

Medical College of Georgia State of the College Address

*Transforming Our Statewide Academic Health
System with Digital Innovation and AI*

David C. Hess, MD

Dean, Medical College of Georgia

Executive Vice President, Medical Affairs and Integration

Interim Executive Vice President, Research and Innovation

Presidential Distinguished Chair

Regents' Entrepreneur

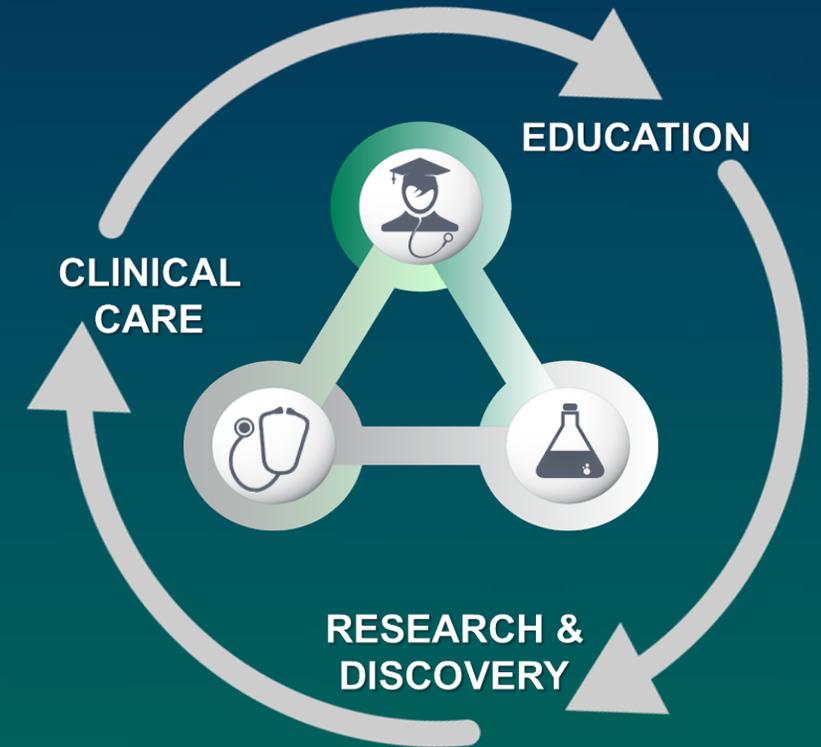
MCG

...the nation's 13th oldest medical school started with 7 students in 1828, now among the top five largest medical school classes.

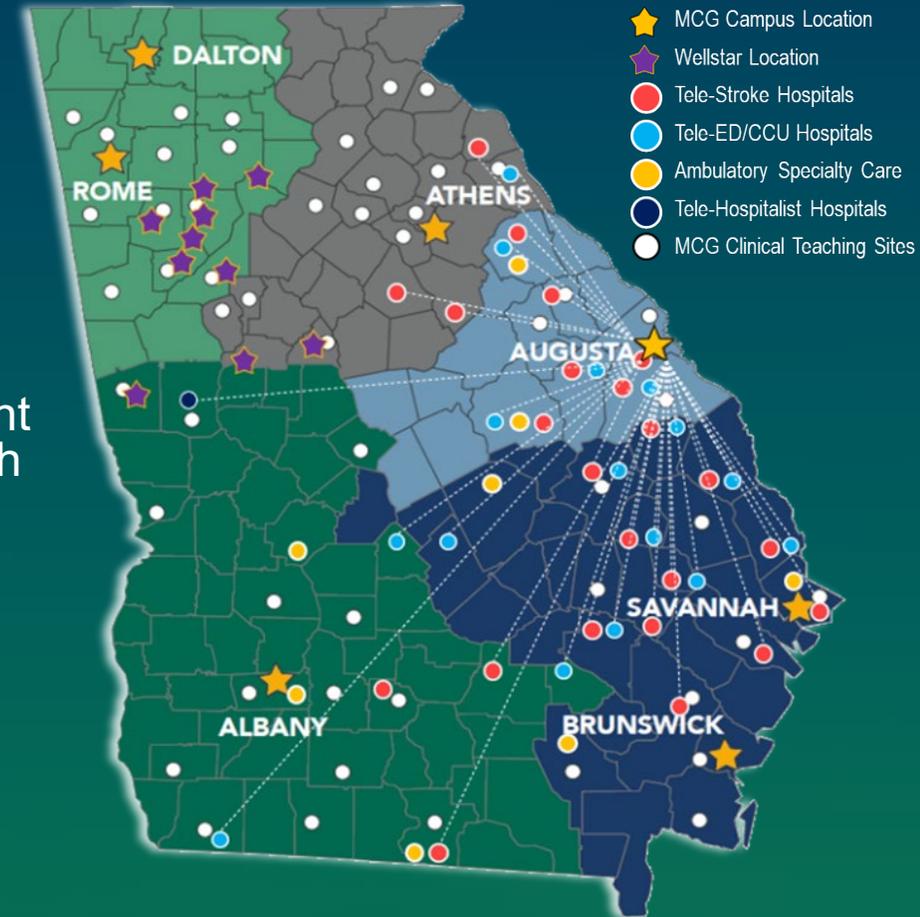
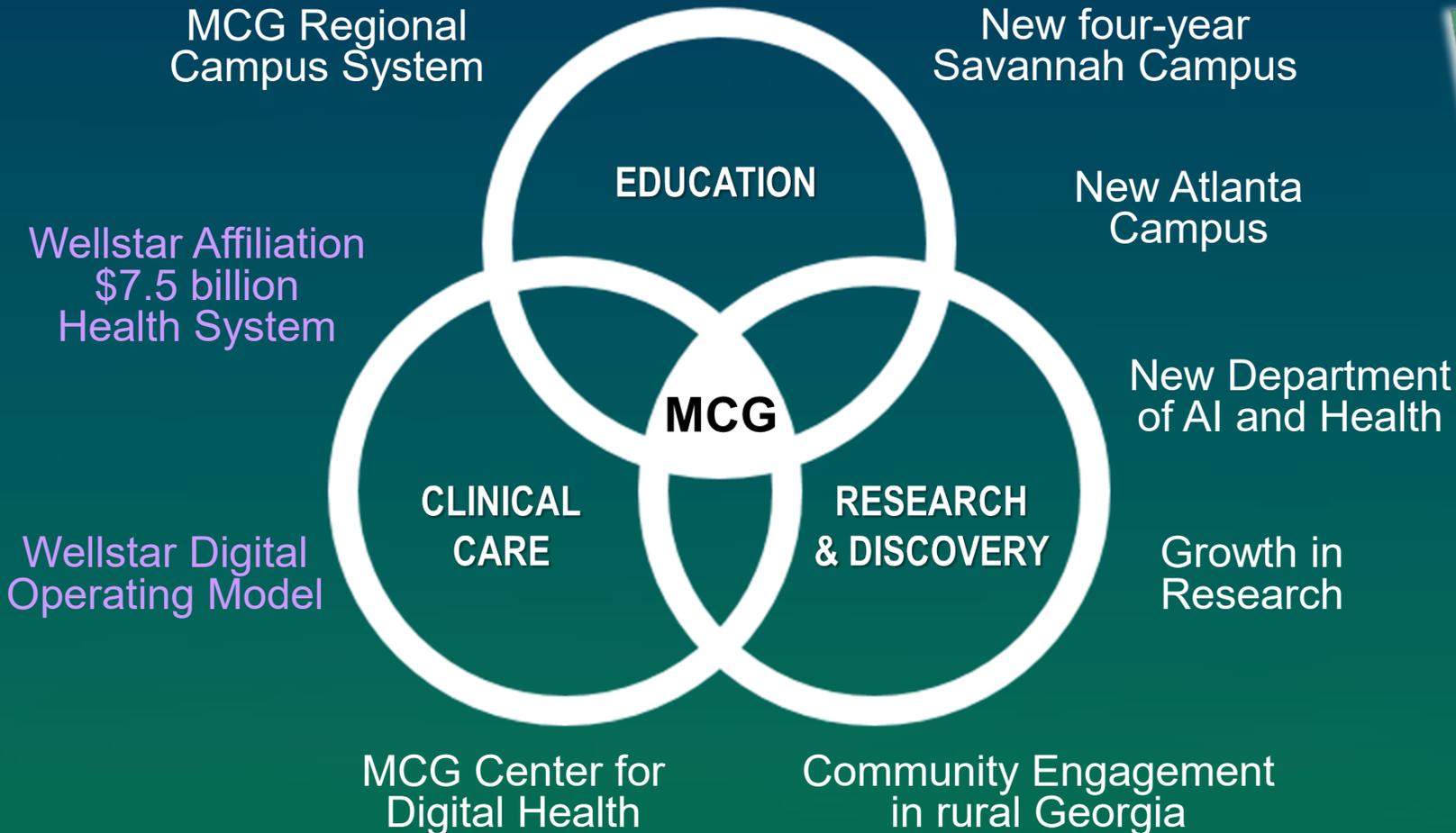


Academic Medical Centers: A National Treasure

- Out of 6,100 hospitals in the U.S., 400 are major teaching hospitals and about **125 are true academic medical centers (AMC)**
- There are **only 2 AMCs in Georgia, (Emory and Wellstar MCG)**, 5 in Ohio, 4 in North Carolina
- Train the majority of medical students, residents and fellows in the U.S.
- Safety net hospitals: 5% of hospitals provide 33% of charity and 27% of Medicaid care
- **Primary source of major medical research discoveries**
- Centers for innovation: **~50% of new drugs approved by FDA are developed in AMCs**



BHAG: Statewide Integrated Public-Private Academic-Community Health System

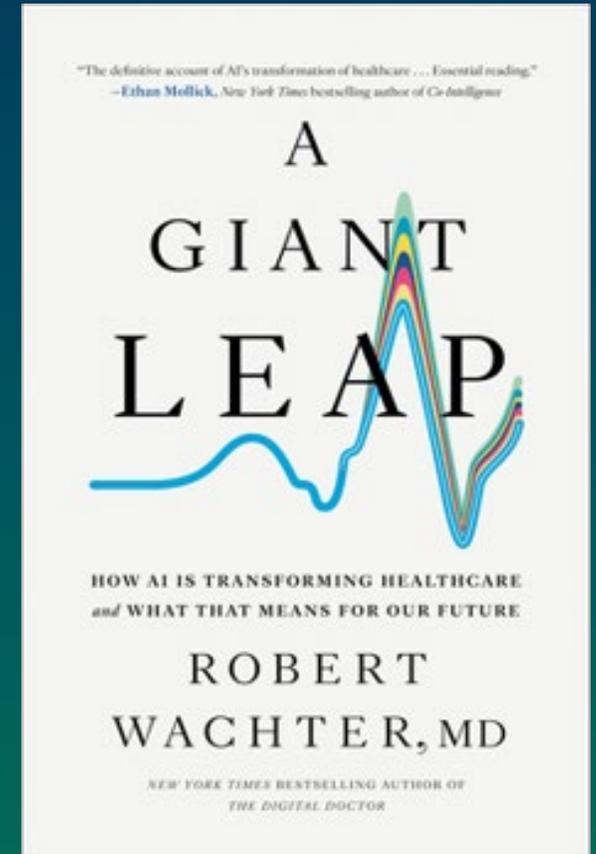


BHAG: Statewide Integrated Public-Private Academic Health System: AI Enabled



AI and Health

- **Medical Education and the Curriculum**
- **Clinical Enterprise**
 - Reduce workload (Preauthorization, discharge summaries)
 - Clinical data warehouse with AI-predictive analytics
 - “Digital scribe”
 - “Digital twin”
- **Rural Health Care**
 - Train AI on rural patients and health
- **Discovery Science**
 - AlphaFold



Georgia Physician Workforce

Georgia's Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)

- ▶ Georgia is the eighth most populous state in the U.S. but ranks #39 in the nation for active physicians (all specialties) and #40 for active primary care physicians per 100,000 population.

AAMC Physician Workforce Data Dashboard

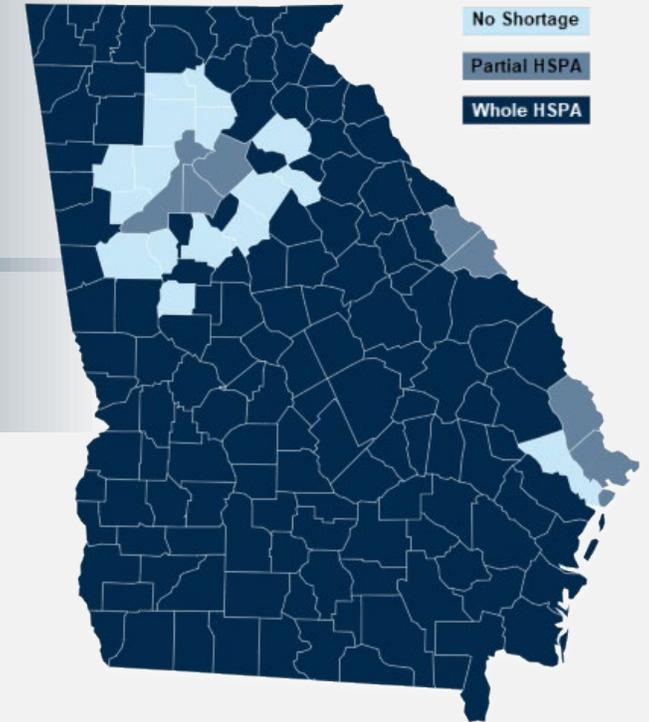
- ▶ Georgia ranks #40 for total number of residents/fellows and #41 in public MD/DO students per 100K population

GEORGIA NEEDS MORE DOCTORS

Number of Georgia counties with

- ▶ No physicians: 10
- ▶ No emergency medicine physicians: 77
- ▶ No family medicine physicians: 19
- ▶ No general surgeons: 83
- ▶ No internal medicine physicians: 42
- ▶ No OB/GYNs: 82
- ▶ No pediatricians: 63
- ▶ No psychiatrists: 95

*Georgia Physician Workforce Report (Spring 2025),
Georgia Board for Health Care Workforce*

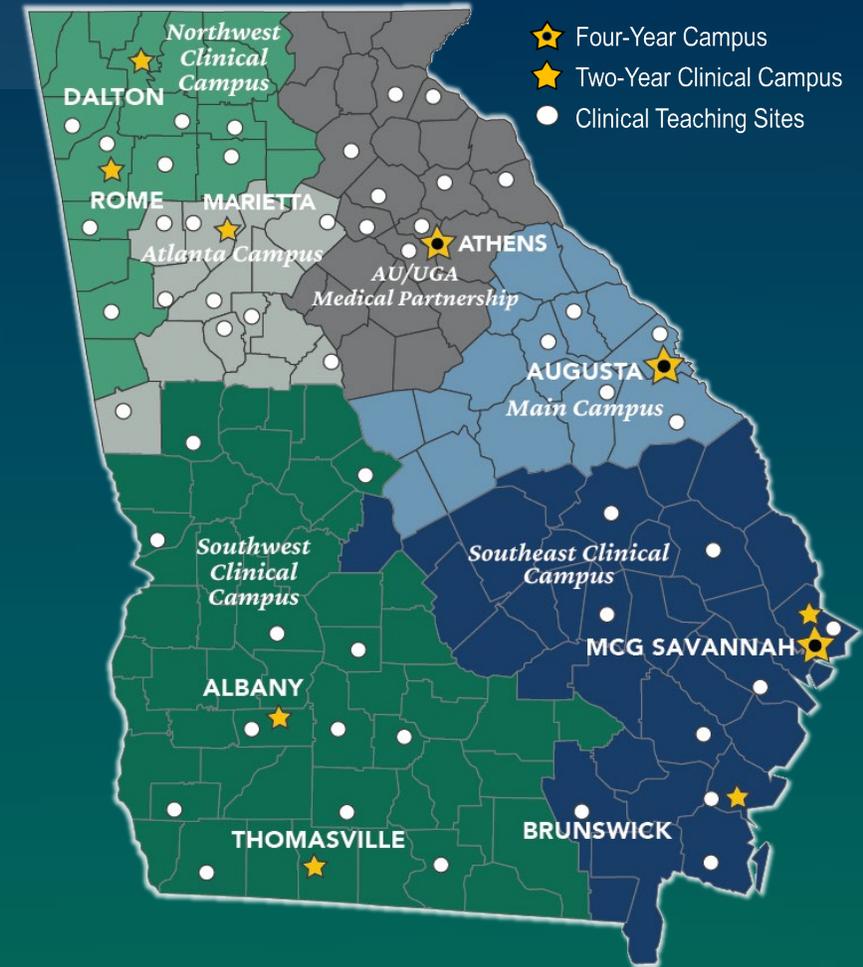


**90% of Georgia's
counties are HPSAs**

**2,783,079 Georgians
live in a HPSA**

Georgia is Our Campus

- Statewide Medical Educational Network
- Entering class of **304** students
- Among the top five largest first-year classes in nation and largest in Southeast
- **MCG's Bicentennial in 2028**

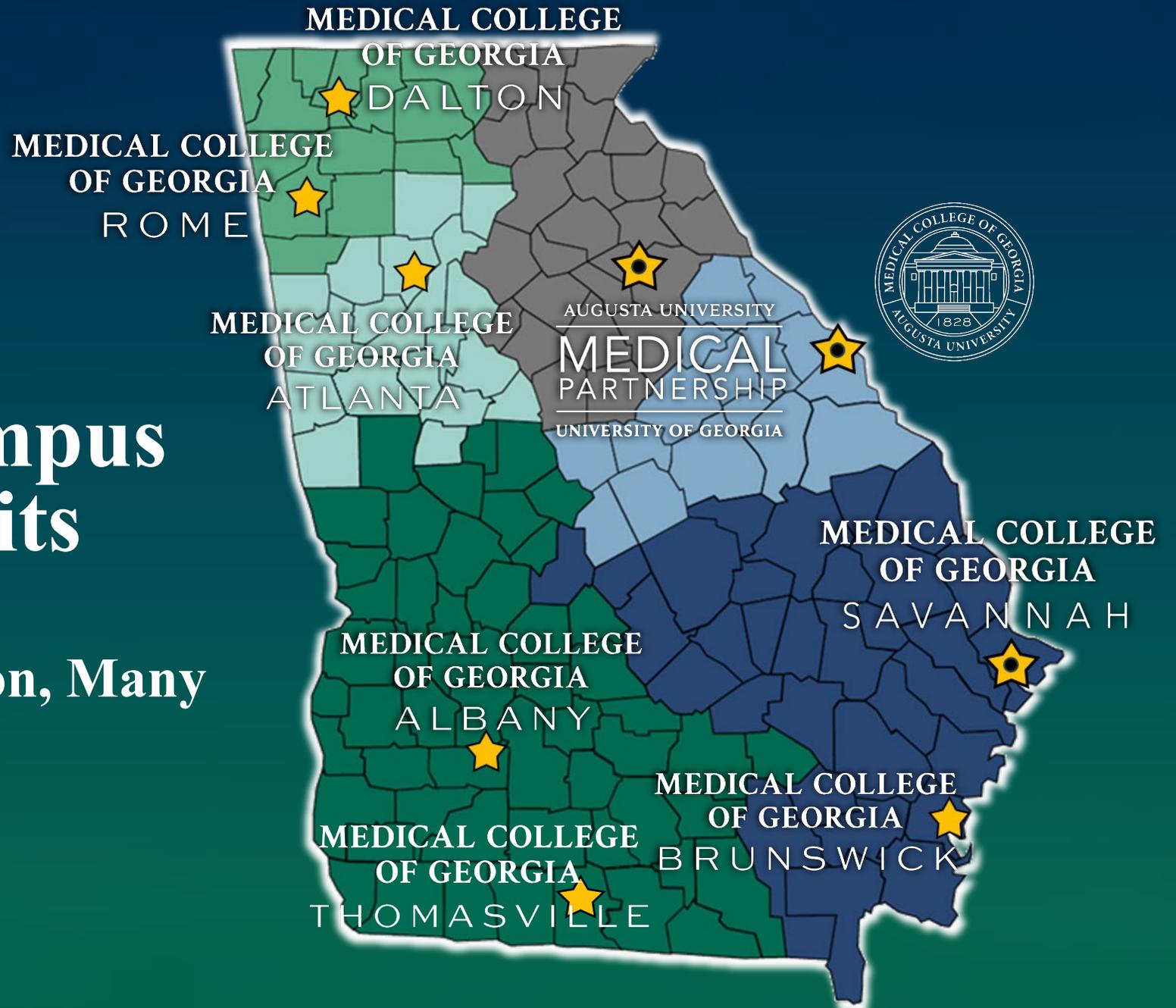


CAMPUS TIMELINE:
Main Campus, 1828
Southwest Campus, 2005
AU/UGA Partnership, 2010

Southeast Campus, 2011
Northwest Campus, 2013
MCG Savannah Campus, 2024
Atlanta Campus, 2025

Regional Campus Virtual Visits

One MCG, One Mission, Many
Campuses





MEDICAL COLLEGE OF GEORGIA ALBANY

Southwest Clinical Campus

- 12 medical students in the Longitudinal Integrated Curriculum (LIC)
- Long-standing educational partnership with Phoebe Putney Health System



Dr. Doug Patten
Campus Associate Dean



Dr. Koosh Desai
Campus Assistant Dean





MEDICAL COLLEGE OF GEORGIA THOMASVILLE



**Our partners at Archbold Health
welcomed the first cohort of students to the
MCG Thomasville campus in January.**



Thomas University

Community Advocate Award

Dr. Raul Santos
MCG Thomasville
Southwest Georgia Campus



Georgia State Capitol



MCG Advocate Award

Rep. Darlene Taylor
Georgia House of Representatives





MEDICAL COLLEGE OF GEORGIA SAVANNAH

- Four-year partnership campus in Savannah seated inaugural class in July 2024
- Welcomed second cohort of students last Fall
- 80 medical students (40 per class)
- Increasing class size to 50 students per year this Fall
- Educational partnership with St. Joseph's/Candler Health System

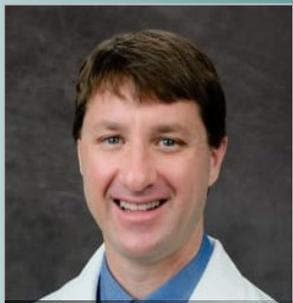




MEDICAL COLLEGE OF GEORGIA BRUNSWICK

Southeast Regional Campus

- Expanded campus rotations, supporting 30%+ of Savannah clinical classes
- Educational partnership with Southeast Georgia Health System



Dr. Stephen Chitty
Campus Associate Dean



Dr. Kregg Laundon
Campus Assistant Dean





MEDICAL COLLEGE OF GEORGIA ROME

Northwest Clinical Campus

- Birthplace of our Longitudinal Integrated Curriculum (LIC)
- 12 medical students
- Educational partnerships with AdventHealth Redmond and Atrium Health Floyd





MEDICAL COLLEGE OF GEORGIA DALTON



MEDICAL COLLEGE OF GEORGIA NORTHWEST

Northwest Clinical Campus

- 6 medical students
- Plans to expand to 8 in 2027
- Educational partnership with Vitruvian Health Hamilton Medical Center





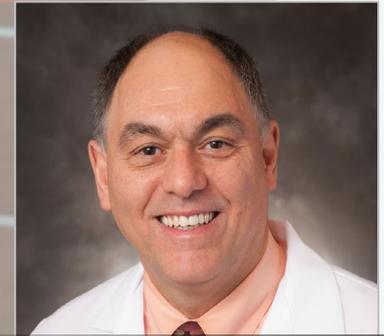
MCG Atlanta Campus Ribbon Cutting



MEDICAL COLLEGE OF GEORGIA ATLANTA

Wellstar Kennestone

- Two-year clinical campus in Atlanta became official January 2025
- 23 medical students
- Early Match in ophthalmology for two MCG Atlanta students in the Class of 2026



Dr. Louis Lovett
Campus Associate Dean



Dr. Usha Anand
Campus Assistant Dean, Curriculum

AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY
**MEDICAL
PARTNERSHIP**
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

- Four-year partnership campus in Athens
- 240 medical students (60 per class)
- Students at the medical partnership (classes of 2027, 2028 and 2029) will remain MCG students until they graduate



**Congratulations UGA
School of Medicine on
being granted preliminary
accreditation by LCME**



AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY
**MEDICAL COLLEGE
OF GEORGIA**

- MCG's main campus in Augusta is home to 204 students per class
- Expanding to 254 students per class in Fall 2026



J. Harold Harrison, M.D. Education Commons
Medical College of Georgia



MCG Class of 2029

- Applications: 3,367
- Matriculated: 304
 - 204 in Augusta
 - 60 in Athens
 - 40 in Savannah
- Men: 126
- Women: 178
- Average Age: 23.5 (range 19-43)
- Colleges/Universities: 64
- Avg MCAT: 512
- Average GPA: 3.8
- Non-Traditional: 119
- Non-GA Residents: 4
- GA Counties: 49
- Students from under-served counties: 71

Innovative Curriculum With Personalized Pathways

MCG 3+ Pathways



Enables students to graduate in three years and enter an affiliated primary care residency program.



Enables students to use their fourth year for advanced clinical training in their chosen future career specialty.



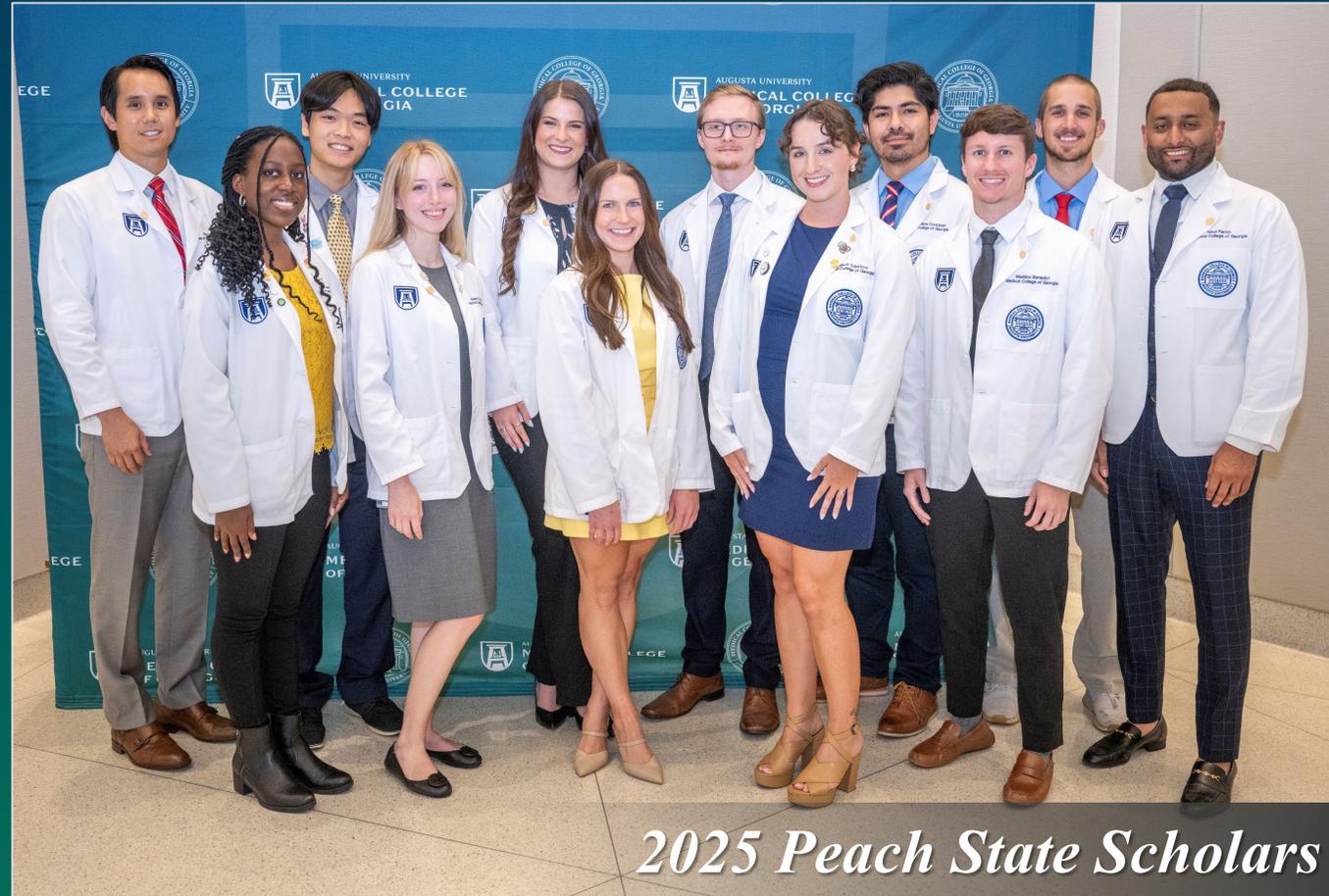
Gives students the opportunity to more efficiently earn a dual degree, like an MD/MPH or MD/MBA.



Gives students in-depth training and faculty-mentored experiences for careers as clinician-scientists.

Peach State Scholars: More Doctors for Rural Georgia

- **Peach State Scholars** commit to practicing a primary care specialty in an underserved area in Georgia after completing residency training
- Economic impact of MCG 3+ is \$7.2 million/year
- Annual cohorts have steadily increased since program launched – from 8 in 2021 to 13 in 2025



Peach State Graduates

- Three cohorts (21 graduates to date) have graduated medical school and entered MCG-affiliated primary care residency programs
 - Emergency Medicine (6)
 - Internal Medicine (5)
 - Pediatrics (4)
 - Obstetrics and Gynecology (3)
 - Psychiatry (2)
 - Family Medicine (1)
- First group of Peach State Scholars will complete residency training this year



Arika Shaikh
Family Medicine



Cayman Bickerstaff
OB/GYN



Edil Nour
Psychiatry



Samantha Feinstein
Pediatrics



Claud Bugheni
Emergency Medicine



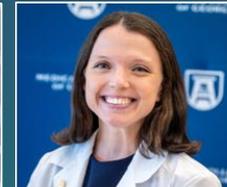
My Duyen Vo
Pediatrics



Sarah Chappell
Pediatrics



Bailey Rodgers
OB/GYN



Jessica McElrath
Family Medicine



Michael Butler
Internal Medicine



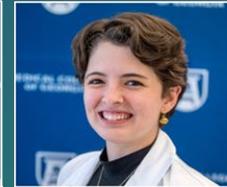
Reggie Benson
Emergency Medicine



Scotty Hall
Internal Medicine



Jordan Bothwell
Emergency Medicine



Brianna Nicholson
Psychiatry



Luis Rodriguez
Emergency Medicine



S. Maduraiveeran
Internal Medicine



Madison Chimenti
Emergency Medicine



Caleb Padgett
Internal Medicine



Adir Mohaban
Emergency Medicine



Christopher Dick
Internal Medicine



Blayne Thomason
OB/GYN

MCG Admissions

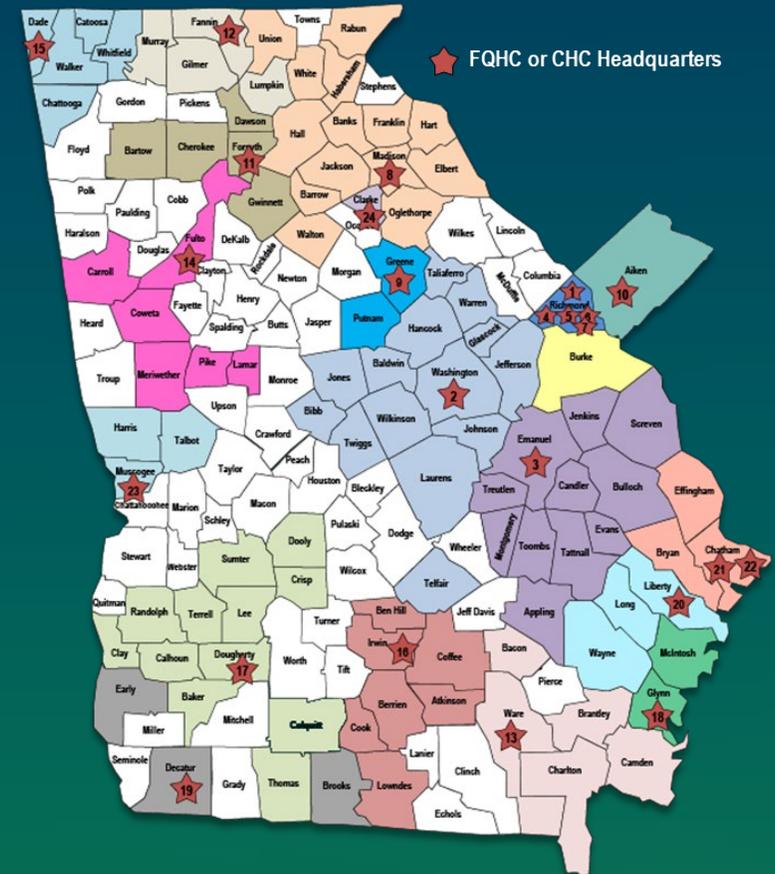
Multiple new pathways to help achieve our mission:

- **Assurance In Medicine (AIM):**
 - Undergraduate pathway program for qualified Georgia students
 - 3 students (from Coastal Georgia, Columbus State and AU) matriculating this fall
 - 5 students returning for year 2
 - Recruitment now open for next group of rising Juniors
- **Regional Clinical Campus Pathway**
 - Early linkage at time of admission to the NW or SW campus
- **Early Assurance Medical Masters**
 - Opportunity for students to strengthen academic rigor
 - 11 students from this program will matriculate this fall



Federally Qualified Health Centers: The Most Important Primary Care Network No One Knows About

- Strategic educational partnerships with 60% of all FQHCs in Georgia
- Strengthening Georgia's Rural and Underserved Health Care Workforce
 - Now operating 20 clinical rotation sites
 - Training MCG's "Physicians in Training" in rural underserved communities



Professionalism Award

Dr. Ashley Saucier

*Assistant Dean for Evaluation, Accreditation, and CQI
Director, MCG FQHC/CHC Educational Affiliations
Associate Professor of Family and Community Medicine*



Community Advocate Award

Dr. David Ringer

CEO, Oconee Valley Healthcare

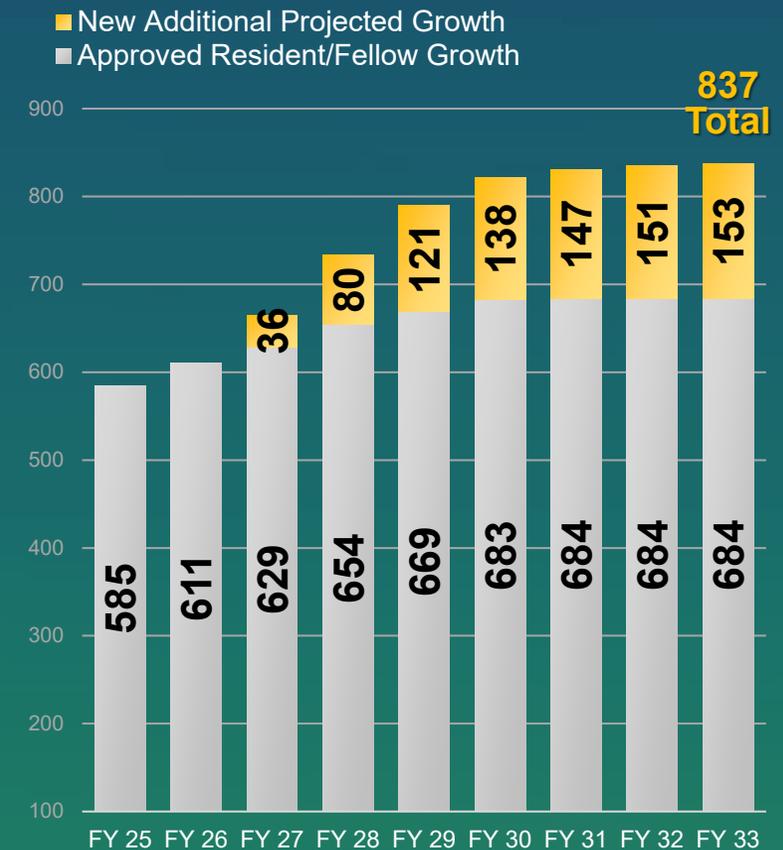
Chief of Staff, St. Mary's Good Samaritan Hospital



Graduate Medical Education

- MCG is the 2nd largest provider of GME in GA
- Georgia ranks #40 for total number of residents/fellows
- Wellstar MCG Rural Hospital Designation (Medicare)
 - **Increase in IME cap by 30%**
 - **From 300 to 390 – GREAT News!**
- Additional increase in IME by allowing for a 5-Year IME CMS cap-building phase for each new residency/fellowship program

MCG – Sponsored GME Program Projected Growth



GME Expansion in Savannah

New GME Program in Partnership with St. Joseph's/ Candler Health System



- Dr. John Cinicola, new Internal Medicine GME Program Director
- Plans to grow to **100+** residents/fellows in 4 programs by FY 33



Department of Psychiatry and Health Behavior

- Dr. Boadie Dunlop joined us August 1 as the new chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Health Behavior and Case Distinguished University Chair
- Clinical psychiatrist who specializes in mood disorders and anxiety
- Came to MCG from Emory University, where he directed the Mood and Anxiety Disorders Program and the Adult Psychiatry Outpatient Program



Department of Emergency Medicine

- Dr. Stephen Shiver named chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine in November 2025
- Earned his medical degree and completed residency training at MCG, joined the faculty in 2005
- Served nine years as residency program director, expanding the program and launching a 17-year partnership with the U.S. Army
- Under his leadership, patient experience scores in the ED have dramatically improved

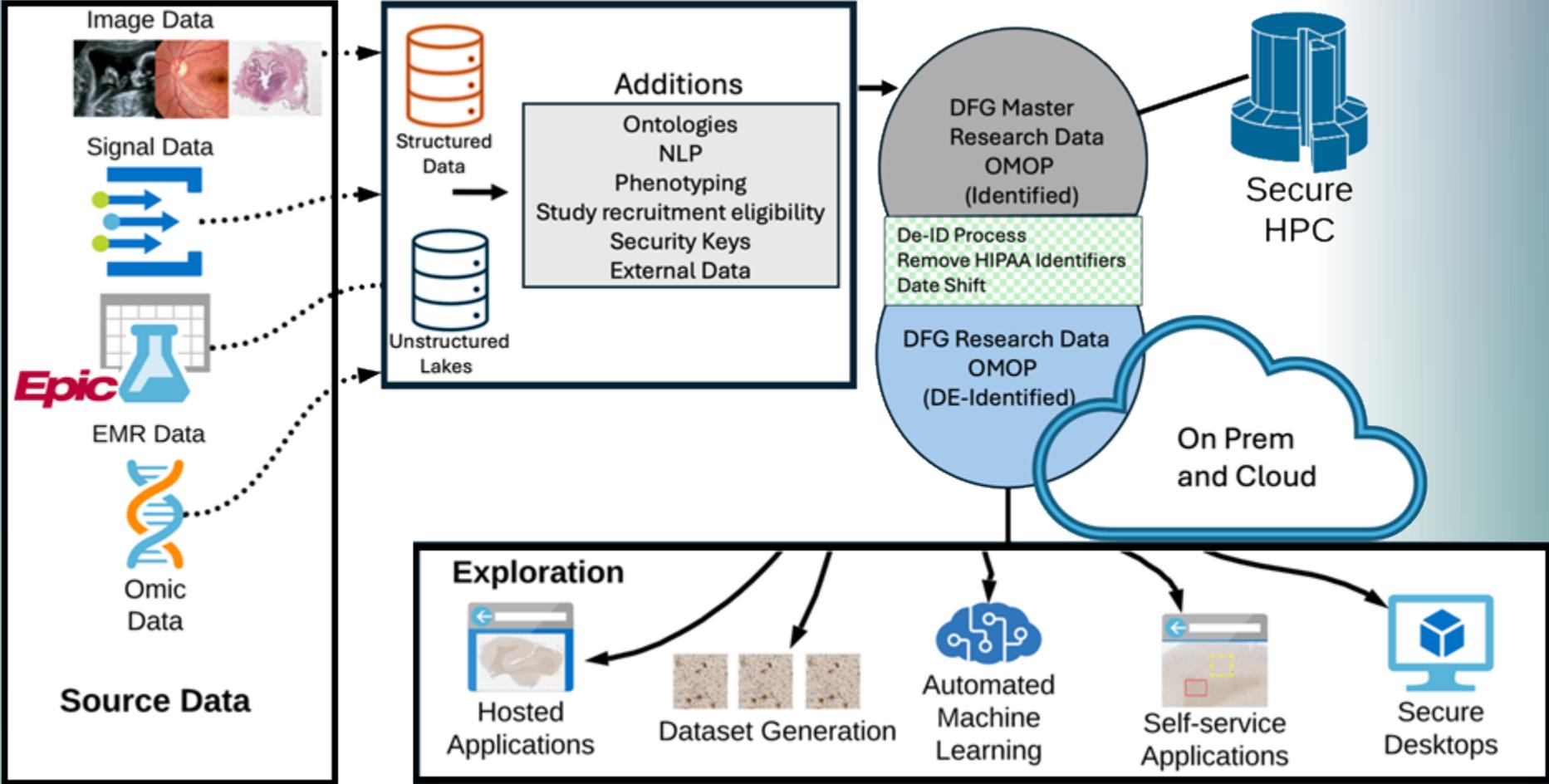


Department of AI and Health

- Dr. Jeffrey Talbert joined us September 1 as the inaugural Department Chair and GRA Eminent Scholar in AI and Health
- Has led more than 100 funded research projects totaling more than \$130 million
- Will recruit up to 15 faculty over the next 3 to 5 years
- **Rapid Actionable Data for Opioid Research in Kentucky (RADOR-KY)**

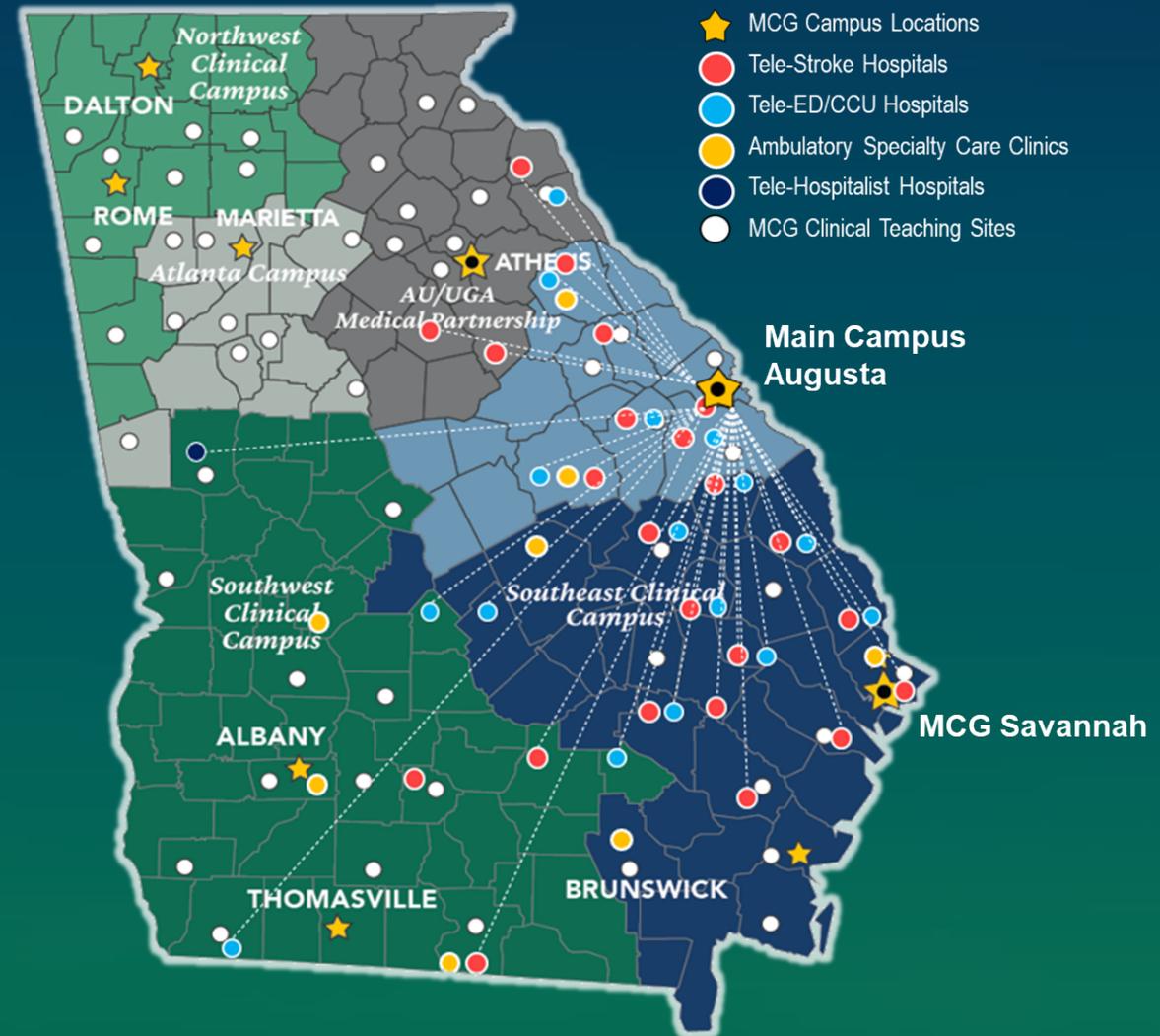


Clinical Data Warehouse: Data for Good



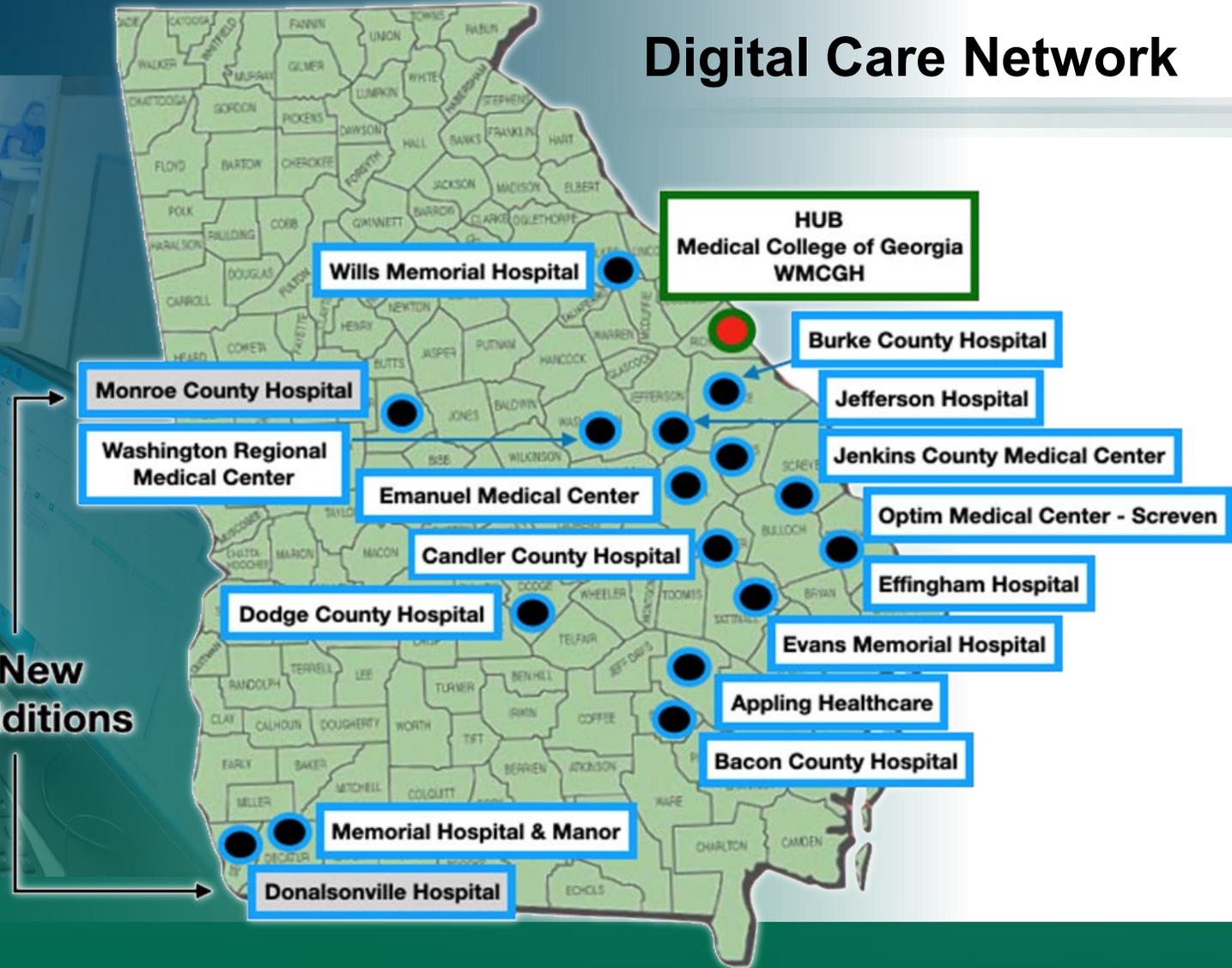
Wellstar-MCG Emphasis on Digital Health

- **MCG Center for Digital Health** directed by Matt Lyon, MD, Professor of Emergency Medicine and J. Harold Harrison, MD Distinguished Chair in Telehealth
- Telehealth support of rural hospitals
- Tele-ED, tele-ICU, tele-stroke, tele-OB
- Standardize telehealth education and service delivery integration



MCG Center for Digital Health

Digital Care Network



Columbia County Hospital and MOB: A Digital Hospital

Anticipated opening:

- Hospital – August 2026
- MOB – October 2026



Wellstar Children's Hospital of Georgia Receives Historic \$50 Million Investment from Tom Golisano, Unlocking Further Excellence and Innovation in Care for Children



People and Relationships Are Everything

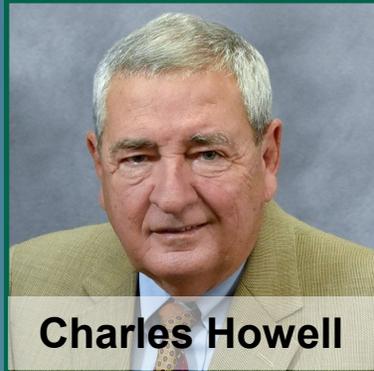
Joint Operating Committee



David Hess



Beverly Bella



Charles Howell



Natasha Savage



Jennifer Miller



Juan Guzman

Key Partners



Ralph Turner



Phillip Coule



Richard Freeman



Jason Stevens



Nelson So



Ceci Turner

NIH Budget: Good News

- The National Institutes of Health (NIH) received a \$415 million boost for the fiscal year 2026, bringing the total to \$48.7 billion
- Budget includes specific increases, such as \$128 million for cancer research and \$100 million for Alzheimer's disease
- Current structure of the NIH's 27 institutes and centers remain unchanged
- **No cuts to indirect rates**



**Eric Kern, AVP for
Sponsored Programs**

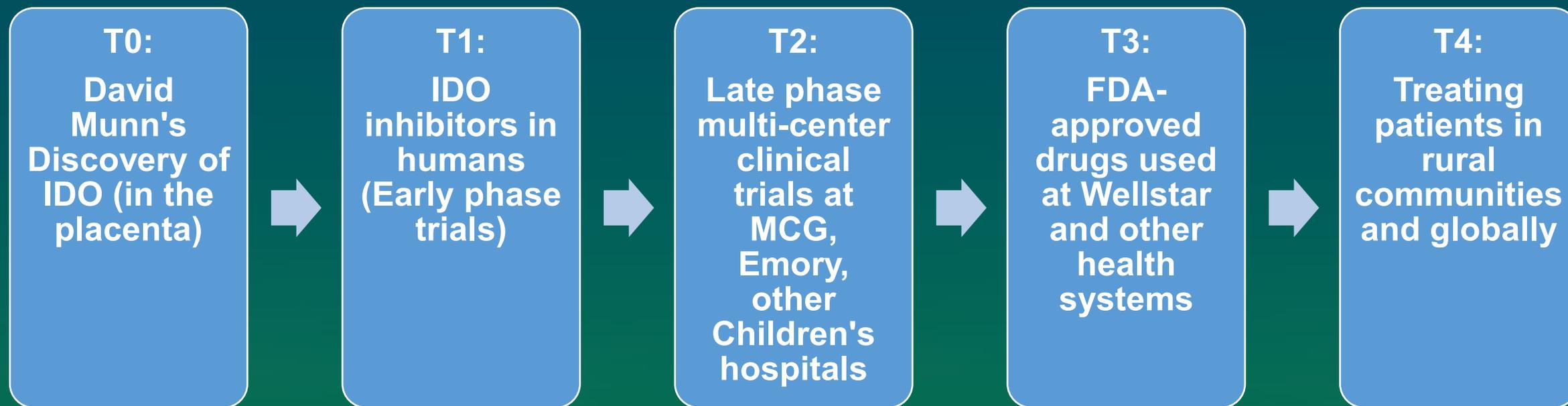
Groundbreaking Bench to Bedside Translation in Pediatric Brain Tumors

Dr. Munn serving as interim director of the Georgia Cancer Center

- Discovery of role of IDO in tolerance of pregnancy in 1998 (D. Munn and A. Mellor)
- Development of Indoximod, an IDO Inhibitor, as cancer immunotherapy
- Indoximod well tolerated and strong hints of efficacy in clinical trials in pediatric brain tumors (T. Johnson)
- FDA approval of new drug

T0 to T4 Translational Research Continuum

T1TR			T2TR			
Basic Research	Pre-Clinical Studies	Clinical Efficacy	Clinical Effectiveness	Dissemination	Implementation	Impact
T0: Basic Research	T1: Translation to Humans	T2: Translation to Patients	T3: Translation to Practice	T4: Translation to Communities		



Our Faculty Do Great Research



MCG starts human trials on deep brain stimulation for Alzheimer's patients



MCG scientists publish research on improving muscle, bone health in aging



IMMCG researchers develop tool to sharpen accuracy of personalized medicine



MCG researchers uncover how exercise reboots vascular health in diabetes



MCG faculty secure \$3.2 million grant from Department of Defense



Georgia Cancer researcher filling gap in prostate cancer treatment



Leducq
Foundation

ARTERIOGENESIS IN TRANSLATION (ARTIST) | 2025

Coordinators:

Christiana RUHRBERG, University College London (UK)
Brian ANNEX, Medical College of Georgia (USA)

Members:

Christopher CHEN, The Wyss Institute at Harvard University (USA)
Boris KHOLODENKO, University College Dublin (Ireland)
Martin SCHWARTZ, Yale University School of Medicine (USA)
Michael SIMONS, Yale University School of Medicine (USA)
Ellie TZIMA, University of Oxford (UK)
Oleksii RUKHLENKO, University College Dublin (Ireland)
Tamara BIDONE, University of Utah (USA)
Martina RUDNICKI, University College London (UK)

Brian Annex awarded \$8.5 million grant from the Leducq Foundation for Cardiovascular Research to help create better treatments for peripheral artery disease.

MCG/AU ranks among top 10 nationally in American Heart Association funding

- Among the top 10 research organizations in the nation in AHA funding in 2025, with 50 active grants totaling nearly \$16 million
- MCG listed alongside institutions like Stanford, UAB, and Johns Hopkins in the rankings
- Awarded additional 10 pre- and postdoctoral fellowships from the AHA, totaling more than \$1.3 million in funding



American
Heart
Association.

AU research team, led by **Jennifer Sullivan**, awarded a \$4.4 million grant from the American Heart Association (Strategically Focused Research Network) to study the risk factors for cardiovascular and kidney diseases and how they impact women.



We're building something big.



IMMUNOLOGY CENTER OF GEORGIA

AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY

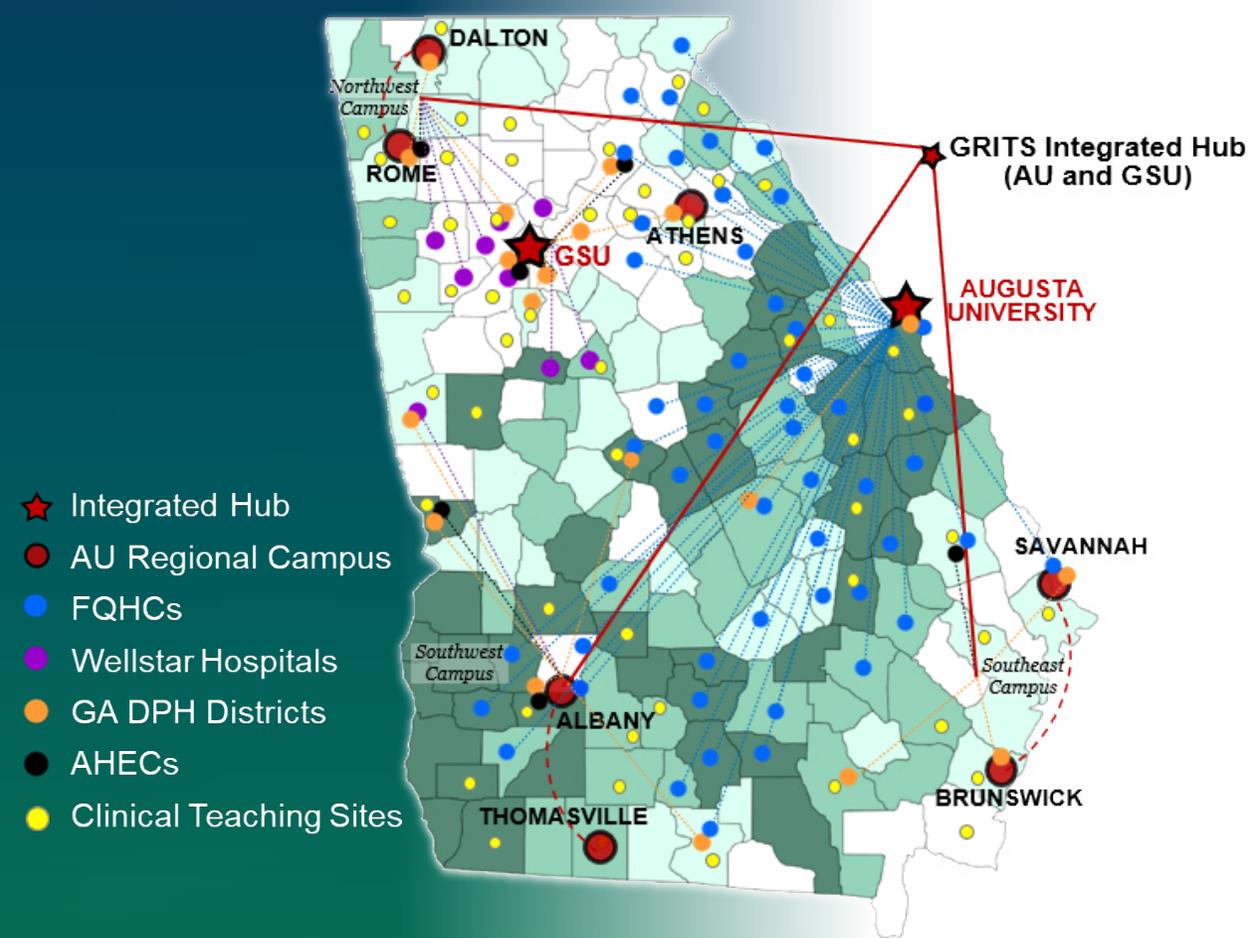


Lynn Hedrick and Klaus Ley



Georgia Research Institute in Translational Science (GRITS): A collaboration between MCG/AU and Georgia State University

- NIH Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA)
- GA ranks 40th in most health outcomes
- Health outcomes worse in south GA
- Focus on rural health and underserved rural populations
- Hub and Spoke network
- Data for Good
- Clinical trials
 - Vision: access to clinical trials at all Wellstar hospitals and clinics



Advancing Community Health In Collaboration With Georgia Communities



HUB, MCG partnership wins
\$200,000 NIH Build UP Trust
Challenge



Co-Researcher Activation Network (CRANE): *Co-creating with communities*



Community Health and Research Translation
network (CHART): *Translating science to practice*



Clinician Academic Development and
Research Education network (CADRE):
*Preparing physicians to apply emerging
evidence*



New Translational Research Building



Construction Start (Initial Sitework): January 2027
Anticipated Completion: Spring/Summer 2029

BHAG: Statewide Integrated Public-Private Academic Health System





Thank you for all you do!