

Iowa Medical Society
175th Celebration and President's Dinner
Hancher Auditorium
Iowa City
Friday, May 2, 2025

Opening announcement from Dr. Brian Privett:

Hello everyone! Thank you for joining us tonight in beautiful Hancher Auditorium. This is a very special night for the Iowa Medical Society as we celebrate 175 years!

****Applause****

Now, we'd like to thank the members of the IMS Board of Directors and the many IMS past presidents (***motion to the reserved table where the past presidents attending will be seated***) who are here this evening.

- Please stand to be recognized if you are a current or newly elected member of the IMS Board of Directors (***Pause for standing and applause***)
- We ask that you please rise if you are a ***past*** board member (***Pause for standing and applause***)
- Tonight, we also have with us IMS ***past presidents*** dating back to the year 1992. Please stand to be recognized if you are a past president of the Iowa Medical Society (***Pause for standing and applause***)
- Your leadership and support of organized medicine makes a positive difference in our state!

We are so fortunate to have a very special group of individuals with us this evening – the past CEO's of IMS. Please rise and remain standing as we recognize this important group of leaders:

- Eldon Huston – 20 years of service as CEO, 40 years at IMS! (***pause for standing and applause***)
- Mike Abrams – 16 years of service (***pause for standing and applause***)
- And, Mike Flesher – Five years of service (***pause for standing and applause***)

I would also like to give a special thank you to the Vice President for Medical Affairs and Dean of the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine for being here tonight, Dr. Denise Jamieson. (***Pause for standing and applause***)

We also want to recognize and thank U.S. Representative Mariannette Miller-Meeks for joining us this evening. As an MD, Dr. Miller-Meeks served as president of IMS in 2006, so we are honored she could be part of our celebration, especially during a busy time in Congress.

Thank you to the Wisconsin Medical Society President, Dr. Michelle Graham who is here with us tonight. Dr. Graham will you please stand and be recognized. (***Pause for standing and applause***)

We also want to recognize our neighbor to the west who is here as well, thank you to Nebraska Medical Association's President-Elect, Dr. Robert Wergin for joining us – Dr. Wergin please stand and be recognized. (***Pause for standing and applause***)

Finally, let's all give a round of applause to Dr. Bruce Scott, president of the American Medical Association, who is here this evening. ****Applause and Dr. Scott to stand and wave**** We all thank you for your outstanding leadership at the national level for helping advocate every single day for the physician voice! We are honored to have you with us this evening to mark this special occasion.

Now, please join me in welcoming to the stage, Iowa Medical Society president, Dr. Christina Taylor, and president-elect Dr. Alison Lynch.

*****Pause for Dr. Christina Taylor and Dr. Alison Lynch to enter stage*****

Dr. Taylor and Dr. Lynch:

Dr. Taylor: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome! On behalf of the Iowa Medical Society Board of Directors, thank you for joining us tonight to celebrate and

acknowledge the accomplishments of our members, our colleagues, and the amazing history of the Iowa Medical Society! It is so great to see so many of you and be together here in Iowa City. Also thank you to our sponsors who have helped make this special night happen:

- Copic
- University of Iowa Health Care
- Iowa Total Care
- Foster Group
- Wellmark

We are here tonight to honor our IMS Award Recipients and to celebrate the installation of the 176th President of the Iowa Medical Society – Dr. Alison Lynch.

Dr. Lynch is director of addiction medicine and clinical professor of psychiatry and family and community medicine at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine.

Full of compassion and knowledge, Dr. Lynch has spearheaded efforts to address drug addiction and mental health in Iowa and beyond. She has trained hundreds of providers in prescribing buprenorphine, and as the director of the UI Addiction and Recovery Collaborative, she began two fellowships in addiction medicine to help grow a much-needed workforce. She has earned national recognition as a distinguished fellow of the American Psychiatric Association and was recently selected for a University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine 2025 Regents Award for Faculty Excellence.

Dr. Lynch currently serves as President-Elect of the Iowa Medical Society and is actively involved in physician advocacy at state and federal levels and serves on multiple IMS committees.

Dr. Taylor:

I'd like to take a moment to thank those of you who made a gift to the Iowa Medical Society Foundation in honor of Dr. Lynch and IMS's 175th Anniversary to support the

important work of the IMS Foundation. We are pleased to report **more than \$10,000** has been raised for IMSF, which will go toward global health scholarships and other projects benefiting medical students. Our goal is to raise \$17,500 and it's not too late! We have a generous donor who has agreed to match whatever amount is raised yet tonight! So if you have not already given, please consider scanning the QR code on the table tent to make a gift this evening.

Tonight, we gather for a truly momentous occasion — a celebration 175 years in the making. It's a matter of great pride to see what IMS has grown into today.

In 1850, when Iowa had only been a state for four short years, and cities were still being developed, a small group of visionary physicians came together in Burlington, Iowa, with a bold idea: Improve medical practice, education, and public health within the state. They saw medicine not just as a practice, but as a calling — one that deserved structure, collaboration, and a unified voice to protect both those who heal and those who seek healing.

From that first meeting, the Iowa Medical Society was born.

What began as a small gathering has evolved into a statewide force. One that today represents thousands of dedicated physicians across every specialty, in every corner of Iowa. Through wars, pandemics, and technological revolutions, IMS has stood strong.

And though 175 years have passed, the mission remains clear: to protect the science of medicine, and to ensure Iowa's physicians have the tools, the voice, and the support they deserve.

Tonight we honor where we began, and we recommit to where we are going – to be the leading voice in medicine to make Iowa a premier destination for physicians to live, work, and serve their communities. The future of medicine in Iowa will continue to demand courage, innovation, and unity.

So, tonight is more than a celebration. It's a reflection of our legacy and a promise that the next 175 years will be just as impactful as we advocate for physicians and empower the next generation of doctors. Thank you all for being here to celebrate this important milestone.

Applause

We have a very special evening lined up to celebrate our incoming president, Dr. Lynch, and to recognize our award winners. But first, please enjoy this video highlighting the last 175 years of the Iowa Medical Society, followed by a toast from AMA president, Dr. Scott.

*****175th Anniversary video plays*****

*****Bruce Scott enters stage*****

Bruce Scott: It is my great honor to be with you on this momentous occasion. The good work of the members of the Iowa Medical Society will have lasting effects on all Iowa physicians and the patients they serve for years and decades ahead. Please raise your glass. **(Brief pause)** Congratulations Iowa Medical Society on 175 years of accomplishments and here's to 175 more! Cheers!

*****Pause for applause and pictures*****

Dr. Scott remarks:

Tonight, we honor 175 years of the Iowa Medical Society's impact on this great profession and five incredible physicians, in particular, who have made significant contributions to the practice of medicine. We'll learn more about their accomplishments in just a bit.

But first, I'd like to thank the leaders and members of IMS for facilitating this celebration.

Congratulations on 175 years of service in the practice of medicine.

Thank you for your commitment to the IMS mission and vision:

...to advance the practice of medicine through advocacy, education, and engagement with physicians throughout Iowa to ensure the highest quality of care for the patients they serve; and

...to be the leading voice in medicine, to make Iowa a premier destination for physicians to live, work, and serve their communities.

Thank you to incoming President Dr. Alison Lynch for your vision for the future. I have no doubt that your tenure will continue to advance the work of IMS in pursuit of this mission.

Like the IMS, the AMA leverages the collective wisdom of our physician community and uses our powerful voice ...our 290,000-member community, representing 190-plus state and specialty societies, to advance ONE mission:

...to promote the art and science of medicine and the betterment of public health.

No small task.

But we figured out a way to make it work. EVERYTHING we do falls into one of three primary areas to support physicians and patients and to reform our health system:

ONE...removing obstacles that interfere with patient care...things like reforming our outdated Medicare payment system....and burdensome prior authorization requirements....and preventing inappropriate scope of practice expansion...

TWO...leading the charge to confront public health crises...including chronic disease, global threats like COVID...and working to address and remove health inequities...

...and THREE...driving the future of medicine through improved medical education, innovation, and physician training. As health care changes, so must our approach to training physicians to respond to our nation's health care needs.

These are important issues at a critical time in our nation's history.

(pause)

For 178 years and counting, the AMA has risen to each extraordinary moment in medicine by advancing science and research, standardizing physician training and medical education, improving public health, and uniting the profession around a common set of ethics.

Today, physicians and patients are mired in a broken health care system that is frustrating, inefficient, inequitable, enormously expensive, and too often, fails to deliver on its most fundamental goal of helping people live longer, healthier lives.

While the pain points in health care are easy to identify, the solutions to fixing these problems are complex and require partnership and collaboration from national health organizations like the AMA, but also state and specialty societies who are working with great urgency to address these issues at home...just are you are doing here at the IMS.

The reality of health care today is that far too many patients face tremendous barriers to get the care they need. And far too many physicians encounter challenges that interfere in the delivery of care, contributing to burnout, early retirements and exacerbating a physician workforce already stretched impossibly thin.

But here's the good news. The AMA – and our Federation partners in every state – are built for this.

We are working to strengthen our nation's physician workforce ... to improve access to necessary care ... and rebuild our health system to more effectively respond to the health challenges we face today and into the future.

AMA advocacy is focused on five core issues that are KEY to building a more effective and sustainable health care system:

ONE. Reforming our flawed Medicare payment system to promote thriving physician practices and innovation. This is our top advocacy priority because our current system is punishing doctors and threatening access to care for patients...and...as you know...for the fifth year in a row, physicians endured a payment cut.

We urge you to join the chorus of advocates, at the AMA, and across the medical community to demand change. Visit FixMedicareNow.org

TWO. The AMA is fighting for reform of a burdensome prior authorization system to reduce the weight on practices and minimize care delays for patients;

THREE. The AMA is committed to stopping inappropriate scope of practice expansions from non-physicians that threaten patient safety;

FOUR. The AMA is committed to addressing the stigma around mental health. Yes, we've seen a decrease in physician burnout rates, but we **MUST DO MORE**.

And FIVE. The AMA continues to support digital health, including telehealth, to maintain coverage and payment.

These issues are **WHY WE FIGHT** for reform.

Our patients, your patients, are **WHY WE FIGHT**.

Securing the long-term sustainability of medicine and medical practice is **WHY WE FIGHT**.

But we do not fight alone.

We do it with partners like IMS.

We do it, standing beside the physicians in this room.

We do it every day, at nights, on weekends, in big towns, and in small towns, in Iowa, and across this country, we rise to meet the challenges of the day ... and the opportunities of tomorrow.

Thank you for standing with us.

*****Pause for applause*****

Dr. Taylor: Now, we would like to take the time to recognize our wonderful retiring board members.

*****Pause for two retiring board members to make it on stage*****

Dr. Shannon Leveridge

Dr. Emily Trudeau

Dr. Taylor:

Dr. Leveridge – thank you for your compassion, honesty, and service to the IMS board. You have been a voice for women, children, and all physicians in your approach to

solutions, challenges, and getting to the best of quality health care in Iowa. Thank you for being a valued member of the IMS board.

Dr. Trudeau – you too, have served our members, students, and residents so well over the course of your term on the IMS board. Thank you for your commitment and dedication as a resident board member during a very busy time in your career. We wish you all the best in your next season of medical practice. Thank you!

*****Pause for applause and members return to seats*****

Dr. Lynch: It is our privilege to present this year's Iowa Medical Society Awards to outstanding individuals and organizations in medicine, public health, and service to their communities. We would like to ask that our four award winners join us on stage at this time. **(Pause for them to join on stage)** The four award winners whom we honor tonight present an opportunity for us in the health care industry to pay tribute to the leadership, accomplishments, and pivotal impact these individuals or organizations have made in our great state. We are proud to present the IMS Awards in the following categories:

- The Award of Merit
- The Washington Freeman Peck Award
- The John F. Sanford Award, and the
- IMS/Copic Physician Humanitarian Award

*****Steve and Dr. Scott *quietly* join the stage to stand by award table and hand correct awards to Dr. Taylor/Dr. Lynch for each recipient. *****

Dr. Lynch:

Dr. Lee (*service ends for AMA delegate term*): We'd first like to say thank you for your time and talent dedicated to the **AMA as IMS' delegate**; your service has been greatly valued. We have been in good hands with your commitment, involvement, and

advocacy on behalf of Iowa physicians at the national level. Thank you for being purposeful and thoughtful in your representation on behalf of Iowa physicians.

Award of Merit

Our first award this evening, the Award of Merit, goes to a physician who has made outstanding contributions to the medical profession and IMS. Since it was first presented in 1951, 91 members have been presented with Awards of Merit for service to the Iowa Medical Society and the medical profession with distinction.

The prestigious Merit Award is one of the highest accolades bestowed by the Iowa Medical Society, and no one is more worthy than this year's recipient, Dr. Rob Lee.

Dr. Lee, you are recognized for your dedication to advancing the practice of medicine in Iowa, your invaluable service to IMS, and steadfast commitment to our mission.

Dr. Lee obtained his undergraduate degree from the University of Northern Iowa, medical degree from Carver College of Medicine in 1988 and completed his residency training in Family Medicine at Trinity Health Grand Rapids in 1991.

He provided care as a family physician with a special focus on non-surgical sports medicine, preventive medicine, and wellness. He was in private practice and later practiced with the Iowa Clinic in Johnston.

Dr. Rob Lee has long history of being a leader in organized medicine.

He is past president of the Iowa Academy of Family Physicians and past Board member of the American Academy of Family Physicians. He first joined the Iowa Medical Society Board of Directors in 2006, became a member of the Executive Board and then President in 2012.

After his service to the IMS, he briefly became an Alternate Delegate for Iowa to the AMA House of Delegates and then became a Delegate. He retired and completed his last term at the end of 2024. We are sure going to miss him at the AMA meetings.

Dr. Lee is always smiling, full of energy, knows everyone in the room, stays on top of the issues, and always participates fully. He has always been a strong medical student advocate. We also will miss his colorful, well-coordinated sense of style and his dance moves at the annual sock hop and AMA Presidential Inauguration “Prom”.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Rob Lee, the well-deserved recipient of this year’s Award of Merit.

(Dr. Lee receives award and gives a few remarks)

*****Pause for Applause*****

Dr. Lynch:

Washington Freeman Peck Award

Our next award is the Washington Freeman Peck Award – presented annually to an organization that makes significant contributions to public health.

Dr. Peck was a surgeon and medical educator. He is attributed with being the principal agent behind the establishment of what is now the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine. The Washington Freeman Peck Award has been presented to 45 different organizations for significant contributions to public health in Iowa.

This year’s recipient has not only recognized an urgent need in our communities — they’ve acted in a way that brings hope to those most in need.

Tonight, we present the Washington Freeman Peck Award to **Houses into Homes**, a local non-profit that provides gently-used beds, furniture, and household items for

families and individuals in Johnson County who are exiting homelessness, domestic violence, and other crisis situations.

Their story is a powerful reminder that public health isn't just about hospitals or policies — it's also about human connection, stability, and a safe place to call home.

Please join me in recognizing this year's Dr. Washington Freeman Peck Award recipient – Houses into Homes!

(Ian Cawley makes brief remarks – 2 mins)

*****Pause for Applause*****

Dr. Taylor:

John F. Sanford Award

Our next award is the John F. Sanford Award – an annual award to honor a non-physician who has made outstanding contributions to public health or made an impact in the field of health care.

This year, IMS is proud to recognize **Kari Harland**.

Since joining the University of Iowa Health Care Department of Emergency Medicine in 2011, Dr. Harland has devoted her career to research that directly improves the lives of Iowans, especially those in rural communities, women, and at-risk youth. Her work includes critical issues like women's health, pregnancy, and the prevention of intimate partner violence.

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Harland stepped up as Director of the Data Coordinating Center for a national study on virus exposure among emergency healthcare workers. This work not only informed national safety protocols but protected frontline staff and their families.

She's since continued her work with projects like PREVENT and IMPACT, tackling everything from vaccine effectiveness to youth mental health and racial equity, securing nearly \$13 million in research funding in the process.

Her colleagues recognize her not just as a brilliant researcher, but as a role model and fierce advocate for her team and community.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Kari Harland, this year's recipient of the John F. Sanford Award.

(Kari Harland receives award and makes brief remarks – 2 mins)

*****Pause for Applause*****

IMS/Copic Physician Humanitarian Award

Dr. Taylor – it's now my pleasure to introduce our partners from Copic who are here tonight to give out the IMS/Copic Physician Humanitarian Award.

It is my pleasure to welcome:

- Ed Whitver - Director of Market Relations - Iowa
- Bev Razon - Senior Vice President of Public Affairs
- Kristin Stepien - Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing

Copic to present the Physician Humanitarian Award.

*****Copic team enters stage and Bev Razon shares her own remarks she is bringing (give her time limit)*****

(Dr. Berry receives award and gives a few remarks)

*****Pause for Applause*****

Dr. Taylor:

Premier Partnership Award

Copic

While we have our Copic friends here on stage, I want them to remain for a moment. We have a special award for you.

As many of you know, Copic is a medical liability insurance provider. They are a trusted partner for physicians, medical professionals, group practices, health care facilities, and hospitals in Iowa and throughout the Midwest and Rocky Mountain region.

And, they have been a tremendous partner for us, at the Iowa Medical Society. We are so grateful to you, Ed, Bev, Kristin, and the entire Copic team for your partnership, involvement, and support as we serve our IMS members. I don't think the word "no" is part of your vocabulary, as at every turn when we ask you to speak at one of our meetings, hop on a phone call to solve a problem, or join us for a special event – the answer is always yes. The people here are on the stage are some of the best in the business.

As our way of saying thank you for all you do, and in honor of our 175th Anniversary, it is my pleasure to present Copic with this first-ever, **IMS Premiere Partnership Award!**

**** Pause for applause and hand them the award****

Dr. Taylor:

2025 Presidential Citations

In addition to our annual awards, it is my pleasure to honor two people who have gone above and beyond as IMS members this past year. These two individuals took our organization to a new level in our quest to realize our vision to be the leading voice in medicine to make Iowa a premier destination for physicians to live, work, and serve their communities. So I decided to recognize them with a Presidential Citation.

As co-chairs of Operation I.O.W.A., these physicians paved a new path by bringing together more than 60 physicians and health care executives to address the physician shortage crisis. And the result was spectacular. Operation I.O.W.A. created a widely respected and referred to report that captured the attention of the Governor and the Iowa legislature with its recommendations to enhance recruitment and retention efforts and incentives for student loan forgiveness and improvements for rural health care infrastructure. We could not have accomplished so much in a short amount of time without these two.

It is my distinct honor tonight to recognize Dr. Gerard Clancy, from the University of Iowa Health Care, and Dr. Michael McCoy from Great River Health in West Burlington with a Presidential Citation. ***(pause for applause)*** I'd like to invite Dr. McCoy to join us on stage, along with Dr. Jamieson, who is accepting the award on behalf of Dr. Clancy – who is somewhere exotic celebrating his 40th wedding anniversary.

Dr. McCoy and Dr. Jamieson come to the stage and receive awards.

No remarks.

Dr. Jamieson is accepting on behalf of Dr. Clancy.

PHOTO

*****Pause for Applause*****

Dr. Lynch:

Five Iowa Physicians to Watch

This year, we are proud to introduce a new award in honor of our 175th anniversary as an organization, the Five Iowa Physicians to Watch Award, sponsored by Copic. This award recognizes outstanding physicians who show leadership, community impact, and potential for future success.

Please enjoy this short video that honors the five recipients of this first-ever, amazing award. We ask that our winners join us on stage at this time, along with Kristin Stepien, senior vice president, sales and marketing at Copic, sponsor of this award and Dr. Scott

*****Video Plays and award recipients go on stage*****

*****Pause for applause*****

*****Dr. Scott to hand out awards and recipients leave stage*****

NO REMARKS FROM AWARD WINNERS

Dr. Lynch: Congratulations again to all our award winners. Please remember to join us after the program in front of the IMS banner for a formal photo.

Dr. Taylor:

Now, Last but certainly not least, we want to recognize the work that former IMS President **Dr. Jessica Zuzga-Reed** completed during **her seven years** on the IMS Board.

Since she was first active in the AMA during medical school through the Medical Student Section, Dr. Reed has been a steadfast leader and dedicated member of our team. She joined the IMS Board as an At-Large Director in 2019. She quickly ascended to the Executive Committee in 2020, which means that she helped lead our board and our organization through much of the COVID pandemic. Her service included leading us through the uncharted territory of transitioning to fully remote board meetings, and then serving as Board Chair while we had numerous additional board meetings to discuss various aspects of the public health emergency.

During what is typically a less demanding year, in her President-Elect year, Dr. Reed chaired our CEO search committee, which led to the hiring of Mr. Steve Churchill. Dr. Reed served as the 174th IMS President from 2023-2024.

Among her accomplishments as IMS President, she helped lead us across the finish line to get tort reform passed in Iowa. Her professional roles outside of IMS have also

grown during her tenure on the Executive Committee, and during this time she has risen from a largely clinical pediatric intensivist leading her clinical division, to a new role as the interim Chief Medical Officer for MercyOne's Sioux City location.

As she exits our Executive Committee, she is leaving large shoes to fill, but we are grateful for her graceful service, her unwavering commitment to our team and our organization, and her ability to meet a challenge with hard work, a willingness to step up whenever we she was called, and a commitment to taking care of business (and medicine).

Thank you, Dr. Zuzga-Reed, for your service to IMS. It is my honor and pleasure to present you with a gift of our appreciation for your leadership at IMS – [gift].

(Ask her to join up stage)

*****Pause for Applause and Photo*****

Dr. Taylor:

In a tradition that began in 2018, I would also like to present you with your very own IMS Presidential Bobble Head, in recognition of your service as president of IMS.

(Present Bobble Head to Dr. Zuzga-Reed)

*****Pause for Applause and Photo*****

*****NO REMARKS FROM JZR***Dr. Lynch to be seated at this time*****

Dr. Taylor and Steven Churchill fireside chat:

Steven Churchill: At this time, we are going to pull up a couple of comfortable chairs and have a conversation with our outgoing president, Dr. Taylor, so she can share her thoughts and reflections on the past year.

*****Pause for staff to move podium and chairs on awards stage.**

The teleprompter will not be used at this time.***

*****Fireside chat begins*****

Steven Churchill:

Thank you, Dr. Taylor. It's been a pleasure working with you this year. I look forward to our continued work together on behalf of IMS and wish you all the best!

*****pause for applause*****

*****Staff to move the podium back into position and chairs back*****

*****Steve to exit stage and Dr. Lynch to enter stage*****

Dr. Taylor/Dr. Lynch:

Dr. Taylor: Now, it is time to pass the gavel to the new President of the Iowa Medical Society, Dr. Alison Lynch. This gavel was carved as a present for Dr. Walter Bierring when he was installed as President of the Iowa State Medical Society in 1908. Dr. Bierring was the first Iowa physician to serve as President of the AMA.

It is my honor and privilege to install you as the 176th President of the Iowa Medical Society. You have my absolute confidence in your ability to lead IMS during the next year, and I know you will do so with great vision and distinction.

I am proud to present you the Presidential medallion and gavel to signify your position as the next leader of the Iowa Medical Society. Congratulations!

(Dr. Taylor places medallion around Dr. Lynch's neck.)

*****Pause for Applause and Photo*****

Dr. Lynch: It is my honor to present Dr. Taylor with the Past President pin to thank her for her dedication and commitment to the Iowa Medical Society.

****Dr. Lynch will present Dr. Taylor with the Past President's pin****

*****Pause for Applause and Photo*****

Dr. Lynch: Additionally, in recognition of your leadership as president and success in leading the charge for IMS, we want to present you with a special gift. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to IMS.

*****Pause for applause and Photo*****

***** Dr. Taylor exits the stage*****

*****Dr. Jamieson joins Dr. Lynch onstage*****

Dr. Jamieson: It is my great pleasure to introduce my colleague, Dr. Alison Lynch, as the 176th president of the Iowa Medical Society.

Dr. Lynch:

Good evening. I want to thank you all for being here tonight, as we celebrate the 175th Anniversary of the Iowa Medical Society and the passing of the IMS President's medallion. Milestones like this are a good time to reflect on where we've been, where we are now, and where we are headed. I hope you have had a chance to enjoy the video and the walk of IMS history, to learn more about the decades of innovation that have brought us here today. I want to thank the 175th Anniversary Planning Committee, headed by Dr. McMillan, and the entire IMS staff for organizing this incredible event for us this evening.

I am grateful to be with all of you in this beautiful auditorium tonight. Hancher Auditorium is a special place to me, and I suspect it is for many of you, as well. In June, 1985, I walked across the stage of Hancher Auditorium as I graduated from Iowa City West High School. In 1998, I walked across the stage of Hancher Auditorium again, as I graduated from the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine. Both of those events were in the old Hancher, and tonight I get to become the 176th President of the Iowa Medical Society in the new Hancher.

Hancher Auditorium is named after Virgil Hancher, who served as University of Iowa's President from 1940-1964. President Hancher understood the tremendous benefits of bringing people together to experience arts and culture, and today we are the beneficiaries of his bold vision to create a performing arts center that would bring the world's finest performing artists to Iowa. As in arts and literature, Iowa City is a beacon of medical advancement. I am honored to represent this in the auditorium where Lyle Lovett, Wynton Marsalis, the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, and many other masters have filled the stage with their creative genius.

When I think about my path to this moment, I want to acknowledge my most important mentor, my father, Dr. Richard Lynch. My dad was a pathologist here at the University of Iowa. He was also an immunology researcher, a department head, an interim dean, a teacher, a mentor, a writer, a veteran, a New Yorker, an Iowan. It was a special joy to share the profession of medicine with him.

I also want to acknowledge the rest of my family who are here with me tonight. My mother, Nancy Lynch. She has been an incredible support to me, and her willingness to step in whenever I needed help with my 3 kids made it possible for me to be a doctor and a mom. My 3 children: Joey, Veronica, and Luie. You each had to accommodate my busy work hours, but somehow we managed to find the time to go to hockey tournaments, musical theater rehearsals, family trips, read Harry Potter, watch Rough Ruffman and Word Girl--we made it work, and I am so proud of the adults that you have become. And my husband, Eric. You are my best friend and your support helps me to be a better doctor and a better person. Meeting you was the luckiest thing that ever happened to me.

I joined the faculty at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in 2003 after completing my residency training in Family Medicine and Psychiatry. I have focused my practice on the integration of mental and physical health care, and for the past 8 years I have primarily focused on addiction medicine. I direct the UI Addiction and Recovery Collaborative or UI ARC, which incorporates clinical services, educational programming, research, outreach, and advocacy in addiction medicine. I see patients in our MAT clinics. I teach students, residents, fellows, and practicing physicians how to provide

high-quality care to people with addiction and mental health conditions. I direct several grant funded projects aimed at improving access to care for people with substance use disorders. I work with an awesome multidisciplinary team of talented and dedicated people at UI ARC, some of whom are here tonight. I want to thank my UI ARC team for all your support and for helping create an environment that allows me to go to work at my dream job every day. My team really values collaborating with our community, and one of the agencies we work with is Houses into Homes, so I am really pleased that they are being recognized this evening.

Over the past year, another collaboration my team had was with the UI Pentacrest Museums, as we worked together to bring an exhibit to campus called the Into Light Project. This exhibit features portraits and stories of Iowans who have lost their lives due to overdose, and it helps to humanize the experience of addiction, facilitate conversations and compassion, and combat stigma. These stories are testimony that too many lives have been cut short, and that we still have work to do to make addiction treatment widely accessible. The exhibit will be at the Old Capital Museum through the end of 2025, and I invite you to stop by and see it while you are in Iowa City. As I step into the role of IMS President, I hope to use this opportunity to shine a light on mental health and substance use disorders in Iowa, and the Into Light Project exhibit is one example of how we can foster conversations and humanize the experience of addiction.

As we look toward the future, we face a time of change, transition, and uncertainty. When I find myself feeling overwhelmed or anxious about the future, there are a couple ideas that I find helpful. First, human connection is powerful and important. The recent pandemic underscored the critical role that human contact and interaction has on our collective wellbeing. For many of my patients, loneliness and social challenges contribute to their mental health and substance use problems, and this was very apparent during the pandemic. Johann Hari, a British journalist, observed “The opposite of addiction isn’t sobriety, it is human connection.” Not only does lack of human connection lead to worsening mental health and substance use disorder symptoms, but the presence of human connection prevents mental health and substance use disorders and restores mental health. When I was a first year medical

student, one of our faculty, Dr. Bill Erkonen, a radiologist, counseled his students to “just keep showing up.” I think his words meant to literally keep showing up and being a part of the group. If we don’t show up, we get left out or left behind or left alone, and that isn’t good for our mental health and wellbeing. Nor is it good for success in medical school.

The second idea I find helpful during times of uncertainty is to never waste a crisis. In a crisis environment, things are shifting and often chaotic or confusing. The risk/benefit calculations of the past may adjust, making something that seemed risky or out of reach suddenly feel more accessible. Keep your eyes open, opportunities often present themselves during these times, and people may be open to new ideas or willing to try new things. Again, the pandemic showed us this—before the pandemic there were so many barriers to telehealth and when the pandemic hit, telehealth became much more accessible over a course of days to weeks.

I want to close by telling you a little bit about the work of the Iowa Medical Society Foundation. The IMS Foundation is a non-profit organization whose primary purpose is to raise funds to provide scholarships for medical students in Iowa, both from the University of Iowa and Des Moines University, to do elective rotations in global health. For students, the opportunity to travel abroad and learn about health, health care, and the practice of medicine in other countries and cultures can have a profound impact. When I was a medical student, I had the opportunity to do a rotation in the Dominican Republic. It was educational and incredible, and I've never forgotten how fortunate I was to experience it. These types of opportunities for students are as important as ever, but sometimes cost is prohibitive. Scholarships from the IMS Foundation make global health experiences more accessible to more medical students. When you registered for this event, you were asked if you would make a donation to the IMS Foundation. Thank you to all who have donated. There are several ways to further support the IMS Foundation, from single donations to recurring donations, and a new legacy society for planned giving.

The newly established 1850 Legacy Society, created in conjunction with our 175th Celebration, is a way for physicians to continue to make an impact in the future, without

having to tap into their assets today. As you consider your legacy, I hope you will consider becoming a Charter Member of the 1850 Legacy Society by scanning the QR code on the table tent in front of you on your tables this evening.

In whatever way you consider supporting the IMS Foundation, your generosity will help ensure that cost does not keep any medical student from having the opportunity to expand their horizons beyond the classroom.

And with that, here is to another 175 years, and I hope to see you all at the 200th anniversary of IMS!

Dr. Lynch closes program:

On behalf of Dr. Taylor, the entire IMS Board of Directors, and myself, thank you again for joining us this evening. Please enjoy a cupcake before you go to celebrate the Iowa Medical Society's 175th anniversary! Good night and safe travels home!

END