Aurora Graduate Medical Education Resident Biographies

Family Medicine Residency ● Second Year Residents

Chella Bhagyam, DO

- Hometown: Houlton, WI
- Undergraduate: Biology, Luther College
- Medical School: Midwestern University Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine

I chose family medicine because I enjoy taking care of people in all aspects of their life. I love working with people of all ages and doing this will give me a great variety in my future practice! I also enjoy focus on preventative medicine to keep my patients healthier in the long run.

I chose Aurora St. Luke's because of the opportunities in OMT to further develop my skills, and because the faculty I interviewed with seemed to really care about the future of the residents. I additionally wanted to move back to Wisconsin. After 4 years in Chicago, I was ready to get closer to family again. And I enjoy the nature!

A fun fact about me is I grew up on a hobby farm, and we had sheep, chickens, guinea hens, turkeys and more! After residency, I hope to practice outpatient medicine and possible fellowship in sports medicine.

Mary Dunkin, MD

- Hometown: Beloit, WI
- Undergraduate: Beloit College, Biochemistry
- Medical School: Medical College of Wisconsin

My passion for family medicine started early on in medical school, where I was heavily involved in community-engaged projects, particularly regarding obesity prevention and STEM mentoring programs for underserved children. While on family medicine rotations, I found it very satisfying to assist patients across the vast age demographic, and to serve the family unit as a whole.

My interests in family medicine mirror the broad scope of our training, from community medicine and public health to preventive medicine and women's health. I am particularly drawn to adolescent medicine and women's health. After interviewing at Aurora, I immediately knew it was the program for me! I was impressed with how heavily invested the program was in the community and the diverse patient population it served. Even more so, I was excited for the opportunity to work with residents and faculty who appeared genuinely kind and supportive.

As a Wisconsin native, I enjoy attending Milwaukee Brewers and Bucks games, and watching and cheering on the Packers. In my free time, I also enjoy spending quality time with my family, playing basketball, and watching movies. After residency, I hope to work in an underserved urban community practicing full-spectrum outpatient medicine.
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Patrick Foss, MD

- Hometown: Coppell, TX
- Undergraduate: BA University Scholars, Baylor University
- Medical School: McGovern Medical School

My first real exposure to the practice of medicine was in a family medicine clinic in college. The physicians there demonstrated great care and compassion for their patients, and they played a vital role in helping the most vulnerable patient populations stay well when times were tough.

When it came time for me to choose a specialty, I knew that I wanted to emulate those physicians, and I found family medicine to be a great field to work toward that goal. What I loved about Aurora was the combination of flexible training, diverse patient population, and a vibrant (and less humid!) location.

When I'm not working, I like to play board games, practice the piano, and go to the movies. My go-to fun fact about myself is that I once ate cereal out of the Stanley Cup. After residency, I plan to either go into outpatient practice or possibly pursue a subspecialty fellowship — only time will tell.

Anna Karst, DO

- Hometown: Greenfield, WI
- Undergraduate: BS Neurobiology & Political Science, University of WI – Madison
- Medical School: Kansas City University

I was drawn to family medicine throughout my clerkships because there was not a population I was willing to give up caring for — from neonates, to new parents, to grandparents. One aspect I particularly value about primary care is the continuity of care. To me, watching the growth of a family and caring for all its members is what makes family medicine so rewarding. I will be honored to participate in the journey of my patients as they age and reach all of life's milestones.

An important part of my role as a physician will be to become an advocate for my patients on a larger scale by becoming involved in health policy. Interning with the Ways and Means Committee, Subcommittee on Health, expanded my knowledge of the role of government in health care. It is my goal to become a physician with a good understanding of our health care system in order to guarantee that every individual receives the care they deserve and require, and to promote preventative medicine and accessible care within my community.

As a rotating student, I was impressed with Aurora's friendly atmosphere and pleasant interactions among residents, faculty and staff. Everyone appeared genuinely happy. This was exactly the environment I sought in a program. Since Milwaukee is my hometown, I was eager to return and serve my community as a resident at Aurora.

In my free time, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends, traveling, running and cheering on the Packers.
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Morgan Lively, DO

- Hometown: Waunakee, WI
- Undergraduate: UW – Eau Claire, Microbiology
- Medical School: A.T. Still University KCOM

As a family medicine physician, I have the opportunity to help my patients learn and understand how their overall health can improve daily life. Family Medicine gives me the opportunity to treat all ages and conditions, which makes for an exciting and challenging career.

I rotated at St. Luke’s as a medical student, which confirmed its excellent reputation as a supportive and passionate residency program. I was welcomed as part of the team and experienced the benefits of the staff’s guidance and mentorship, which provided an excellent foundation to achieve my future professional goals. I am also excited to be coming home to Wisconsin after living out of state the last four years and Milwaukee is a vibrant city with so much to explore.

Outside of medicine, I enjoy being active and outdoors; trail running, playing soccer, or trying something new. As a physician, I am interested in working in the outpatient setting with an emphasis on women’s health, pediatrics, and community medicine.

Leart Neziri, MD

- Hometown: Kicevo, Macedonia
- Undergraduate: Biology/Pre-Med, Augustana College
- Medical School: Rush Medical College

During my training at Rush Medical College, I enjoyed all my rotations. I chose family medicine because it allows the unique opportunity to experience a broad range of pathology across a diverse age range, manage chronic conditions while emphasizing preventative care, and work with patients in underserved communities. I love the challenge of knowing a little bit about every specialty to keep me on my toes.

But what really drew me to family medicine is the life-long relationships I will form with my patients. Aurora provides a good balance of inpatient and outpatient experiences that will prepare me well for the broad scope of practice that family medicine has to offer. I appreciated the emphasis on resident wellness and knew I would be provided mentorship and support. Milwaukee is a pretty cool city too, like a little Chicago, but with less traffic and just as many breweries.

Outside of scrubs, I enjoy attending Cubs games, traveling abroad, talking about how bad my fantasy football team is this year, trying new restaurants or rooftop bars, and spending time with family. After residency, I plan to pursue my interests in global medicine and urgent care.
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Kristin Randa, DO

- Hometown: Waterford, WI
- Undergraduate: UW – Milwaukee
- Medical School: Des Moines University

My interest in family medicine came during third year after rotating through a clinic that was tailored to an underrepresented population in the Detroit area. The clinic provided me with both a fascinating and humbling learning experience and made me realize how diverse family medicine can truly be. I witnessed how important it is to get to know patients as individual people so that their health care may be holistic and include mind, body and spirit.

I chose Aurora because the program quickly felt like a good fit in matching my personal values and career goals. Aurora offers a well-rounded training with integrative medicine, OMT, global health, a community clinic and ability to focus on women’s health. During my interview day, I observed the staff and residents’ commitment to providing culturally competent and compassionate care.

As someone who was born and raised in Wisconsin, I enjoy spending my free time outdoors especially boating, kayaking, hiking, and camping. I am excited to return to the Milwaukee area for residency training. During my career, I hope to focus on integrative medicine with osteopathic manipulative treatment, global medicine and women’s health.

Taylor Rutledge, DO

- Hometown: Sharon Center, Ohio
- Undergraduate: Miami University, Philosophy
- Medical School: West Virginia School of Osteopathic Med

My motivation for choosing family medicine resides in the emphasis on preventative medicine and forming lasting patient relations over isolated interactions. Amidst a somewhat curative care system, I enjoy the ability to empower patients regarding their health and well-being, taking a holistic approach to the person and acknowledging physical, emotional, and social aspects of the patient.

While determining a residency program as a medical student, I immediately felt welcomed at Aurora. The residents and staff were extremely eager to incorporate me into the program and there was a strong sense of camaraderie throughout the residents, staff, and faculty. I was excited to be surrounded by passionate individuals whose ultimate goal was to provide quality care to the patients they serve.

Prior to medical education, I enjoyed endeavors such as being a Peace Corps volunteer, pedicab driver, and organic farmer. Currently I’m interested in bikes, alternative energy, sustainability, making tasty food and maintaining health.

After residency I plan to stay around the Midwest focusing on preventative medicine, enjoying time with friends and family.
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Keyonna Taylor-Coleman, MD, Junior Chief

- Hometown: Milwaukee, WI
- Undergraduate: University of Minnesota – Twin Cities
- Medical School: Ross University School of Medicine

Choosing family medicine was like finding the perfect key to a lock. For me, there is no greater purpose than serving people. Family medicine allows me to be on that front line as a resource to partner with, advise, educate, prevent, and assist in the well-being of my patients. Being able to share in their significant life events (good, bad, and uncomfortable) and building a long-lasting PCP-Patient relationship, gives me the privilege to see the patient as a person with a real life and not just a problem to treat.

As a Milwaukee native who has been away for quite some time, it seemed only right to come back home to sow the lessons I've learned to a community that has helped to shape me. Having rotated through Aurora St. Luke's Family Medicine Residency, I witnessed a staff full of people who created an enjoyable work environment, but most importantly centered themselves on providing high-quality patient care with compassion and positivity. From that point, I knew this was a place I wanted to be and one where I knew I could thrive.

The beauty of family medicine is that it embodies so many parts. Post-residency, I know I don't have to choose one area, however, academic medicine, prevention, community health, women's health, infectious disease, mental and behavioral health are of particular interest to me.

Although, medicine is life ... so is food! I'm a foodie who loves to cook, eat, travel, dance, have game or movie nights, and spend some QT with my loved ones. As an ex-middle/high-school teacher, I also enjoy mentoring the younger generation.

Steven W pijewski, DO, Junior Chief

- Hometown: Franklin, WI
- Undergraduate: BS Biology, Wisconsin Lutheran College
- Medical School: Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences

What makes family medicine stand out to me is that it's one of the few specialties that gives physicians the opportunity to form close bonds and relationships with their patients, in the process, providing education to them to help them better understand their health. Another great aspect about family medicine is that in a sense, it's all specialties rolled into one, and that physicians can tailor their practices to their individual interests.

Considering Milwaukee is where I ultimately want to practice, I was drawn to the Aurora Family Medicine Residency Program because of the residents, faculty, staff, and patients. When I interviewed and rotated at Aurora, the residents were all down-to-earth and had a sense of camaraderie inside and outside of the clinic. The staff was friendly, and the faculty was supportive, insightful, and welcoming.

Aurora's patients also come from a variety of backgrounds, which was an important determining factor for a residency for me. Since my goal is to be a primary care doctor for the Milwaukee HIV and LGBTQ+ communities, and maybe someday be a part of a future Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, I felt that Aurora would prepare me as a leader for a community full of diversity and culture.
Fun fact about me: I used to be a barista for Colectivo Coffee, and I can still whip up a mean latte. If you know of a great local coffee shop, let me know! In addition to anything coffee-related, my hobbies also include bowling, card and board game nights with friends, festivals, and trying new restaurants. I also support the Milwaukee LGBTQ+ community and enjoy attending drag shows.