



# THE BREEZEWAY

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

# SCRAPBOOK

Check out pictures from some of our recent alumni events below.  
For more pictures, please visit our website at [med.uth.edu/alumni](http://med.uth.edu/alumni).

## STUDENT SEND-OFFS



Gloria Oyeniya, MD '11, and Moise Levy, MD '79,  
at Austin Student Send-Off



Houston Student Send-Off  
at the home of Mark Farnie, MD '87



Pat Pace, MD '99, Jennie Pace,  
Cedric DuPont, MD '01, and Catherine McNeese, MD '00,  
at Austin Student Send-Off

## STUDENT WELCOME RECEPTIONS



College Station Student Welcome Reception  
at the home of Tom Wagner, MD '90,  
and wife Jeanne Wagner



Paul Kennedy, MD '88, and McGovern Medical School Alumni Association  
President-Elect Priscilla Alfaro, MD '89,  
with students at Austin Student Welcome Reception



Mark Chassay, MD '92, Bryan Townsend, MD '92,  
Michael Andreo, MD '91, and McGovern Medical School  
Alumni Association President Melanie Collins, MD '91,  
at Austin Student Welcome Reception

# Greetings from THE BREEZEWAY

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Hello,

Greetings from McGovern Medical School, where the spring semester is in full swing. One of the most important responsibilities of any medical school is to educate the next generation of physicians — MDs ready to provide the highest quality care for patients and families and to make an impact on the communities they serve. Ensuring that our graduates have a strong foundation and are prepared for the ever-changing landscape of medicine and health care is the challenge of our educational program.

Three years ago, McGovern Medical School launched an extensively revised medical education curriculum — one that weaves the basic sciences with the human biological systems, and integrates science and medicine from the first days of medical school. This issue of The Breezeway features more on our innovative educational program.

Our curriculum includes a renewed focus on the care and wellness of our students, with the Wellness and Resilience Program. I invite you to learn more about how we address student stress, professionalism, leadership, and well-being in the context of a medical education.

With the excitement of Match Day just around the corner, I can't help thinking about last year's special crowdfunding endeavor, which was met with such enthusiasm and success. No spoilers, but please see the White Coat Sponsor Program article for all the details.

It's a wonderful time to be a part of McGovern Medical School. I invite you to join us for an event, or just to stop by and say hello.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara".

**Barbara J. Stoll, MD**

Dean, McGovern Medical School

H. Wayne Hightower Distinguished Professor in the Medical Sciences

# INAUGURAL MCGOVERN MEDICAL SCHOOL

## WHITE COAT SPONSOR PROGRAM

### A HUGE SUCCESS

written by  
**Jonathan Garris**  
Office of Communications

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**Thanks to the generosity of alumni, students, friends, and family from across the country, the McGovern Medical School White Coat Sponsor Program was a major success.**

A crowdfunding campaign dedicated to providing white coats to first-year medical students at 2018's White Coat Ceremony has been a major success, beating its initial goal by almost \$20,000.

Through donations from alumni, family, friends, and members of the community, the inaugural campaign for the McGovern Medical School White Coat Sponsor Program shattered its initial goal of \$2,000, ultimately raising \$21,430. The campaign met its goal within hours of beginning on April 5.

The impetus behind the campaign came from Barbara J. Stoll, MD, dean and H. Wayne Hightower Distinguished Professor in the Medical Sciences. Funds raised from the campaign were used to purchase white coats handed to incoming medical students during the White Coat Ceremony on Aug. 2, 2018. Additional funds will support white coats for future first-year classes.

"The white coat represents the profession of medicine, and the annual white coat ceremony serves as a symbolic entry into the profession and introduction for our students to this wonderful career. I could not

think of a more meaningful gift for our alumni and friends to bestow upon the next generation of McGovern physicians," Stoll said.

Virginia Craig, senior director of Annual Giving and University Alumni Engagement at UTHealth, opted to use a crowdfunding platform and tap into the excitement and generosity of alumni nationwide.

"It isn't like simply donating a textbook to a student that will be used for a year and either sold back or given to another student," Craig said. "You're purchasing their white coat and their first big step in medical school, and it's so meaningful."

Derrick Miller, director of University and McGovern Medical School Alumni Engagement, said emails were distributed primarily among alumni, and word quickly spread to all corners of the United States. Beyond the 77 donors from within Texas, donations poured in from places like California, Louisiana, New York, Massachusetts, Colorado, Missouri, and even Hawaii. He said the initiative was "very much a grassroots effort."

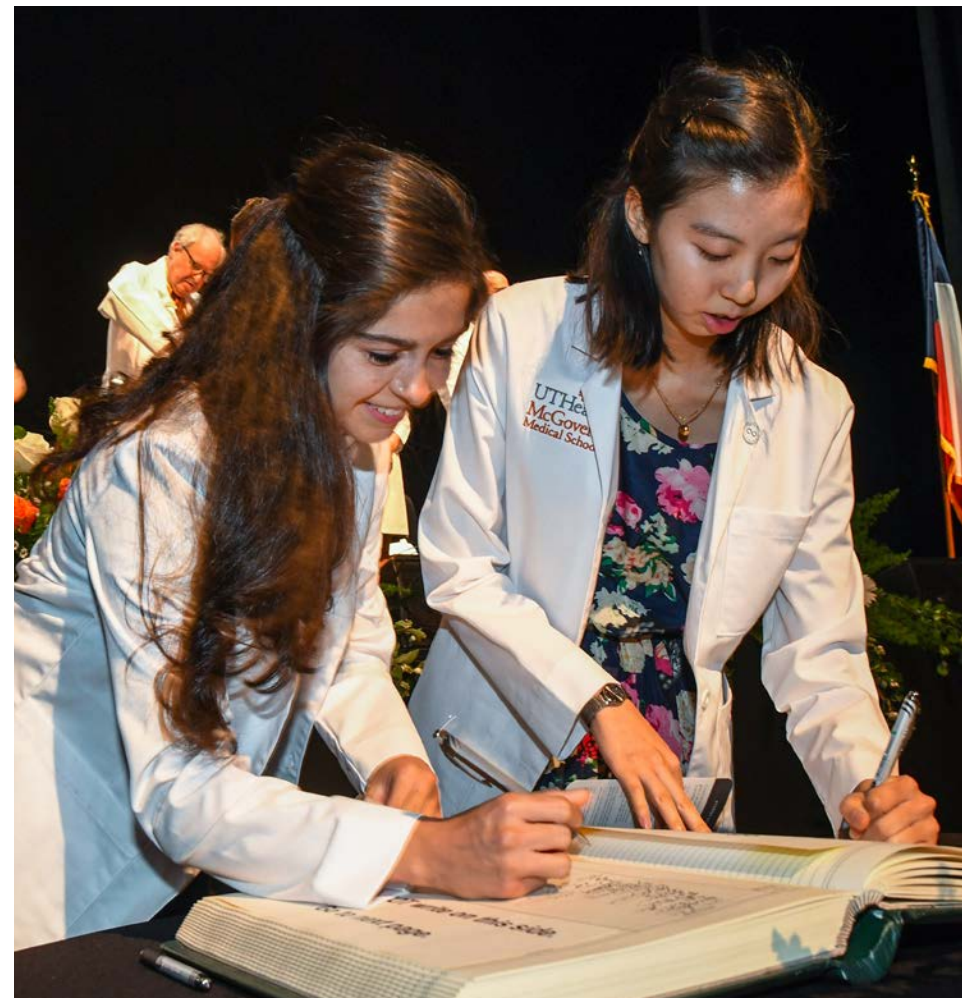
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The first White Coat Ceremony was held in 1996 after it was established in 1993 by the Arnold P. Gold Foundation as a way to welcome medical students into the medical profession. In addition to donning their white coats for the first time, students recite the Hippocratic Oath, reminding them of the sacred promise between caregiver and patient. The gold lapel pin they will receive from the foundation contains an inscription about humanism in medicine – a visual connection to our school’s values.

Arnold Gold, MD, of the Arnold P. Gold Foundation, died in 2018 at the age of 92. He was an internationally known pediatric neurologist and professor at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. He taught the art, as well as the science, of medicine. He also emphasized the value of respectful, honest communication with patients and families – how to share good news and bad, with humility and humor. The goal of the Gold Foundation has been to promote a “Gold Standard” in health care – compassionate, collaborative, and scientifically excellent care. ■



With coats in hand, students ready for the start of the White Coat Ceremony (above). The Arnold P. Gold Foundation provides “Keeping Healthcare Human” lapel pins to all incoming students as part of the White Coat Ceremony (top right). Students sign in after reciting the Oath of Hippocrates during the ceremony (right).





# INTEGRATION COMES

# TO THE CURRICULUM

written by  
**The Office  
of Educational  
Programs**



Students working together  
to learn anatomy (top).  
Students practicing their  
neurological exam skills (bottom).

In August 2016, McGovern Medical School implemented the first phase of its curriculum revision. The Integrated Medical Science (IMS) curriculum covers the first 20 months of students' preclinical education. The new curriculum explicitly integrates the scientific basis of medicine with relevant clinical experiences within and across each year of learning. It has three guiding principles – integration, application, and personalization.

**INTEGRATION: Foundational and clinical sciences are integrated in order to promote comprehension and retention.**

Students in the IMS have a weekly theme case they work through in Team-Based or Problem-Based Learning sessions. These cases provide the clinical context and structure for didactic content. Additionally, longitudinal themes, such as professionalism and evidence-based medicine, are woven throughout the curriculum, ensuring that students are learning about these topics in a variety of contexts and across their entire education.

**APPLICATION: Clinical experiences begins in the first year and continue throughout the medical curriculum.**

During their first semester at McGovern Medical School, students start learning and practicing their medical interviewing and physical exam skills. Once they have mastered the basic skills, they move into a longitudinal clinical experience for the next two semesters, putting their new skills into practice under the guidance of a faculty preceptor. This early clinical experience gives students a frequent and extended focus on caring for patients.

**PERSONALIZATION: The curriculum provides opportunities for students to develop expertise in specific areas of career interest.**

Students can participate in a scholarly concentration track, which is designed to complement and enhance the required curriculum by providing role models,

mentorship, and guidance for students' academic and personal development in a particular health-related topic. There are 11 tracks students can choose among, ranging from Nanomedicine and Biomedical Engineering to Primary Care and Family Medicine. By graduation, students will have completed an original scholarly project guided by a faculty mentor.

The next phase of curriculum revision will extend the opportunities to develop career interests. In 2019, the Career Focus Tracks (CFT) will be introduced to the fourth-year curriculum. The four CFTs will be Primary Care, Acute Care, Applied Anatomy, and Academic Careers. These tracks will provide structure to the students' elective choices, helping them prepare for the next step in their medical career. A key component of the CFTs is active mentoring, engaging our medical school faculty to help students navigate the residency application and interview process.

Each track will have its own specialty-specific workshops and sessions, but underpinning all four tracks will be longitudinal content focused on patient safety and quality improvement. The CFTs continue to build on the foundations of integration, application, and personalization that the Integrated Medical Science curriculum introduces in the first phase of medical school.

The curriculum revisions have been well-received by both students and faculty, and Step 1 USMLE scores remain comparable to previous years. Additionally, the new curricular design has promoted faculty adoption of more active learning strategies, such as the flipped classroom. McGovern Medical School plans to continue its curriculum revisions, monitoring the success of current initiatives and seeking new ways to improve educational quality for students. ■

# Live WELL Be WELL

As with matters of health, wellness is a journey. One does not deem themselves well on any given day, then consider the mission accomplished; rather, well-being is influenced by many internal and external factors that require ongoing attention. When proper attention is given, we all benefit from being immersed in a wellness-promoting culture.

written by  
**The Office  
of Admissions and  
Student Affairs**

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Physician self-care can be an afterthought in an industry built on caring for others. However, the old adage of “do as I say, not as I do” has contributed to a community of medical professionals embattled with anxiety, burnout, depression, and suicide rates higher than their contemporaries. This compromised well-being can result in medical errors and professionalism breaches, demonstrating the correlation between physician well-being and optimal patient care.

McGovern Medical School understands that our future physicians begin forming their practice habits here. As they learn anatomy, physical exams, proper diagnoses, and compassionate care, they must also learn the value of self-care and building a resilience skill set that will serve them well as they traverse a stress-filled profession. The Office of Admissions and Student Affairs (OASA) Wellness and Resilience Program is growing a culture of wellness through a longitudinal and holistic program that promotes the importance of health and well-being throughout medical school and beyond. OASA is dedicated to supporting the overall success and wellness of all students. With a robust resilience skill set, students are positioned to optimally serve their communities and actively achieve best patient outcomes.

Our wellness initiative’s holistic approach focuses on three areas of wellness – Community, Personal, and Occupational – with McGovern Societies serving as an all-encompassing central component. Throughout the

year, students are offered a variety of sessions that focus on academic assistance, mental health, financial wellness, personal nutrition, cultural competency, service, fitness, and more. McGovern Societies provide students an informal small group to discuss wide-ranging topics that promote their personal and occupational well-being while fostering a greater sense of community. In these societies, students are the beneficiaries of mentoring and coaching from a clinical faculty Society Leader, a basic science Faculty Affiliate, and two second- and fourth-year Peer Mentors.

Wellness programming has been introduced in both the preclinical and clinical years and received positively by students. Well into its third year, the Wellness and Resilience Program has realized early successes in large part due to the contributions from the student Wellness and Resilience Committee. The committee is comprised of members from all four classes and serves to steer many of the program’s initiatives and provide feedback throughout the year.

#### **OASA Wellness and Resilience Program**

Our holistic wellness program is thoughtfully designed to meet the unique needs of McGovern Medical School students because strong physicians consistently rise to the challenge of achieving the best outcomes – in medicine and in life. ■





*You cannot  
serve from an  
empty vessel*

| Eleanor Brown





Alumnus paves the way for  
**FUTURE LEADERS**

written by  
**Jessica Vanderpool**  
Office of Development

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John McDonald, MD '82, with daughter,  
Michelle McDonald, MD '18

John McDonald, MD '82, remembers his medical school days well – from the small apartment complex he called home, to his bike route through Hermann Park, to the research lab where he discovered his calling. It was while studying platelet function in this research laboratory at McGovern Medical School at UTHealth, then known as The University of Texas Medical School at Houston, that he found his passion for pathology that continues to captivate him to this day.

Now he works in the field of pathology as medical director of laboratory and chief medical officer at Medical City North Hills in North Richland Hills, Texas. And his daughter is a resident at McGovern Medical School, working in the same pathology department where he once was.

But his family's legacy does not stop there. Together, McDonald and his wife, Joan Bergstrom, MD, established the John McDonald, M.D. and Joan Bergstrom, M.D. Endowed Dean's Scholarship. Thanks to their generosity, future health care leaders will continue to form their own memories and find their own passions inside the walls of McGovern Medical School for years to come.

Since 2012, the scholarship has provided more than \$30,000 to a total of eight students.

One of these students is Scott Mathis, a Houstonian set to graduate in 2020.

"My UTHealth education means that I have the opportunity to not only take care of those in the city I call home ... (but also to) one day ... extend that care to other countries across the world," Mathis said. "I hope to fundamentally connect with patients in a positive way that only a medical education can provide."

The McDonald-Bergstrom scholarship is helping make this possible.

In a thank-you note to the couple, Mathis wrote about a trip to El Salvador, which he took prior to his medical school days. During the trip, he helped provide medical care to communities and became inspired to use medicine as a way of serving others.

"Participating firsthand in the field of global medicine has inspired me to pursue future charity work in medically underserved communities," he wrote. "I appreciate the opportunities that this scholarship affords me, and hope through my medical education to help those in my community and abroad."

As an endowed scholarship, the McDonald-Bergstrom scholarship will continue supporting students like Mathis in perpetuity.

"I very much appreciate the education I received in Houston," said McDonald, who is a past president and current member of the McGovern Medical School Alumni Association Board. "I wanted to leave a legacy of that appreciation by helping out future students so that their possibly phenomenal debt load might be a little lighter."

He said he hopes his story will spark similar feelings of gratitude in fellow alumni and that one day all students will have the opportunity to be supported by endowed scholarships. He noted that having scholarships available might also allow the school to be more competitive in recruiting students.

"Being loyal to and supporting any alma mater is a way to express your appreciation for your education and is also an indication of the regard in which you hold your alma mater," he said. "I regard our school and its position in the Texas Medical Center as being a flagship and big star of medical education and health care delivery for the future."

In addition, he explained that when high-level donors and foundations are deciding which institution to support, they may be influenced by the percentage of alumni who give back to each school in consideration. The assumption is that a higher percentage may indicate greater alumni satisfaction in the school.

"Even small donations can make a big difference if those donations help to get our percentage of donors up," McDonald said.

Through the years, McDonald himself has contributed to various funds at the school, including the Alumni Association scholarship. He said this fund is an ideal place to make regular, small gifts and increase the percentage of alumni giving to McGovern Medical School.

"I think it is important for all of us to support and encourage future generations of physicians," McDonald said.

"Medicine is a great profession and will continue to be a great profession into the future. We all will need a physician at some point. We will want those physicians to also feel positive about the great things they have to offer their patients and their communities." ■

## CHASSAY, DOMINO HONORED AS

# DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI



McGovern Medical School Alumni Association President  
Melanie Collins, MD '91, with Distinguished Alumnus  
Award recipient Frank Domino, MD '88,  
and his nominator/classmate, Drew Grimes, MD '88

written by

**Jonathan Garris**

Office of Communications

**Mark Chassay, MD '92, and Frank J. Domino, MD '88,  
received the Distinguished Alumnus Award of McGovern  
Medical School during the alumni reunion weekend  
Oct. 19-20, 2018.**

Established in 1987, the purpose of the award is to  
recognize outstanding contributions of alumni in the areas  
of medical science and education, or the prevention  
and treatment of diseases, as well as continued interests  
in McGovern Medical School and its students.



McGovern Medical School Alumni Association President  
Melanie Collins, MD '91, with Distinguished Alumnus  
Award recipient Mark Chassay, MD '92



Distinguished Alumnus Award recipients  
Mark Chassay, MD '92, and Frank Domino, MD '88



**Mark Chassay, MD '92**

**Chassay** is senior vice provost for Clinical Affairs & Healthcare Partnerships at the University of North Texas Health Science Center. From March 2014 through January 2019, he served as assistant professor in the Department of Orthopedic Surgery and the Department of Family and Community Medicine, associate dean for Alumni Relations and Continuing Medical Education, and assistant dean for Admissions and Student Affairs at McGovern Medical School. Chassay received his undergraduate degree from The University of Texas at Austin and attended McGovern Medical School, where he also completed his family medicine residency. He completed a fellowship in primary care sports medicine at Kaiser Permanente in Fontana, California. Chassay holds a master's degree in education, kinesiology, and sports medicine from The University of Texas at Austin and completed the Healthcare Executive Master of Business Administration program at UT Southwestern Medical School.

Chassay has been involved in numerous professional organizations and sports programs, serving as a team physician for California State University, Riverside Community College, and Arlington High School from 1995

to 1996. He served as team physician and coordinator of sports medicine for the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women for UT Austin from 1996 to 2005, and served as a clinical assistant professor at the Joe R. & Teresa Lozano Long School of Medicine. From 2003 to 2006, he served as the team medical physician for the Austin Wranglers, an Arena Football League team, and is currently a team physician in the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics at UT Austin. At McGovern Medical School, he established the Sports Medicine Fellowship Program.

Chassay has held positions with the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Medical Society of Sports Medicine, and the Texas Academy of Family Physicians.

"His years of private practice experience helped him to rapidly become one of the most effective faculty at McGovern Medical School," one of his nominators wrote. "His involvement with alumni as associate dean of Alumni Relations and with recruiting future physicians as assistant dean for Admissions and Student Affairs will continue to bring prestige."



**Frank J. Domino, MD '88**

**Domino** is an attending physician at UMass Memorial Medical Center and a professor and director of predoctoral education in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, where he has been awarded the annual "Outstanding Medical Educator" 13 times since 2001. After graduating from McGovern Medical School, he completed a family practice residency at Hunterdon Medical Center in Flemington, New Jersey, as a chief resident. After serving two years as a clinical instructor at the Mid-Hudson Family Medicine program in Poughkeepsie, New York, he established and served as president of a private group there. He has been a member of the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine and the Cochrane Collaboration since 1991.

Domino served as an associate editor for "Up to Date" when it began publishing in 2000, and five years later he became the editor-in-chief of the "5-Minute Clinical Consult" textbook. He was appointed co-editor in chief

of Audio Digest's Family Medicine Board Recertification Course, and has been a speaker for a variety of events, including the American Academy of Family Physicians Annual Meeting, and will serve again as a keynote speaker for next year's meeting. He is the co-founder and CEO of RxPalm, Inc., which specializes in medical content development, and served as a technology consultant for PILS, Inc., until 2015. Domino serves as co-conference chair for the Pri-Med EAST annual conference and has served on the Pri-Med National Advisory Panel since 2012.

One of Domino's nominators wrote that he is the "consummate family physician."

"He is clearly achieving rock star status, and in all sincerity, Domino's success reflects beautifully on our medical school," wrote another nominator. ■



## An interview with

**Jane Fitch, MD '88**

*Best job in the world - RETIRED!*

Residency:

University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

Fellowship:

University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

# CONVERSATIONS From The Leather Lounge

written by

**Derrick J. Miller**

### **What is your fondest memory of your time at McGovern Medical School?**

Our 1988 trip to China, led by Dr. Henry Strobel, was the highlight!

### **What are your hopes for today's McGovern Medical School students?**

My hope is that the current students find medicine to be their true passion. Whether caring for patients or teaching the next generation of physicians, I hope they never lose sight of the sanctity of the patient-physician relationship. I hope they will also strive to be good citizens of their chosen specialty and of the profession of medicine.

### **What inspires you?**

Inspiration comes from many sources. The unconditional love of my family inspires me to be a better person. The unconditional love and support from my husband of 42 years inspires me to always follow my dreams. My patients inspire me to always be the best physician possible. The beauty of our planet inspires me to always remember that the world is our classroom!

### **What's a day on the job like?**

After 40 years in health care and 30 years as a physician, I'm now living life after medicine – aka retirement! I am spending my days traveling and will be learning at least two languages (French and Spanish). I also plan to return to my first love of music (piano and flute).

### **What skill is most vital to your job?**

Communication is the most important skill. It must be bidirectional – providing information as well as listening and receiving information.

### **What is the one thing you can't live without and why?**

I can't live without my faith. It is my source of strength, and it comforts me in trying times.

### **What fulfills you most?**

Doing my best caring for my patients fulfills me most. Also, seeing our students and residents excel serves as a constant reminder of why I chose an academic career.

### **Who would you most like to meet (alive or deceased) and why?**

Because of my love of travel, I would most like to meet and talk with Christopher Columbus. I'm curious about why and how he mapped his travels.

### **What has been your greatest adventure?**

My greatest adventure is most definitely my journey through health care, starting as a nurse, then a nurse anesthetist, and finally as a physician anesthesiologist.

### **What is your favorite word?**

There are two words that just put a smile on my face when I say them. They are both names of cities. The first is Woolloomooloo – an Australian town. The second is Chicamacomico, a town along the North Carolina Outer Banks. ■

# CONTACT

## Send in your Class Notes!

Let us know what is happening with you and find out what your classmates have accomplished. Please email us at [ms.alumni@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:ms.alumni@uth.tmc.edu) regarding your personal and professional accomplishments for our "Class Notes" section of the website, [med.uth.edu/alumni](http://med.uth.edu/alumni).

# UPCOMING EVENTS

**March 10** A Week to Remember Reception

**March 15** Match Day

**March 30** Alumni Reunion at Brennan's

**April 17** UTHealth Spring JAM (Joint Alumni Mixer)

For more information on these events, please visit our website at [med.uth.edu/alumni](http://med.uth.edu/alumni) or contact Derrick J. Miller at [Derrick.J.Miller@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:Derrick.J.Miller@uth.tmc.edu) or 713-500-5181.

# UPDATE YOUR INFO

Have a new phone number? Changed your email address? Want to receive the electronic version of The Breezeway? If so, please take a moment to update your contact information at [www.uth.edu/index/alumni-form.htm](http://www.uth.edu/index/alumni-form.htm) or fill out and return the attached self-mailing form.



McGovern Medical School Photos

2018 Alumni Reunion (top)

2018 Family Fun Day event hosted by Anna Lavedan, MD '94, and Pierre Lavedan, MD '93 (center)

2018 Austin Student Welcome Reception hosted by Bryan Townsend, MD '92, and Pamela Townsend, DDS, '94 (bottom)

Photo of Dean Stoll (Page 3/Robert Seale Photography, Inc.)





**McGovern** Medical School

**Office of Alumni Relations**

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