



Lee Jones, MD

The Stanley G. Harris Family Professor
of Psychiatry

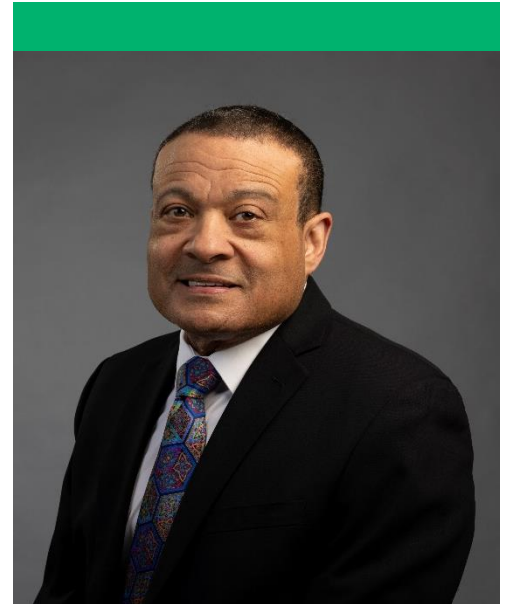
Advancement of Medicine

Rush Medical College has a long and proud history of serving the community and making major contributions to medical science and education. Rush is known nationally for its strong emphasis on community service, empathic patient care, innovative self-directed learning and clinical focus within a major urban academic health system in Chicago. Through a supportive and dynamic learning community, Rush nurtures the development of empathic, proficient physicians dedicated to continuous learning, innovation and excellence in clinical practice, education, research and service. As vice dean for education and student experience at Rush Medical College, I serve as a resource for faculty, students and staff navigating academic and professional challenges. I also support compliance, accreditation and continuous improvement.

As a new member of the wonderful Rush family, I am deeply honored to be named the Stanley G. Harris Family Professor of Psychiatry. Addressing the current and future mental health and wellness needs of all members of all our communities is of the utmost importance. This includes our patient communities and partners, as well as our learners and educators. These needs have become increasingly important, and current events across the globe add urgency to this mission. This generous endowment will enable us to advance the education of future physicians to meet pressing challenges — necessary now more than ever.

Faculty Development, Research and Education

Almost 15,000 people applied for the 144 seats in Rush Medical College's Class of 2030. Each year, we seat a class of outstanding future physicians. Our dynamic and engaged students bring energy to our missions, fueling our staff and faculty work to improve our medical education, scholarly activities and clinical care. We continue to advance both pedagogy and practice in education and clinical care





by refining our curricular approaches and using the most up-to-date evidence-based information and practices. Many Rush colleagues participate in national organizations, serving as thought leaders at the Association of American Medical Colleges, or AAMC, as assessment resources at the United States Medical Licensing Examination, as research advisers at the National Institutes of Health and as policy advisers at the American Medical Association.

This generous professorship has allowed us to expand several endeavors, increasing our already significant impact on medical education, research and clinical care. I'm proud to list some of these efforts on the following pages.

Learning, Networking and Sharing Knowledge

The AAMC, a nonprofit established in 1876 and based in Washington, D.C., represents medical schools and academic societies in the U.S. and Canada. The AAMC administers the Medical College Admissions Test, or MCAT, the American Medical College Application Service, or AMCAS, and the Electronic Residency Application Service, or ERAS, and co-sponsors the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, or LCME, a medical school accrediting body.

Thanks to generous support from the Harris endowment, seven Rush employees, a fourth-year medical student and I attended the **2025 Learn Serve Lead meeting**, the AAMC's premier annual gathering. Those in attendance included the associate dean for education, the associate dean for medical student affairs, the assistant dean for M4 education, the assistant dean for assessment, the director of admissions and recruitment and the director of student professional development. The event featured discussions about the future of medical education, health care policy and research.

Presentations by the Rush team during the meeting included:

- Bunin, J., Brooks, A., Haischer-Rollo, G., **Behel, J.** Promoting civil discourse and community-building in medical education: Creating a comprehensive faculty development initiative. Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). Learn, Serve, Lead Annual Meeting. 2025, November 3. San Antonio, TX.
- Expanding access to research in today's academic landscape: peer-led grassroots initiative, poster presented by Devin Asher, fourth-year medical student.



Funds from the endowment also enabled our associate director of pharmacology education to attend the **AAMC 2025 Midcareer Faculty Leadership Development Seminar**. This three-day event is designed for midcareer faculty on a path toward leadership in academic medicine and science. The seminar covers organizational leadership topics, preparing attendees to achieve their career goals and enabling them to expand their networks of mentors, sponsors and colleagues.

Thanks to your support, our director of clinical skills and a clinician educator attended the annual **Society of Bedside Medicine** meeting. A global community of physician educators, the society aims to foster a culture of bedside medicine through deliberate practice and teaching. It encourages innovation in education and research on the role of clinical encounters in 21st-century medicine.

This Harris endowment also funded the opening presentation and networking reception for the **International Restorative Justice Conference**, which was hosted in October 2025 by Rush Medical College. This event represented the culmination of Rush's decade of bringing restorative community-building and conflict-resolution practices to academic medicine. This work, led by **Jay M. Behel, PhD**, has garnered national and international attention. Dr. Behel also leads training at the AAMC.

The restorative justice approach focuses on repairing harm by bringing together those affected (e.g., victims, offenders and community members) to collectively decide how to address the impact, take responsibility and rebuild relationships. The approach focuses on healing and accountability, rather than justice alone. During the opening presentation, Chief Justice Emeritus Robert Yazzie of the Navajo Nation shared a reflection and personal history. More than 60 participants attended the opening presentation and networking reception.

The conference convened global leaders, scholars and practitioners for a five-day event that blended intellectual engagement with cultural connection. Featuring experts from nine countries, the conference created an immersive experience that highlighted the transformative power of restorative justice across disciplines, institutions and communities. Attendees joined from Italy, Brazil, Egypt, Argentina, Spain, the Navajo Nation, Hawaii, California, Arizona, New York and Illinois.

Supporting Student Education

Funds from the Harris endowment support a portion of the salary of **Kathryn Solka, PhD**, assistant professor in the Department of Microbial Pathogens and Immunity. Dr. Solka serves as course



director for “Food to Fuel,” the gastrointestinal system, nutrition and metabolism course at Rush Medical College. She is an outstanding, passionate, energetic, and caring faculty member, recognized by our students as a phenomenal medical educator. She actively attends to the well-being of our medical students.

The Year Ahead: 2026 and Beyond

Looking toward the future, we plan to further embed Rush’s mission in our education and continue to improve the learning environment. Our plan includes several initiatives.

Teaching Students to Lead With Compassion

The endowment will allow Rush Medical College to join the **Gold Humanism Honor Society’s Gold Partners Council**. The Gold Humanism Honor Society, a nonprofit founded in 1988, is a community of medical students, physicians and other leaders who have been recognized for their compassionate care. GHHS reinforces and supports the human connection in health care, which is essential for the health of patients *and* clinicians.

Rooted in the core values of empathy, integrity and patient-centered care, GHHS initiatives aim to foster humanism in medicine at every level — within institutions, in communities and across health care practices. Each initiative is designed to inspire collaboration, drive innovation and empower health care professionals to lead with compassion.

The Gold Partners Council is composed of top hospitals, health systems and schools that serve as leaders for humanism in health care and provide critical support for the Gold Foundation’s mission. In 2025, the council expanded to welcome nursing schools. Joining the council at the highest level (Hippocrates) will give RMC full access to all tools and resources to maximize the humanistic education of our graduates and support of our faculty and staff.

Joining a National Movement to Enhance Patient-Centered Care

The Kern National Network for Flourishing in Health and the Healing Works Foundation aim to foster a movement that catalyzes systemwide change and achieves patient-centered health goals by integrating four foundational elements within the profession of medicine: character, caring, practical wisdom and flourishing.



Flourishing refers to a wholeness of being and doing that enables individuals to realize their potential and help others do the same. It can be measured across the domains of happiness and life satisfaction, physical and mental health, meaning and purpose, character and virtue, and relationships. It is most commonly achieved through the pathways of family, work, education and spiritual community.

The Kern National Network for Flourishing in Health has three major priorities:

- Transforming medical and health professions education using the concepts of character, caring and practical wisdom
- Working with health care organizations to influence cultures and environments
- Sharing knowledge and engaging partners toward broader policy and systems change

With support from the Harris endowment, Rush will undertake a Catalyst Organization initiative to integrate Kern Foundation ideas and practices in faculty, students and care teams. This integration aligns with Rush Medical College's mission and its vision to be the global leader in student-centered, future-oriented medical education.

Supporting Students and Faculty in Scholarly Endeavors

The Summer Research Fellowship program provides paid research time for our M1 students on a faculty-guided project that helps students gain experience in writing an NIH-style research grant. In the past, roughly 80-97% of M1 students who applied received support, but external funding from federal and private sources has dramatically decreased in the past year. The Harris endowment will allow us to support our students in this research program, training the next generation of researchers.

We will continue and expand the faculty and staff development support noted above. Scholarly activity has been added to the faculty incentive plan to encourage participation at regional, national and international levels. This endowment will allow us to continue and expand this important work.



With Gratitude

The country and world are at a very challenging time now. Our missions at Rush are focused on health and health care, health equity, and innovation in science, clinical care, service and medical education. As both a psychiatrist and educator, I — along with my colleagues — am dedicated to providing the best possible education and learning environment to our trainees. Our work ensures that our graduates are prepared to meet the needs of our diverse communities in the years ahead. This will require we look at people holistically by considering all aspects of their humanity and addressing their mental health needs.

The Stanley G. Harris family's incredibly generous investment in this professorship enables Rush Medical College to succeed in our mission by supporting students, staff and faculty across the spectrum of medical education, well-being and exceptional care for individuals and communities. We could not be doing this work at this level without this wonderful investment. Each of our graduates will go on to care for thousands of people; what a wonderful return on investment. Thank you for your generosity and dedication to making the world a better place.