthier Birth Outcomes</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-6/30/2025</p>	<p>Creating an innovative partnership to improve health and well-being of low-income pregnant people through a food-as-medicine program</p>	<p>Anna Palatnik, MD, MCW Department of Obstetrics &amp; Gynecology</p> <p>Food for Health, Inc.</p>
<p>Mental Health Action Partnership: Fostering Local Mental Health Coalitions</p> <p>\$49,998 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Supporting local and regional mental health coalitions throughout Wisconsin to improve Wisconsin's mental health service system</p>	<p>Michelle Broaddus, PhD, MCW Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine</p> <p>National Alliance on Mental Illness Wisconsin</p>
<p>Strategic Investments to Bridge the Gaps in Prevention and Care to Reduce Inequities in Cancer</p> <p>\$4,819,477 Cross-Cutting</p> <p>4/1/2024-3/31/2027</p>	<p>Supporting how communities, academics, and healthcare systems work together to produce meaningful changes in cancer prevention and early detection</p>	<p>Staci Young, PhD, MCW Department of Family Medicine</p> <p>The Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System/Center for Urban Population Health</p>
<p>Development of the Center for Sustainability, Health, and the Environment</p> <p>\$500,000 REAC-Initiated Investments</p> <p>2/1/2024-1/31/2025</p>	<p>Preparing future clinicians and researchers for a changing climate while ensuring ongoing support for the community MCW serves</p>	<p>Christa Wagner, PhD, MCW Institute for Health and Equity</p>





# HEALTH WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

AHW's Health Workforce Education and Development focus area aims to cultivate a diverse, skilled, and resilient health workforce tailored to meet Wisconsin's evolving needs. Through strategic recruitment, retention, and ongoing learning initiatives, these projects aim to enhance the purpose and well-being of health professionals across all disciplines.

## CLOSED PROJECTS

- Dismantling Cancer through the Community Health Worker Workforce
- Community and Healthcare System Collaboration to Reduce Health Disparities
- Mental Health Workforce Development Pilot Project
- 2023 WPHA-WALHDAB Annual Public Health Conference
- Reaching the Rural Population: Making a Difference Together
- Wisconsin Society of Anesthesiologists (WSA) 2023 Annual Meeting
- 2023 SCW Summer Meeting
- Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin: 1st Annual Advisory Committee Assembly
- Wisconsin EMS Workforce Development: Addressing Occupational Trauma with Resiliency Training
- Student Champions: Connecting Dementia Patients/Caregivers to Essential Community Resources
- Milwaukee Healthcare Workforce Initiative (MHWI)
- The Creative Care Institute for Dementia Care Specialists
- Building a Healthcare Workforce through Access and Equity
- Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association
- 2024 Health Literacy Collaborative Summit: Every State, Every Day, Every Way
- Health & Harmony
- Say It. Suicide.
- 2023 WPHA Public Health in Practice Conference
- Moving Communities Forward on Active Transportation
- Jackson County Pathways Community Hub
- Accelerated Pathways for Licensure of Transitioning Medics and Corpsmen
- Practitioners of Color Training and Internship Program
- Addressing Knowledge Gaps and Reducing Barriers in Substance Abuse Treatment for APRNs in Wisconsin
- Genetic Counseling Master of Science Program
- Investigating the Feasibility of a Health Equity-Aligned Early Medical School Admissions Program
- A Film-Based Curriculum to Teach Empathy and Cultural Competencies to Residents and Fellows
- A Pilot Trauma Resuscitation Intervention to Reduce Perceived Life Threat
- MCW Department of Surgery Leadership Development Program (CAPTAINS)
- 2023 Midwest TL1 Summit
- Transforming Healthcare through Relationship-Centered Communication Skills Training
- 2024 Milwaukee Vascular Symposium
- 2024 Solid Organ Transplant Symposium
- Froedtert and the Medical College of Wisconsin's Neurotrauma Symposium: Research Transforming Care
- MCW Micro-Credential Pilot: Health Equity
- Transforming How Health Professionals Identify and Support Non-paid Caregivers of Older Adults
- Annual State of Science Health Disparities Conference
- 13th Annual MCW Pancreatic Cancer Symposium
- Advances in Minimally Invasive General Surgery Symposium
- Rare Diseases and Rare Cancers in the Era of Systems Biology
- PMP Pals Meetup Co-hosted by Froedtert and the Medical College of Wisconsin

Find descriptions of each closed project with a summary of outcomes at [ahwendowment.org/fundedprojects](https://ahwendowment.org/fundedprojects)

# \$740,796 FUNDED IN FY24

## NEW INVESTMENTS

PROJECT NAME AND AWARD	PROJECT AIM	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS AND PRIMARY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION
<p>Compensated Work Therapy Core Career Training in Veterans with Disabilities: A Feasibility Study</p> <p>\$40,844 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Helping veterans obtain gainful employment by testing a Core Career Training program</p>	<p>Bertrand Berger, PhD, MCW Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine</p> <p>Marquette University</p>
<p>Txhawb: A Phone Line to Support Access to Healthcare for Central Wisconsin Hmong Communities</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Improving Hmong community health with a support phone line providing healthcare assistance and resources</p>	<p>Corina Jo Norrbom, MD, MCW Medical School Regional Campuses</p> <p>Hmong American Center, Inc.</p>
<p>Inclusive Health Training Expansion to All MCW Campuses</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Expanding MCW's Inclusive Health curriculum to provide better care for patients with intellectual disabilities</p>	<p>Erin Green, MD, MHPE, MCW Department of Emergency Medicine</p> <p>Special Olympics Wisconsin</p>
<p>Increasing BIPOC Representation in Healthcare Professions</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Increasing the number of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) with greater equity of representation in healthcare professions</p>	<p>Staci Young, PhD, MCW Department of Family Medicine</p> <p>MATC Foundation</p>
<p>Building Skills of Wisconsin Dietetic Professionals to Meet Evolving Needs of Nutrition-Insecure Clients</p> <p>\$49,993 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Promoting health and well-being to nutrition-insecure communities through enhanced dietetic professional education</p>	<p>Christopher Simenz, PhD, MCW Institute for Health and Equity Wisconsin Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics</p>
<p>Promoting Tailored Decision-Making Support for Persons with Disabilities: A PFW and MCW Partnership</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants 1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Expanding supported decision-making (SDM) education and clinical services for people with disabilities</p>	<p>Lindsay Nelson, PhD, MCW Department of Neurosurgery</p> <p>People First Wisconsin</p>
<p>MedEd 2.0: Developing Community-Based Medical School Training to Prevent Childhood Obesity</p> <p>\$49,984 2024 Community-Led Seed Grants 1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Advancing health equity for low-income youth in Wisconsin through a new medical nutrition education program</p>	<p>Stuart Wong, MD, Department of Medicine</p> <p>FoodRight, Inc.</p>

PROJECT NAME AND AWARD	PROJECT AIM	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS
Closing the Gap on Disparities in Maternal Health and Child and Adolescent Immunizations \$5,000 Community-Led Learning Event Support 2/29/2024-7/28/2024	Addressing disparities in maternal health and child/adolescent immunizations	Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality
Health & Harmony \$5,000 Community-Led Learning Event Support 2/12/2024-6/11/2024	Providing physicians with timely knowledge and tools relating to physician well-being	Wisconsin Medical Society
Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association \$5,000 Community-Led Learning Event Support 7/26/2023-11/25/2023	Exploring how health centers can innovate and evolve with a focus on patient experience	Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association
2024 WPHA-WALHDAB Annual Public Health Conference \$5,000 Community-Led Learning Event Support 3/22/2024-7/21-2024	Moving public health to the next level	Wisconsin Public Health Association
2023 WPHA Public Health in Practice Conference \$5,000 Community-Led Learning Event Support 8/31/2023-12/30/2023	Strengthening foundations for thriving communities in Wisconsin	Wisconsin Public Health Association
Say It. Suicide. \$5,000 Community-Led Learning Event Support 7/11/2023-12/10/2023	Building mental health support capacity for high-risk populations	Taylor County Health Department
2024 WAND Annual Conference \$5,000 Community-Led Learning Event Support 12/12/2023-7/11/2024	Elevating health promotion and disease prevention to reduce the risk of chronic disease development	Wisconsin Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (WAND)
Moving Communities Forward on Active Transportation \$4,466 Community-Led Learning Event Support 8/2/2023-1/1/2024	Advancing the health and safety of all Wisconsin communities through equitable access to sustainable transportation options	1000 Friends of Wisconsin
2024 WASH Best Practices Huddle Up \$4,999 Community-Led Learning Event Support 2/2/2024-7/1/2024	Providing education on quality standards for recovery housing for individuals with substance use disorders	WASH Community Inc

<p>2024 Health Literacy Collaborative Summit: Every State, Every Day, Every Way</p> <p>\$5,000 Community-Led Learning Event Support</p> <p>12/19/2023-6/18/2024</p>	<p>Providing health professionals with actionable health literacy resources and education</p>	<p>Wisconsin Health Literacy</p>
<p>Concussion Guidance and Education Program</p> <p>\$44,775 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Exploring a program to expand up-to-date concussion care through education for primary care and pediatric providers</p>	<p>Jennifer Apps, PhD, MCW Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine</p>
<p>Mitigating Impacts of Healthcare Delivery on Climate and Community: Greening the OR at Froedtert &amp; MCW</p> <p>\$44,650 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Establishing an environmentally friendly implementation kit to reduce harmful healthcare-related emissions</p>	<p>Christa Wagner, PhD, MCW Institute for Health and Equity</p>
<p>Froedtert &amp; MCW Ignite: An Outreach Program to Spark Interest in Health Equity Biomedical Careers</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Launching Froedtert &amp; MCW Ignite to address locoregional health inequities through educational opportunities</p>	<p>Malika Siker, MD, MCW Department of Radiation Oncology</p>
<p>Understanding Barriers and Facilitators to Health Risk Communication Cannabinoid Use in Pregnancy</p> <p>\$49,833 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Addressing barriers to improving health risk communication relating to cannabinoid use during pregnancy</p>	<p>Annie Friedrich, PhD, MCW Institute for Health and Equity</p>
<p>Increasing Equitable Access to Fertility Preservation Care in AYAs with a New Cancer Diagnosis</p> <p>\$41,587 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Providing hope and equitable opportunities for complete fertility preservation procedures</p>	<p>Stephanie Gunderson, MD, MCW Department of Obstetrics &amp; Gynecology</p>
<p>Advancing Rural Health Equity and Civic Health through Medical Student Community Engagement</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-2/28/2025</p>	<p>Addressing rural health disparities in central Wisconsin through MCW student engagement in rural communities</p>	<p>Corina Jo Norrbom, MD, MCW Medical School Regional Campuses</p>
<p>Understanding Medical Professional Identity and Character Development Symposium (3rd Annual)</p> <p>\$5,000 MCW-Led Learning Event Support</p> <p>6/17/2024-11/16/2024</p>	<p>Advancing professional identity and character formation in health professions to improve healthcare in Wisconsin</p>	<p>Adina Kalet, MD, MPH, MCW Kern Institute for the Transformation of Medical Education</p>
<p>The Harvest: Reflecting on the Hmong Experience to Build Cultural Humility</p> <p>\$5,000 MCW-Led Learning Event Support</p> <p>4/24/2024-9/19/2024</p>	<p>Deepening understanding of the Hmong culture among medical students, faculty, and the future medical workforce</p>	<p>Amy Prunuske, PhD, MCW Department of Regional Campuses</p>

PROJECT NAME AND AWARD	PROJECT AIM	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS
<p>Midwest Neuropsychology Conference</p> <p>\$5,000 MCW-Led Learning Event Support</p> <p>12/12/2023-7/11/2024</p>	<p>Addressing the latest advancements and challenges in the field of neuropsychology</p>	<p>Alissa Butts, PhD, ABPP, MCW Department of Neurology</p>
<p>Transforming How Health Professionals Identify and Support Non-Paid Caregivers of Older Adults</p> <p>\$5,000 MCW-Led Learning Event Support</p> <p>8/2/2023-1/1/2024</p>	<p>Increasing awareness of the need to educate and support non-paid caregivers of Wisconsin's aging population</p>	<p>Leslie Ruffalo, PhD, MS, MCW Department of Family Medicine</p>
<p>Building Capacity for Suicide Prevention in Milwaukee County</p> <p>\$5,000 MCW-Led Learning Event Support</p> <p>2/29/2024-11/28/2024</p>	<p>Sharing evidence-based suicide prevention practices for Milwaukee County</p>	<p>Sara Kohlbeck, PhD, MPH, MCW Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine</p>
<p>13th Annual MCW Pancreatic Cancer Symposium</p> <p>\$5,000 MCW-Led Learning Event Support</p> <p>12/1/2023-3/31/2024</p>	<p>Providing updates and education on timely advancements in pancreatic cancer research and treatment</p>	<p>Callisia Clarke, MD, MCW Department of Surgery</p>
<p>2024 Solid Organ Transplant Symposium</p> <p>\$5,000 MCW-Led Learning Event Support</p> <p>1/22/2024-6/21/2024</p>	<p>Highlighting updates and innovations in pancreas and kidney transplantation and liver disease management</p>	<p>Matthew Cooper, MD, MCW Department of Surgery</p>
<p>Froedtert and the Medical College of Wisconsin's Neurotrauma Symposium: Research Transforming Care</p> <p>\$5,000 MCW-Led Learning Event Support</p> <p>8/2/2023-12/1/2023</p>	<p>Providing timely education on neurotrauma and multidisciplinary collaboration</p>	<p>Michael McCrea, PhD, ABPP, MCW Department of Surgery</p>
<p>2024 Milwaukee Vascular Symposium</p> <p>\$5,000 MCW-Led Learning Event Support</p> <p>2/2/2024-6/1/2024</p>	<p>Addressing new developments in vascular interventions</p>	<p>Peter Rossi, MD, FACS, DFSVS, MCW Department of Surgery</p>
<p>Advances in Minimally Invasive General Surgery Symposium</p> <p>\$5,000 MCW-Led Learning Event Support</p> <p>7/11/2023-12/10/2023</p>	<p>Addressing the future of diagnostic and treatment approaches for minimally invasive general surgery</p>	<p>Andrew Kastenmeier, MD, MCW Department of Surgery</p>
<p>Annual State of Science Health Disparities Conference</p> <p>\$5,000 MCW-Led Learning Event Support</p> <p>7/11/2023-1/10/2024</p>	<p>Exploring structural inequality and health outcomes</p>	<p>Rebekah Walker, PhD, MCW Center for Advancing Population Science (CAPS)</p>
<p>PMP Pals Meetup Co-Hosted by Froedtert and the Medical College of Wisconsin</p> <p>\$4,665 MCW-Led Learning Event Support</p> <p>7/26/2023-12/25/2023</p>	<p>Helping oncology professionals improve and enrich patients' lives through medical advances, wellness, and quality of life</p>	<p>Alexandra Istl, MD, MPH, MCW Department of Surgery</p>

PROJECT NAME AND AWARD	PROJECT AIM	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS
Great Lakes Palliative Care Conference \$5,000 MCW-Led Learning Event Support 10/17/2023-7/16/2024	Advancing the practice of hospice and palliative medicine	Renee Foutz, MD, MCW Department of Medicine
Rare Diseases and Rare Cancers in the Era of Systems Biology \$5,000 MCW-Led Learning Event Support 8/25/2023-12/24/2023	Advancing genetic insights and collaboration in rare disease treatment	Angela Mathison, PhD, MCW Department of Surgery

## Learning Event Support

With Learning Event Support funding, AHW seeks to advance Wisconsin's health workforce by supporting events that build knowledge, skills, and connections. These events equip current and future health professionals with the tools to improve health outcomes across Wisconsin communities.

- 24 Learning Events supported by AHW funds in FY24
- \$119,130 Total Investment in FY24





# HEALTH-FOCUSED RESEARCH

AHW's Health-Focused Research focus area prioritizes funding visionary projects aligned with Wisconsin's health needs. We aim to enhance the dissemination and application of new knowledge while building and sustaining a robust pipeline of trained investigators.

## CLOSED PROJECTS

- Relax and Breathe Easy: Quantifying the Health Value of Quality Urban Green Space
- Metcalfe Park Arts and Health Initiative
- PsychChild
- Developing Novel Programs in a Joint Biomedical Engineering Department
- Cognitive Neuroscience Research Program
- Establishing Wisconsin's First Cancer Precision Medicine Simulation Unit
- Engineering Platelets to Increase Coagulability and Effectiveness of Platelet Transfusions in Resuscitation in Bleeding Patients
- Circulating Agouti-Related Peptide and Metabolic Adaptation to Weight Loss
- Defining Intraoperative Turbulence Using a Deep Learning Approach
- Drugs Targeting NAADP Action to Combat Neurodegeneration
- Commercialize QRF+ Predictive Mental Health Crisis Intervention Tool for Trauma and Substance Abuse
- Determining the Contribution of Fibrinolysis to Blood Loss in Severe Hemorrhage Using RNA Therapy
- Novel Tail Domain MYH6 Gene Variants in Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome (HLHS) and Cardiomyopathy
- Inpatient Stroke Database for Evaluation of Equity in Process and Outcome (ISDEEPO)
- Structural Discrimination and Health Outcomes in Milwaukee at the Community and Individual Levels
- Robust Estimators for Missing Covariate Parameters for Right-Censored Data
- Targeting Inflammation in Heart Failure with Reduced Ejection Fraction with Probiotics
- Macrophage Mitochondrial ROS Disrupt Cholesterol Metabolism During Atherosclerosis
- Assessing Breast Cancer Risk Prior to Gender-Affirming Chest Masculinization Surgery
- Post-acute Sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 Infection (PASC) in Cancer
- Study of Pre-analytical Effects on Breast Cancer Biomarkers
- Translational Dissection of Cav3.2iPA Molecule Engagement in Human iPSC-Derived Sensory Neurons
- Chronic Sleep Restriction as a Cause of Age-Related Bone Disease
- Intensive Postpartum Antihypertensive Treatment to Improve Women's Cardiovascular Health
- Bridging the Gap in Translational Vascular Research
- Regulation of the Small GTPase Prenylome by SmgGDS During Neuronal Development
- Molecular Pathogenesis of Common Variable Immunodeficiency
- Plasma Factors in Patients with Sickle Cell Disease Sensitize Nociceptors to Drive Pain
- Iyengar Yoga as a Probe of Prolonged Grief Disorder Neurobiology
- Enhancing Neural Plasticity for Recovery from Aphasia
- A Randomized Controlled Trial of a Post-Discharge Team to Improve Care of Gun Violence Survivors
- Development of a Compliant and Biomimetic Small Vascular Graft with Human Amnion Membrane
- Building the Black American Neurodegenerative Discovery-Together Initiative to Improve Healthy Minds
- Investigating a New Model of Psychiatric Crisis Care to Improve Mental Health Equity and Outcomes<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Investigating a New Model of Psychiatric Crisis Care to Improve Mental Health Equity and Outcomes* received funding approval and was initiated, but project work was not completed. Approved funds in the amount of \$158,416.67 were returned to the Endowment.

Find descriptions of each closed project with a summary of outcomes at [ahwendowment.org/fundedprojects](http://ahwendowment.org/fundedprojects)

# \$6.3 MILLION FUNDED IN FY24

## NEW INVESTMENTS

PROJECT NAME AND AWARD	PROJECT AIM	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS AND PRIMARY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION
<p>Role of 3D Chromatin Architecture in Breast Cancer Endocrine Resistance</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Exploring new therapeutic strategies to treat breast cancer</p>	<p>Victor Jin, PhD, MCW Institute for Health and Equity</p>
<p>Understanding Relationships Between Colleges, Local Alcohol Policies, Drinking, and Health Outcomes</p> <p>\$49,998 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Reducing underage and binge drinking and related harms</p>	<p>Felice Borisy-Rudin, JD, PhD, MCW Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology</p>
<p>Diagnostic and Treatment Options for Patients with High-Risk Cutaneous Squamous Cell Carcinoma</p> <p>\$49,982 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Optimizing the care of patients with high-risk squamous cell carcinoma</p>	<p>Melanie Clark, MD, MCW Department of Dermatology</p>
<p>Identifying LDL Particles as a Novel Functional Carrier for Coagulation Factor VIII in Hemophilia A</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Elucidating an important role of LDL in improving hemostasis</p>	<p>Ze Zheng, PhD, MCW Department of Medicine</p>
<p>Treatments Targeting Phonological Short-Term Memory to Improve Language Health after Stroke</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Improving language health in stroke survivors with aphasia</p>	<p>Priyanka Shah-Basak, PhD, MCW Department of Neurology</p>
<p>Developing a Novel Gallium Compound for the Treatment of Metastatic Breast Cancer</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Developing novel therapies for the treatment of breast cancer brain metastases</p>	<p>Mona Al-Gizawiy, PhD, MCW Department of Biophysics</p>
<p>Recovering after Denial: Evaluating Eligibility Criteria for the Crime Victims Compensation Program</p> <p>\$49,937 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Helping the Crime Victims Compensation program maximize its support of survivors</p>	<p>Mary Schroeder, MD, MCW Department of Surgery</p>
<p>Development of a Dual Nav1.7 and Nav1.8 Blocking Peptide Aptamer for Sensory Neuron Analgesia</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Developing a new low-cost, effective, safe, and flexible pain therapy approach</p>	<p>Hongwei Yu, MD, MCW Department of Anesthesiology</p>

PROJECT NAME AND AWARD	PROJECT AIM	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS
<p>Automating Myocardial Infarction Diagnosis by ECGs with VERITAS Software and Hybrid Learning</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Improving automated acute myocardial infarction diagnosis to save lives</p>	<p>Rodney Sparapani, PhD, MCW Institute for Health and Equity</p>
<p>Biofabrication of Small Vascular Graft with Human Amniotic Membrane</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Improving vascular grafts used in reconstructive surgeries</p>	<p>Bo Wang, PhD, MCW Department of Biomedical Engineering</p>
<p>siRNA Lipid Nanoparticle Delivery for Liver Defatting During Normothermic Machine Perfusion</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Enhancing the viability of fatty donor livers for transplantation</p>	<p>Joohyun Kim, MD, PhD, MCW Department of Surgery</p>
<p>Necrotizing Enterocolitis from Microbial Hydrogen Sulfide Intoxication</p> <p>\$49,931 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Exploring causes of and treatments for "dead bowel" in premature births</p>	<p>Rodney Willoughby, MD, MCW Department of Pediatrics</p>
<p>Characterizing the Path to Surgery for Uninsured Patients in Milwaukee</p> <p>\$49,823 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Improving pathways to surgery for uninsured patients in Milwaukee</p>	<p>Katie Iverson, MD, MPH, MCW Department of Surgery</p>
<p>Personalizing Emergency Surgery in Wisconsin Cancer Patients: A Data Driven Approach</p> <p>\$47,595 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Establishing a patient-centered care framework for cancer patients with acute surgical conditions</p>	<p>Patrick Murphy, MD, MCW Department of Surgery</p>
<p>Genetic Influence on Metabolic Health after Chronic Dietary PFAS Exposure</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Determining how genetic makeup impacts PFAS exposure across endocrine systems</p>	<p>Anne Kwitek, PhD, MCW Department of Physiology</p>
<p>Assessing Post-Operative Cognitive Dysfunction in the Elderly</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Determining the effects of anesthesia on post-operative cognitive dysfunction in the elderly</p>	<p>Adam Greenberg, PhD, MCW Department of Biomedical Engineering</p>
<p>Bringing Wellness Home: QI Evaluation of An Urban Community Mental Health Education Project</p> <p>\$47,109 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Promoting trauma-informed wellness strategies within a challenged urban community</p>	<p>Matthew Jandrisevits, PhD, MCW Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine</p>

<p>The Role of Modified HDL in Atherogenesis</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Identifying new strategies for treating heart disease</p>	<p>Daisy Sahoo, PhD, MCW Department of Medicine</p>
<p>Chromatin Remodeling Mediated by Insulin Signaling: The Role of FoxK Factors</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Investigating chromatin remodeling events driving gene regulation of glucose production</p>	<p>Lisa Cirillo, PhD, MCW Department of Cell Biology, Neurobiology and Anatomy</p>
<p>Data-Driven Computational Modeling of Cellular Response in CART Therapy</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Defining and developing optimal chimeric antigen receptor T cell (CART) products</p>	<p>Ranjan Dash, PhD, MCW Department of Biomedical Engineering</p>
<p>Endothelial Senescence in Impairment of Lung Regeneration in Obesity</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Exploring the potential of an extracellular vesicle-based strategy for obese patients with lung disease</p>	<p>Akiko Mammoto, MD, PhD, MCW Department of Pediatrics</p>
<p>The Role of Tip60 in Cardiac Calcium Signaling and Mitochondria Function</p> <p>\$49,757 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-9/30/2024</p>	<p>Exploring a new treatment for ischemic heart disease</p>	<p>Xinrui Wang, PhD, MCW Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology</p>
<p>Characterization of Response to Gallium Maltolate in Treatment-Resistant Glioblastoma</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Improving care for patients with glioblastoma</p>	<p>Mona Al-Gizawiy, PhD, MCW Department of Biophysics</p>
<p>Implementation of Genomic Testing in Neonatal Intensive Care Units throughout Wisconsin</p> <p>\$49,976 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Using genetic testing to improve diagnoses and care for critically ill newborns in Wisconsin</p>	<p>Jessica Scott Schwoerer, MD, MCW Department of Pediatrics</p>
<p>Exploring First-to-Arrive Scene Transport for Penetrating Thoracoabdominal Injuries in Milwaukee</p> <p>\$49,372 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Decreasing prehospital time in patients with penetrating thoracoabdominal injuries</p>	<p>Daniel Holena, MD, MCW Department of Surgery</p>
<p>Pharmacokinetics of Piperacillin/Tazobactam in Pediatric Obesity</p> <p>\$12,575 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Optimizing antibiotic dosing in the growing obese child patient population</p>	<p>Frank Zhu, MD, MCW Department of Pediatrics</p>

PROJECT NAME AND AWARD	PROJECT AIM	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS
<p>Targeting Epidermal TRPV4 to Alleviate Neuropathy following Cancer Chemotherapy Treatment</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Reducing pain associated with cancer chemotherapy treatments</p>	<p>Olena Isaeva, PhD, MCW Department of Cell Biology, Neurobiology and Anatomy</p>
<p>Structural and Functional Imaging Correlates of Cognitive Phenotypes in Epilepsy</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Improving the lives of people with epilepsy by better understanding the interplay between cognitive functioning and structural/functional neuroimaging biomarkers</p>	<p>Sara Swanson, PhD, MCW Department of Neurology</p>
<p>Let's Hash This Out: The Case for Rapid THC Testing to Reduce ED Resource Utilization</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-6/30/2025</p>	<p>Decreasing the need for invasive testing for THC ingestion in children</p>	<p>Amanda Dupont, DO, MCW Department of Pediatrics</p>
<p>Improving Access to Medication for Opioid Use Disorder through Transdisciplinary Collaboration</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Expanding and enhancing primary care-based treatment for opioid use disorder</p>	<p>Jennifer Hernandez-Meier, PhD, MCW Department of Emergency Medicine</p>
<p>Restoration of Vision in the Blind through Reprogramming of the Neural Retina</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Developing a novel and innovative sight-restoration therapy</p>	<p>Daniel Lipinski, PhD, MCW Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences</p>
<p>Enhancing Suicide Review in Wisconsin: Elevating Data and Collaboration for Prevention</p> <p>\$46,254 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Establishing a sustainable infrastructure for suicide review in Wisconsin</p>	<p>Sara Kohlbeck, PhD, MCW Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine</p>
<p>A Novel in Vivo Model for Investigating Alternatively Activated Rod-Shaped Microglia</p> <p>\$49,992 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Mitigating neuropathological disorders</p>	<p>Pui-Ying Lam, PhD, MCW Department of Cell Biology, Neurobiology and Anatomy</p>
<p>Infection Prophylaxis in Patients with Multiple Myeloma Receiving Bispecific Antibody Therapy</p> <p>\$46,067 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Elevating the standard of care for multiple myeloma patients</p>	<p>Meera Mohan, MD, MCW Department of Medicine</p>

<p>Identifying Long-Term Care Deserts in Wisconsin</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW-Led Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Assessing socio-spatial disparities in long-term care access across Wisconsin</p>	<p>Wei Xu, PhD, MCW Institute for Health and Equity</p>
<p>Improving Pancreatic Beta-Cell Differentiation and Maturation through Epigenetic Modulation</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW Post-Doctoral Researcher Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Enhancing diabetes therapies</p>	<p>Joshua Nord, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, MCW Department of Biochemistry</p>
<p>Role of Alzheimer's Disease-Associated Genes in Neuronal Mitochondrial Homeostasis: An in Vivo Study</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW Post-Doctoral Researcher Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Exploring genetic risk factors associated with Alzheimer's disease</p>	<p>Swapnil Waghmare, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, MCW Department of Cell Biology, Neurobiology and Anatomy</p>
<p>BMP-Dependent GATA3-TFAP2A-WNT Signaling Mechanisms Regulating Human Amnion Formation</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW Post-Doctoral Researcher Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Improving the detection and treatment of amnion-related pregnancy complications in Wisconsin</p>	<p>Nikola Sekulovski, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, MCW Department of Cell Biology, Neurobiology and Anatomy</p>
<p>Thrombophilia Promotes the Development of Bronchus-Associated Lymphoid Tissue</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW Post-Doctoral Researcher Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Exploring novel therapeutic interventions for multiple chronic respiratory diseases</p>	<p>Michelle Castillo, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, MCW Department of Pathology</p>
<p>Role of Mitochondrial ATP Synthase <math>\epsilon</math> Subunit, ATP5E, in Pancreatic Cancer</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW Post-Doctoral Researcher Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Exploring novel diagnostic methods and therapies for pancreatic cancer</p>	<p>Jagadeesh Uppala, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, Department of Biochemistry</p>
<p>Regulation of the Prenylation, Trafficking, and Activity of KRas and Rac1 by RabL3 in Breast Cancer</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW Post-Doctoral Researcher Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Developing new therapeutics to treat breast cancer</p>	<p>Olivia Koehn, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, MCW Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology</p>
<p>The Role of G3BP1 in Cancer Progression and Chemoresistance</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW Post-Doctoral Researcher Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Exploring possible links between environmental toxins and cancer</p>	<p>Anupama Nair, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, MCW Department of Obstetrics &amp; Gynecology</p>
<p>Multi-omic Analyses of Epigenetic Drivers of Immunotherapy Resistance in Small Cell Lung Cancer</p> <p>\$49,839 2024 MCW Post-Doctoral Researcher Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Exploring new treatments to alleviate the burden of lung cancer</p>	<p>Sana Parveen, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, MCW Department of Medicine</p>

PROJECT NAME AND AWARD	PROJECT AIM	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS
<p>Therapeutic Targeting of the Genome Guardian SIRTuins in Metastatic Prostate Cancer</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW Post-Doctoral Researcher Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Developing new treatment options for patients with advanced prostate cancer</p>	<p>Subhajt Giri, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, MCW Department of Pathology</p>
<p>Identification of Novel Therapeutic Targets of RhoBTB1-Cullin 3 Pathway in Cardiovascular Disease</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW Post-Doctoral Researcher Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Assessing the function of RhoBTB1 binding proteins as regulators of vascular function and blood pressure</p>	<p>Gaurav Kumar, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, MCW Department of Physiology</p>
<p>Defining Mechanisms of Glia-Mediated Synapse Formation to Develop Future Retinal Repair Therapies</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW Post-Doctoral Researcher Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Supporting the development of early intervention therapies to prevent blindness</p>	<p>Emily Welby, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, MCW Department of Cell Biology, Neurobiology and Anatomy</p>
<p>Exploring the Oncogenic Mechanisms of NAT10 in Ovarian Cancer</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW Post-Doctoral Researcher Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Improving detection, treatments, and outcomes for patients with ovarian cancer</p>	<p>Sonam Mittal, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, MCW Department of Obstetrics &amp; Gynecology</p>
<p>Mapping Motor Functions to Brain Networks in Patients with Brain Tumors from Diagnosis through Recovery</p> <p>\$50,000 2024 MCW Post-Doctoral Researcher Seed Grants</p> <p>1/1/2024-12/31/2024</p>	<p>Enhancing recovery from brain tumor surgery</p>	<p>Timothy Boerger, Postdoctoral Researcher, MCW Department of Neurosurgery</p>
<p>The Role of Myofibroblast CCN3 in Pathological Cardiac Remodeling</p> <p>\$300,000 REAC-Initiated Investments</p> <p>7/1/2023-6/30/2026</p>	<p>Investigating the role of protein CCN3 in the heart</p>	<p>Caitlin O'Meara, PhD, MCW Department of Physiology</p>
<p>Accelerating Precision Oncology Discovery with an Integrated Cancer Data Resource</p> <p>\$300,000 REAC-Initiated Investments</p> <p>10/1/2023-9/30/2025</p>	<p>Establishing the Integrated Cancer Data Resource to support precision oncology efforts</p>	<p>Gustavo W. Leone, PhD, MCW Cancer Center</p>
<p>RNA-Binding Proteins in Human Direct Cardiac Reprogramming</p> <p>\$800,000 REAC-Initiated Investments</p> <p>7/1/2023-6/30/2026</p>	<p>Improving understanding of how to convert other cells into beating heart muscle cells for the treatment of heart failure after a heart attack</p>	<p>Ziqing Liu, PhD, MCW Physiology</p>

<p>A Data Science-Enhanced Genomic Program for Advancing the Health of Our Wisconsin Children</p> <p>\$2,279,178 REAC-Initiated Investments</p> <p>2/1/2024-1/31/2028</p>	<p>Creating a program dedicated to developing new methods for diagnosing and treating genomic diseases that act through altering chromatin structure</p>	<p>Raul A. Urrutia, MD, MCW Department of Surgery</p>
<p>The Impact of Time Restricted Feeding on Metabolic Pathology in Chronic Kidney Disease<sup>2</sup></p> <p>\$300,000 REAC-Initiated Investments</p> <p>10/1/2023-6/30/2024</p>	<p>Exploring a cost-effective approach to reduce morbidity and mortality of chronic kidney disease</p>	<p>Allison Kriegel, PhD, MCW Department of Physiology</p>

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<sup>2</sup> *The Impact of Time Restricted Feeding on Metabolic Pathology in Chronic Kidney Disease* received funding approval and was initiated, but project work was not completed. Approved funds in the amount of \$243,571.92 were returned to the Endowment.

# COALITIONS TACKLING COMPLEX HEALTH CHALLENGES



Representatives from 10 AHW-funded coalitions focused on improving mental and behavioral health in their communities attended the Advancing Health for ALL Wisconsin Conference at Lambeau Field on June 20-21 to share experiences and lessons learned from their participation in the Advancing Behavioral Health initiative. © Adam Shea Photography

## ADVANCING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

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Culminating an eight-year, \$20 million investment in 10 community-based coalitions devoted to addressing the unique mental and behavioral health challenges in their areas of the state, lessons learned from AHW's Advancing Behavioral Health (ABH) initiative have been documented in a resource entitled, *Behavioral Health Strategy Guide*.

The work captured in the Strategy Guide reflects a major coordinated effort to understand the mental and behavioral health issues affecting communities statewide, along with actionable solutions to address them. Participating coalitions represented a diverse cross-section of Wisconsin, serving rural, urban, suburban, and tribal populations.

The Behavioral Health Strategy Guide is available at [www.mcw.edu/departments/psychiatry-and-behavioral-medicine/advancing-behavioral-health-initiative](http://www.mcw.edu/departments/psychiatry-and-behavioral-medicine/advancing-behavioral-health-initiative).

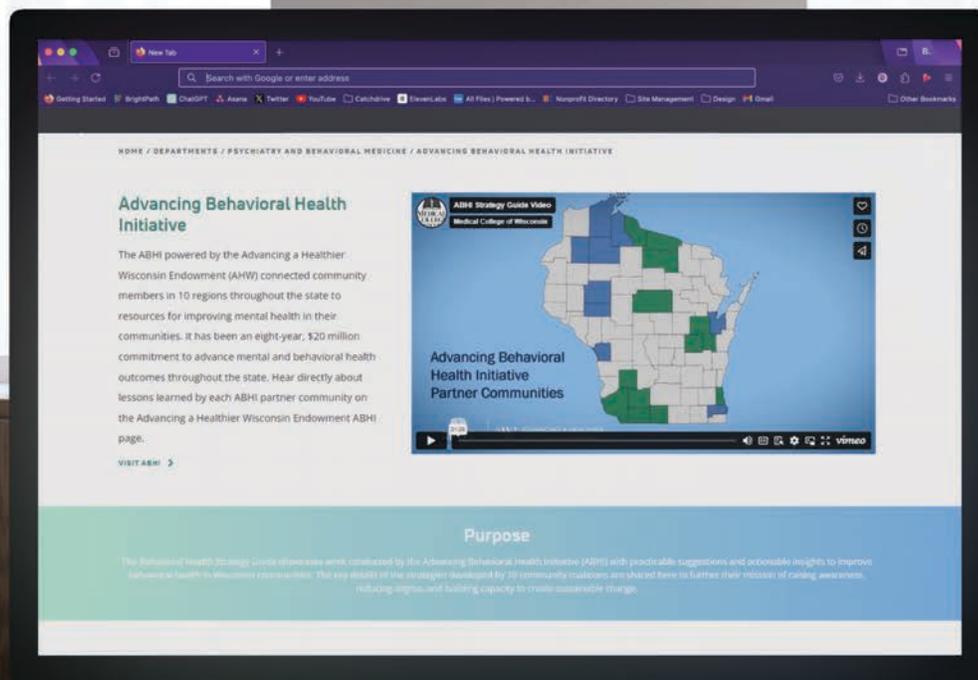
In each of the 10 regions across Wisconsin, several unique strategies were developed and implemented to address mental health in those communities. The focus of the community coalition work varied based on local needs. Topics addressed include:

- Adverse childhood experiences
- School-based mental health
- Youth Risk Behavior Survey data reporting
- Online listings of local mental health resources
- Crisis safety plans for law enforcement use during mental health calls
- Mental health first aid training for workplaces, faith-based organizations, and educators
- Behavioral health evaluations in children ages birth to five
- Social-emotional learning

The goal of disseminating this information is to allow other mental health advocates to adapt and carry out the strategies for their own use.

ABH coalition members also attended AHW's Advancing Health for ALL Wisconsin Conference, where they shared the takeaways from their projects with attendees and held their final of 38 learning community gatherings, which have taken place throughout the eight-year project in various locations throughout the state.

AHW's Childhood Behavioral Health Landmark Initiative aims to build upon the lessons learned from the groundbreaking ABH project.



The online **Behavioral Health Strategy Guide** shares strategies and lessons from 10 communities that participated in AHW's eight-year, \$20 million Advancing Behavioral Health initiative.

## COMMUNITY AND CANCER SCIENCE NETWORK

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In 2021, AHW awarded a planning grant to support a coalition of cancer-focused organizations and stakeholders to develop and implement a cancer screening protocol to support increased screening, detection, and prevention in Wisconsin. The project, entitled *Dismantling Cancer through the Community Health Worker Workforce*, was part of the Community and Cancer Science Network's (CCSN's) broad collaborative focused on creating equitable, scalable, and effective solutions to eliminate cancer disparities and achieve health equity in Wisconsin. CCSN's ongoing work includes three complex initiatives, each focused on building the knowledge, partnerships, and strategies needed to reduce breast and lung cancer disparities in Wisconsin: **Research and Community Scholars Curriculum**; **Collaborative Work Groups**; and **Mammographic Quality**.

Among the outcomes of the health workforce project, which ended in March 2024, were the staffing, relationship building with community champions, data collection, and the identification of specific counties and tribal areas for focused outreach. The project also saw the launch of communities of practice for project facilitators and evaluators in each community. The project also attracted \$260,000 in matched and in-kind funding to support its efforts.

With new funding from AHW in 2024, CCSN embarked on a three-year phase-two transdisciplinary implementation project focused on multiple levels of impact in four communities: Milwaukee, Racine, Walworth, and the Lac du Flambeau tribal area. The locally relevant and culturally grounded approaches will increase awareness of cancer risks, prevention, and screening; improve access to cancer prevention and early detection efforts; and foster equitable systems. Participating partners include the University of Wisconsin Center for Urban Population Health, Wisconsin Women's Health Foundation, YMCA of Southeastern Wisconsin, Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc., Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin, Progressive Community Health Centers, and Evaluation Plus.

*The Community and Cancer Science Network is a broad collaborative, solely funded by AHW, committed to reducing breast and lung cancer disparities in Wisconsin.*



# PROGRAMMING

“The goal is to increase the Black health workforce, but also to elevate all underrepresented groups in the workforce.”

**UGWUJI MADUEKWE, MD, MPH,  
ASSOCIATE DEAN AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
ADVANCING A HEALTHIER WISCONSIN  
ENDOWMENT**

In addition to grant funding, AHW develops and delivers resources that add value to our partners, building capacity within Wisconsin’s health ecosystem and extending the impact of our investments to maximize opportunities for people and communities throughout the state to thrive.

We provide technical assistance to grant recipients to increase their efficiency and effectiveness, and we fund, organize, and support learning events designed to share expertise and experience among health-focused stakeholders across Wisconsin.

## EMPOWERING DIVERSITY IN WISCONSIN’S HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE: BLACK MEN IN WHITE COATS

In spring 2024, AHW hosted two impactful events to enhance diversity and address racial disparities in Wisconsin healthcare, as part of the national Black Men in White Coats campaign. This initiative, which aims to counter the decline in Black male medical school applicants, works with medical schools across the country to raise awareness and boost representation. AHW organized the events in collaboration with community partners, including Milwaukee Fellows, Greater Milwaukee Urban League, and Black and Latino Male Achievement.

The first event, held on Feb. 24, 2024, at the Marcus Performing Arts Center, was a screening of the Black Men in White Coats documentary. The film highlighted the systemic barriers that Black men face in entering the medical field. Following the screening, a discussion led by medical professionals and students provided a platform to explore these challenges further and discuss strategies to overcome them.

The second event, the Black Men in White Coats Youth Summit: Milwaukee, took place on May 4, 2024, at Golda Meier High School. The summit brought together nearly 150 students, parents, healthcare leaders, and educators to inspire Black youth to pursue medical careers. The event featured powerful talks from respected healthcare leaders, interactive workshops led by medical professionals, and panel discussions offering valuable insights to parents and caregivers on supporting their children’s aspirations.

The hands-on workshops allowed students to gain practical experience in various medical fields, boosting their confidence and helping them envision careers in medicine.

By providing an inclusive and supportive environment, the Black Men in White Coats Youth Summit: Milwaukee not only inspired the next generation of healthcare professionals but also laid the foundation for a more diverse and equitable healthcare workforce in Wisconsin.



# AHW RESOURCES



AHW offers a range of valuable resources that empower our partners to maximize their impact on Wisconsin's health landscape.

From connecting projects with skilled professionals to providing strategic guidance and fostering collaboration, our resources are designed to build capacity, support innovation, and extend the reach of our investments. These initiatives ensure that our partners are equipped with the tools and expertise they need to drive meaningful change and improve health outcomes across the state.

## EMPOWERING COMMUNITY HEALTH INITIATIVES: AHW TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDER (TAP) PROGRAM

The AHW Technical Assistance Provider (TAP) Program offers vital support to community-based health improvement projects by connecting AHW-funded teams with seasoned consultants. These consultants bring specialized expertise to help grantees address challenges, develop strategic solutions, and enhance their project's impact.

By providing up to 20 hours of TAP services annually at no additional cost, AHW ensures that its partners can access the necessary resources to drive meaningful health outcomes across Wisconsin. This program empowers grantees to maximize their project's potential, fostering sustainability and long-term success.

“Through AHW’s Technical Assistance Provider Program, we have worked with some incredible consultants that have helped us create strategic plans and do other things that have helped make our work more sustainable.”

**HOLLIE WHITE**  
**PROJECT COORDINATOR**  
**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES GROUP**

## CONNECTING WISCONSIN NONPROFITS WITH EXPERT SUPPORT: CATCHAFIRE

Catchafire is an innovative platform that connects nonprofits with skilled volunteers who offer expertise in various fields such as marketing, IT, finance, design, and more. By partnering with Catchafire, AHW-funded projects, local health departments, and health-focused nonprofits in Wisconsin can quickly access professional support tailored to their specific needs. Within minutes, organizations can post projects and be matched with volunteers ready to contribute their skills to meaningful causes, enhancing the capacity and impact of these nonprofits.

The benefits of Catchafire extend beyond just project-based support. Organizations gain unlimited access to nonprofit experts who offer coaching, professional development, and one-on-one consultations, helping them navigate challenges and grow sustainably. This comprehensive support system empowers nonprofits to efficiently manage their operations, develop strategic solutions, and ultimately, better serve their communities. Catchafire's network of nearly 90,000 volunteers has proven to be a transformative resource, enabling Wisconsin's nonprofits to make a lasting positive impact on health and well-being across the state.

### Catchafire Impact

- **2,022** hours donated in FY24
- **\$438,912** savings to AHW-supported organizations in FY24
- **136** completed Catchafire projects in FY24
- More than **\$1.2 million** in savings to AHW-supported organizations to date



# PUBLIC STEWARDSHIP

Since 2004, AHW has been provided the extraordinary opportunity and responsibility to steward a generous financial gift on behalf of the people of Wisconsin. Today, we continue to advance our mission and purpose through effective oversight and management.

## OVERSIGHT

AHW is an entity within the Medical College of Wisconsin's (MCW's) School of Medicine. AHW's operations are led by an MCW faculty member, who also serves as a senior associate dean in the MCW School of Medicine and reports to the dean of the School of Medicine. The director provides oversight and day-to-day direction for AHW staff. Governance and oversight of AHW is provided by three entities: The MCW Consortium on Public and Community Health, the AHW Research and Education Advisory Committee, and the MCW Board of Trustees.

The MCW Consortium on Public and Community Health (Consortium) was formed in 2002 as a non-stock, nonprofit corporation whose purpose is to fulfill the obligations of the Public and Community Health Oversight and Advisory Committee as described in the March 2000 Order of the Insurance Commissioner of the State of Wisconsin. The Consortium provides oversight for AHW's investments in support of community and public health partnerships and projects and serves in an advisory capacity for investments in research and education. The Consortium conducts itself in accordance with its bylaws and Wisconsin Open Meetings and Public Records laws.



**Jesse Ehrenfeld, MD, MPH**  
Senior Associate Dean and Director  
Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin  
Endowment  
Professor, Anesthesiology  
Medical College of Wisconsin



**Elizabeth Giese, RN, MSPH**  
Health Officer/Director  
Eau Claire City/County Health  
Department  
(Stepped down from  
Consortium in December 2023)



**Stephanie Harrison, MA**  
Chief Executive Officer, Wisconsin  
Primary Health Care Association



**Joseph E. Kerschner, MD**  
Provost and Executive Vice President  
Dean, School of Medicine  
Medical College of Wisconsin



**Catherine Kolkmeier, MS**  
Executive Director  
La Crosse Medical Health  
Science Consortium  
(Joined Consortium in January  
2024)



**Ian B.K. Martin, MD, MBA**  
Professor and System Chair,  
Department of Emergency Medicine,  
Medical College of Wisconsin  
Emergency Medicine Physician-in-  
Chief, Froedtert & Medical College  
of Wisconsin Health Network



**John R. Raymond, Sr., MD**  
President and Chief Executive  
Officer,  
Medical College of Wisconsin



**Rebecca Rice, MA (Chair)**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
NorthLakes Community Clinic



**Tony Shields, MSM**  
President & CEO, Wisconsin  
Philanthropy Network



**Joy R. Tapper, MPA**  
Executive Director, Milwaukee  
Health Care Partnership  
(Stepped down from  
Consortium in December 2023)



**Paula Tran, MPH**  
State Health Officer and  
Division of Public Health  
Administrator Wisconsin  
Department of Health Services  
(Joined Consortium in January  
2024)

The AHW Research and Education Advisory Committee (REAC) provides oversight for AWH investments and support of MCW-led biomedical and population health research, as well as programs to enhance medical education opportunities for the healthcare and public health workforce.

## AHW Research & Education Advisory Committee



**Ivor Benjamin, MD**  
Director, Cardiovascular Center;  
Professor of Medicine, Physiology,  
Pharmacology, toxicology, Cell  
Biology, Surgery  
Medical College of Wisconsin



**Jesse Ehrenfeld, MD, MPH  
(Chair)**  
Senior Associate Dean and Director  
Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin  
Endowment  
Professor, Anesthesiology  
Medical College of Wisconsin



**Shelisa Dalton, MBA**  
Chief Financial Officer  
Medical College of Wisconsin



**José Franco, MD**  
Senior Associate Dean for  
Education  
School of Medicine  
Medical College of Wisconsin



**Cecilia Hillard, PhD**  
Associate Dean for Research  
Professor of Pharmacology and  
Toxicology  
Director, Neuroscience Research  
Center  
Medical College of Wisconsin



**Joseph E. Kerschner, MD**  
Provost and Executive Vice  
President  
Dean, School of Medicine  
Medical College of Wisconsin



**John Mantsch, PhD**  
Chair and Florence Williams  
Professor of Pharmacology and  
Toxicology  
Medical College of Wisconsin



**Ann B. Nattinger, MD, MPH,  
MACP**  
Senior Associate Dean for Research,  
School of Medicine  
Associate Provost for Research  
Professor of Medicine, Lady  
Riders Professor of Breast Cancer  
Research  
Medical College of Wisconsin



**Amy Prunuske, PhD**  
Associate Professor, Department of  
Medical School Regional Campuses  
Medical College of Wisconsin

# FUND MANAGEMENT

The Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin funds are invested with the Medical College of Wisconsin Endowment Funds using a diversified asset allocation strategy that includes money market funds held by external investment managers, marketable debt and equity securities, bond and equity mutual funds, commingled bond and equity funds, other equity securities, and accrued interest and dividends thereon and are reported at fair value. The investment goal for the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin funds, as approved by the Medical College of Wisconsin Board of Trustees, is to preserve the purchasing power of its investment, while providing a level of investment return and liquidity that funds its purposes within a reasonable and prudent level of risk. The Medical College of Wisconsin has a long-term investment objective for the endowment assets to earn on average a real (inflation-adjusted) annual rate of return and to provide a return for the appropriation of not less than the total annual spendable income rate under the endowment fund spending policy.

All Endowment Funds, including the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin funds, are invested in a unitized pool. Pooling of funds allows an individual participating fund to benefit from diversification and economies of scale in the investment process. Income is also unitized and allocated based on

relative value on the first of the month. Realized capital gains are reinvested in the pool. The separate identity of each fund participating in the Endowment Fund pool is fully preserved, and each fund's share in the income and gains and losses of the pool is assured.

The Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin funds are segregated within the Endowment Fund. With respect to the 35% allocation of the funds for the Healthier Wisconsin Partnership Program and the 65% allocation of the funds for the Research and Education Program, separate accounts for the endowed funds and the spendable income funds available for current and future program distribution are maintained.

Distributions are based on the MCW Endowment Fund Spending Policy. Investment earnings that are not distributed are restricted under the terms of the Grant Agreement.

## FUND MANAGEMENT

A financial audit of The Medical College of Wisconsin, Inc. Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Program was conducted by an external audit firm for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2024, and 2023.

The following pages reflect the financial position for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2024, and 2023 and the activities and changes in net assets for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024.

## ADVANCING A HEALTHIER WISCONSIN ENDOWMENT

### Statements of Financial Position

As of June 30, 2024 and 2023

(in thousands)

	2024	2023
<b>Assets</b>		
Investments, at fair value:		
Spendable income funds	\$ 64,950	\$ 64,618
Endowed funds	454,868	417,834
Total investments, at fair value	519,818	482,452
Total assets	\$ 519,818	\$ 482,452
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		
Liabilities		
Due to The Medical College of Wisconsin, Inc.	\$ 303	\$ 405
Total liabilities	303	405
Net assets with donor restrictions	\$ 519,515	\$ 482,047
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 519,818	\$ 482,452

## ADVANCING A HEALTHIER WISCONSIN ENDOWMENT

### Statements of Activities and Changes in Net Assets

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

(in thousands)

	HWPP*	REP**	TOTAL
<b>Changes in net assets without donor restrictions:</b>			
Net assets with donor restrictions released from restrictions	\$ 9,023	\$ 17,518	\$ 26,541
Program Expenditures			
Faculty salaries	939	4,616	5,555
Staff salaries	828	5,303	6,131
Fringe benefits	392	2,234	2,626
Services, supplies, and other	723	5,365	6,088
Payments to community partners	6,141	-	6,141
Total expenditures	<u>\$ 9,023</u>	<u>\$ 17,518</u>	<u>\$ 26,541</u>
Increase (decrease) in net assets without donor restrictions	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Change in net assets without donor restrictions	<u>\$ 9,023</u>	<u>\$ 17,518</u>	<u>\$ 26,541</u>
<b>Changes in net assets with donor restrictions:</b>			
Investment return	23,246	40,763	64,009
Net assets released from restrictions	(9,023)	(17,518)	(26,541)
Decrease in net assets with donor restrictions	<u>14,223</u>	<u>23,245</u>	<u>37,468</u>
Net assets with donor restrictions at beginning of year	<u>\$ 174,628</u>	<u>\$ 307,419</u>	<u>\$ 482,047</u>
Net assets with donor restrictions at end of year	<u>\$ 188,851</u>	<u>\$ 330,664</u>	<u>\$ 519,515</u>

\*Healthier Wisconsin Partnership Program

\*\*Research and Education Program

**ADVANCING A HEALTHIER WISCONSIN**  
 For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024  
 (in thousands)

The MCW Consortium on Public and Community Health authorized the following changes in outstanding commitments for the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin program. These outstanding commitments will be funded on a reimbursement basis and recognized as expenditures after the amounts have been expended by MCW and the community partners.

	<b>LIFE-TO-DATE AUTHORIZED FUNDING<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>LIFE-TO-DATE EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>OUTSTANDING COMMITMENTS</b>
Healthier Wisconsin Partnership Program	\$ 259,616	\$ 192,945	\$ 44,446
Research and Education Program	109,978	87,454	15,452
Support Services Provided by AHW Staff	38,818	31,064	3,898
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 408,412</b>	<b>\$ 311,463</b>	<b>\$ 63,796</b>

<sup>1</sup> Reflects grants awarded net of grant reductions made due to the economic recession that began in December 2007

# HOW WE OPERATE



Funding proposals received through both the MCW Consortium on Public and Community Health (Consortium) and AHW Research and Education Advisory Committee (REAC) follow standard request for application (RFA) and review processes. However, the process varies for each funding mechanism, right-sizing applicant requirements to align with the amount of funds being requested.

## MCW-LED PROJECT (REP) APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

The AHW Research and Education Program (REP) funds are distributed through the following processes:

- **REAC-Initiated Investment** – REAC-initiated proposals are received upon invitation. AHW’s scientific advisors and AHW staff work with applicants to ensure the proposal’s alignment with AHW’s mission and vision through a multi-level process that includes the submission of a letter of intent and a full proposal. All submissions are screened by AHW staff to determine that all eligibility, content, and submission requirements are fulfilled, then are reviewed by the REAC for scientific merit and alignment with the AHW Five-Year Plan. REAC-approved awards are advanced to the MCW Board of Trustees for final funding determination. All full proposals are also reviewed under AHW’s supplanting requirements through the MCW controller’s office prior to award commencement.
- **2024 MCW-Led Seed Grant** – Proposals received through this competitive funding opportunity followed a one-stage submission process involving review by AHW staff for technical requirements, including, but not limited to, eligibility criteria and adherence to the guidelines and restrictions. Peer reviews were conducted by other applicants who applied to this funding opportunity for all applications that passed technical review. Following peer review, the REAC reviewed the recommendations from the peer reviewers and approved a slate of proposals to be advanced to the MCW Board of Trustees for approval. All full proposals were also reviewed under AHW’s supplanting requirements through the MCW controller’s office prior to award commencement.
- **2024 Post-Doctoral Researcher Seed Grant** – Proposals received through this competitive funding opportunity followed a one-stage submission process involving review by AHW staff for technical requirements, including, but not limited to, eligibility criteria and adherence to the guidelines and restrictions. Merit reviews were conducted by a review body consisting of MCW faculty. Following merit review, the REAC reviewed the recommendations from the merit reviewers and approved a slate of proposals to be advanced to the MCW Board of Trustees for approval. All full proposals were also reviewed under AHW’s supplanting requirements through the MCW controller’s office prior to award commencement.

- **MCW-Led Learning Event Support** – AHW’s MCW-Led Learning Event Support awards are distributed in adherence with the resource allocation and review process approved by the REAC. These smaller, rolling funding awards follow a review process that includes the submission of a written application that undergoes AHW staff review and supplanting review prior to funding determination by AHW leadership.

## COMMUNITY-LED PROJECT (HWPP) APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

- **2024 Community-Led Seed Grant** – Proposals received through this competitive funding opportunity followed a one-stage submission process involving review by AHW staff for technical requirements, including, but not limited to, eligibility criteria and adherence to the guidelines and restrictions. Peer reviews were conducted by other applicants who applied to this funding opportunity for all applications that passed technical review. Following peer review, the Consortium on Public and Community Health reviewed the recommendations from the peer reviewers and approved a slate of proposals to be advanced to the MCW Board of Trustees for approval. All full proposals were also reviewed under AHW’s supplanting requirements through the MCW controller’s office prior to award commencement.
- **Community-Led Learning Event Support** – AHW’s Community-Led Learning Event Support awards are distributed in adherence with the resource allocation and review process approved by the MCW Consortium on Public and Community Health. These smaller, rolling funding awards follow a review process that includes the submission of a written application that undergoes AHW staff review and supplanting review prior to funding determination by AHW leadership.

## CROSS-CUTTING GRANT APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

Cross-Cutting proposals are received upon invitation. AHW staff work with applicants to ensure the proposal’s alignment with AHW’s mission and vision through a multi-level process that includes the submission of a letter of intent and a full proposal. All submissions are screened by AHW staff to determine that all eligibility, content, and submission requirements are fulfilled, then are reviewed by the MCW Consortium on Public and Community Health and the REAC for merit and alignment with the AHW Five-Year Plan. Approved awards are advanced to the MCW Board of Trustees for final funding determination. All full proposals are also reviewed under AHW’s supplanting requirements through the MCW controller’s office prior to award commencement.

## AHW SUPPLANTING POLICY

As determined by the Order of the Insurance Commissioner of the State of Wisconsin, AHW funds may not be used to supplant funds or resources available from other sources. As such, AHW, via the MCW controller’s office, conducts a review of all AHW funding awards for determination of non-supplanting in accordance with procedures approved by the Order.

## EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS FUNDED

Throughout the year, AHW evaluates the progress and outcomes of funded projects using regular progress and final reports as well as financial status reports and/or presentations, site visits, meetings, or subrecipient audits. Multi-year awards are reviewed for progress annually by the appropriate AHW oversight body. Project updates and outcomes are posted on our funded project listing at [ahwendowment.org/fundedprojects](http://ahwendowment.org/fundedprojects).

# OUR TEAM

## LEADERSHIP



**Jesse M. Ehrenfeld, MD, MPH**  
Senior Associate Dean and Director  
Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin  
Endowment  
Professor, Anesthesiology  
Medical College of Wisconsin

**Ugwuji N. Maduekwe, MD, MMSc, MPH**  
Associate Dean and Deputy Director  
Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin  
Endowment  
Associate Professor, Surgery  
Medical College of Wisconsin



## STAFF



**Lupita Ayala**  
Administrative Assistant



**Kate Beadle**  
Grant Compliance Coordinator



**Kaylee Beck**  
Program Coordinator II



**Andrés Daryanani, MD**  
Postdoctoral Research Fellow



**Christina Ellis, MS**  
Program Director – Strategic  
Investments



**Julia Enright**  
Grant Compliance Coordinator



**Amanda Fraser**  
Program Manager III



**Monica Grimm**  
Program Coordinator III



**Amy Homel, MS**  
AHW Administrator



**Amber Jacoby**  
Program Coordinator



**Kristi Klewein**  
Administrative Associate



**Autum Kowalczyk, MBA**  
Compliance Business Manager



**Kelly Lietz, MA**  
Communications Director



**Mark McNally, PhD**  
AHW Scientific Consultant for  
Basic Science



**Liliana Pezzin, PhD, JD**  
Scientific Advisor



**Michael Plewa**  
Digital Media  
Specialist



**Chris Renaud**  
Communications  
Consultant



**Kanoë Riedel, MA**  
Communications  
Consultant



**Abby Sokol-Roberts**  
Salesforce  
Administrator



**Amy Sordahl**  
Program  
Coordinator III



**Scott Terhune, PhD**  
Scientific Advisor  
(Joined July 2024)



**Madison Van Allen**  
Data Analyst



**Tracy Wilson, MPH**  
Program Manager



## AHW INTERNSHIPS

AHW’s unique position at the intersection of academic medicine and public health creates exciting opportunities for young learners to broaden their perspectives about the careers available to them. By inviting interns from area schools as well as from within MCW, we extend our mission of advancing health in Wisconsin by exposing the next generation of health workers to the many avenues available to them for community-focused service.

AHW started its internship program in 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, offering our inaugural interns fully remote work options. Building upon three years of successful internship rotations coordinated with individual schools, AHW expanded its internship program in 2023 by becoming a Milwaukee Area Health Education Center (MAHEC) Community Health Internship Program (CHIP) partner.

Whether they stay on with AHW, as some learners have done, or continue their career paths elsewhere, we are proud to be part of our interns’ journeys of personal and professional discovery.

### SEPTEMBER 2023 – MAY 2024 MCW INTERN



**Cordero McCall, MBA, MPH**  
MD Candidate 2026  
Medical College of Wisconsin

### MAY 2024 – JULY 2024 MAHEC CHIP PARTNERSHIP INTERNS



**Ramla Bajabar**  
University of Wisconsin-Parkside



**Julia Jakusz**  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

“My internship with AHW has been one of the most genuine and amazing experiences I have ever been able to be a part of. This team is truly something remarkable, and it is uniformly amazing from top down. I have been able to make really amazing and meaningful connections that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.”

**JULIA JAKUSZ**  
AHW 2024 INTERN





“AHW’s mission centers us in a really good place to be able to get people together to focus on improving people’s health where they are”

**Ugwuji Maduekwe, MD, MMSc, MPH  
Associate Dean and Deputy Director  
Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment**

“AHW is making sure that we can adapt to new health challenges by constantly surveying the landscape, making sure that we understand what are the drivers, what are the determinants of the health of our communities, and then putting our resources and our affairs in alignment with those health needs.”

**Jesse M. Ehrenfeld, MD, MPH, FASA, FAMIA, FCPP**  
Senior Associate Dean and Director  
Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment





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