Using input gathered by the dean during 35 meetings with more than 520 participants including faculty, staff, residents, board members, hospital leaders, and community physicians, the leadership team held a series of planning retreats in 2013 and early 2014 to develop the medical school strategic plan for 2014-2018.

A Message from the Dean

The opening of Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine is a testament to the vision and dedication of our community. It is a challenging opportunity to create a new medical school, but the odds of successfully creating a great school are significantly increased when the community works alongside. Thanks to the collaboration and engagement of our community we are not just the newest of 141 US medical schools, we are achieving successes on our pathway of excellence. 2014-15 was a year of firsts that gave us reasons to celebrate.

We announced the naming of the medical school in honor of Dr. Homer Stryker, a WMU alumnus and founder of Stryker Corporation. The naming recognized the donors of the 2011 foundational $100 million gift—Stryker’s granddaughter Ronda Stryker, and her husband William Johnston. They have given our city, state, and nation a wonderful gift that forever honors Dr. Homer Stryker. Their vision and generosity brought together WMU, Borgess Health, Bronson Healthcare, and our community to create a medical school that will enable future generations to make their own marks in medicine, following in Dr. Stryker’s footsteps.

The inaugural class of 54 exceptional medical students arrived in August 2014 and began the innovative team-based curriculum that is designed to prepare them to be exceptional clinicians, leaders, educators, advocates, and researchers of tomorrow. With the arrival of our inaugural class, the community opened its arms and hearts to welcome them and make Kalamazoo feel like home.

I encourage you to review this Annual Report to learn more about the medical school’s six strategic goals and our progress through the academic year 2014-15. Thank you for your continued support to help us fulfill our mission and achieve our vision to be distinguished as a leader among medical schools through community collaboration in medical education, patient care, research, and service. We are fortunate to be a member of an active community that is engaged and committed to the future success of Kalamazoo and southwestern Michigan. Please share our achievements thus far, and the future, as a community success.

Hal B. Jenson, MD, MBA
Founding Dean
The inaugural class of medical students started the first day of classes on August 18, 2014. By the end of April 2015, the students completed 12 courses, which marked the end of the first year of the Foundations of Medicine curriculum. Students celebrated with a picnic to honor this milestone in their journey to earn the MD degree.

On September 17, 2014, members of the class of 2018 were presented with their white coats, the most recognized symbol of the medical profession. At a special ceremony, the students recited a medical student oath that set expectations and defined values that they pledged to keep.

Development of the team-based medical student curriculum is keeping pace with the rollout of the curriculum. The Transition to Medicine course included unique training as Medical First Responders to help prepare students for their patient encounters during the Introductory Clinical Experiences course. Student assessment results are on target. Students have been tested on two of four summative exams in the first two years that use standardized questions from the USMLE Step 1 examination. The WMed students performed slightly below the average of all second year medical students nationwide. For students considered to be at risk, learning contracts are established by the Student Performance Committee to support their remediation.

In May 2015, medical students began to interact with inpatients at Borgess Medical Center and Bronson Methodist Hospital to complete history and physical examinations as part of their clinical skills coursework.

The medical school entered into a partnership in 2014 with the Battle Creek Community Foundation to present the annual Sherwood B. Winslow M.D. Distinguished Lectureship. Continuing a legacy of more than 20 years, the lectureship brings a prominent national speaker to Battle Creek annually to strengthen healthcare understanding and lead to enhanced healthcare decision-making in the community. Planning is underway for this to be sponsored twice annually beginning in the 2015-16 academic year.

Four student learning communities with Scholar-Advisors provide social and academic support for medical students. The Medical Student Council serves as a communications link with the medical school administration regarding issues of importance to students. Students have formed numerous special interest groups, appointed representatives to five national medical student organizations, and also serve on several medical school committees.

For the inaugural class, merit- and need-based scholarships were provided to each student in the range of $4,000 to $16,000. The approach now provides a handful of quarter- and half-tuition scholarships that are awarded for the full four years of medical school. This approach was developed to be more competitive with other medical schools and to help better shape our class to attain the diversity that we seek in the student body.

A medical student recruitment plan guided the process to recruit the next class of medical students, with specific actions to continue to enhance the diversity of our student body. The admissions process focuses on selecting well-rounded medical students with strong experiences, attributes, and academic metrics. The process also recognizes the importance of helping to address the populations traditionally under-represented in medicine (URM) defined as African American, Hispanic, and Native American/Alaskan. The class of 2018 includes 11% URM students and the class of 2019, which began on August 10, 2015, includes 17% URM students. This brings the WMed medical student population to 14% URM. The admissions process also supports our efforts to seek students from varying socioeconomic (SES) backgrounds. The class of 2018 includes 15% with lower SES backgrounds and the class of 2019 includes 8% of students with lower SES backgrounds. Geographically, with the addition of the incoming class of 2019, the WMed student body includes graduates from 58 undergraduate institutions hailing from 20 different states.

Our admissions process is designed to be holistic, create a diverse group of medical students, and recognizes that each student brings something unique to the learning environment.
In late March, Ernest Yoder, MD, PhD, MACP began his new role as associate dean for graduate medical education. Serving as the ACGME designated institutional official (DIO), Dr. Yoder assumed the responsibilities for oversight of the medical school’s residency and fellowship training programs.

WMed’s residency programs experienced exceptional Match Results, with 100% of all resident training slots filled. The new resident physicians began their residency training at WMed as of July 1, 2015. Match Day is the time-honored event held at medical schools across the country during which each graduating medical student learns where they will spend the next three to seven years of residency training. Match Day represents the culmination of their medical school education and the Match ultimately determines the course of their medical careers. Residents practice the medicine of their choice in a clinical setting under the supervision of fully licensed physicians.

The Family Medicine Residency Program moved to the Family Health Center on Paterson Street. Twenty-five exam rooms are dedicated to the WMed faculty and residents who see patients as “Team Oakland,” providing patient care from infants to geriatrics including obstetrics and prenatal care. The WMed faculty and residents provide inpatient admission coverage at Bronson Methodist Hospital and benefit from working with a broad, diverse patient population.

Robert W. Rebar, MD was named the new department chair for OB-GYN and planning continues for creation of the OB-GYN Residency Program.

The WMed Office of Continuing Education obtained full accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), a not-for-profit organization responsible for accrediting US institutions that offer continuing medical education through a voluntary, self-regulatory system. Previously since 1976, WMed has been accredited at the state level. Dean Hal Jenson, MD, was proposed by the American Hospital Association and subsequently named by the ACCME to their board of directors for a three-year term effective January 1, 2015.

On April 1, 2015, WMed hosted Steven J. Stack, MD, president-elect of the American Medical Association for a lecture, “Advances and Perspectives in Medicine and Health,” which was attended by faculty, residents, and medical students.

As a result of a grant awarded by the American Academy of Pediatrics to WMed pediatric chief residents, Megan Sikkema, DO and Jamie Johnson, DO, a nationally-recognized expert on early brain development, Andrew Garner, MD, PhD, was the featured speaker at a day-long symposium as part of the Kalamazoo Community Mental Health System of Care Conference.

In addition to an MD-MBA program in conjunction with the WMU Haworth College of Business, WMed has established new agreements to offer an MD-PhD in Biological Sciences with WMU, and an MD-PhD in Cellular and Molecular Biology with the Van Andel Institute Graduate School.

Planning is underway for WMed to offer several new healthcare-related degree and certificate programs in the future including: master of science degree in biomedical sciences, master of science degree and certificate in medical engineering, and master of science degree and certificate in clinical informatics.

The new Simulation Center in the lower level of the medical education facility on the W.E. Upjohn M.D. Campus has been operationalized and is providing simulation-based education for medical students, residents, and faculty; and providing certification courses to community healthcare providers, emergency medical personnel, and the public. The standardized patient program trains learners in physical examination skills, history taking, communication, and other clinical skills.
Joseph D’Ambrosio, MD, DMD, was named as the associate dean for clinical affairs, effective April 1, 2015. He is responsible for oversight of the medical school faculty practice plan, clinical services, clinical quality improvement, and clinic accreditation.

The Michigan Association of Medical Examiners (MAME) is a state-wide membership organization that fosters the highest professional standards in the performance of the duties of the county medical examiners in Michigan. In addition to her current medical school duties, Leslie Johnson, manager in the Office of the Dean, has been appointed executive director for MAME, assuming responsibilities for association administration, management, membership, support for the MAME Board of Directors, and the annual conference.

The Office of the Medical Examiner opened in July 2014 in its new location on the 7th floor of the medical education facility on the W.E. Upjohn M.D. Campus. The Office services Muskegon, Allegan, Calhoun, and Kalamazoo counties; and provides forensic pathology services to additional counties. A new Forensic Anthropology Recovery Unit provides search and recovery services to law enforcement agencies of counties that utilize the office’s postmortem examinations. Following a comprehensive review, the Office of the Medical Examiner was awarded full accreditation from the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME). NAME accreditation focuses on improving the quality of medicolegal investigation of death in the US and is a benchmark standard for medical examiner offices. A fourth forensic pathologist with strong relationships in St. Joseph and Berrien Counties as well as northern Indiana, Joseph Prahlow, MD, joined the Department of Pathology in July 2015.

The WMed Clinics received four of the available seven awards from the Michigan Department of Community Health in recognition of the continued efforts and commitment to help protect patients from vaccine-preventable diseases.
WMed announced the formation of the Center for Clinical Research, effective July 1, 2015. The Center brings together the leadership, expertise, resources, and staff from the medical school, Borgess Research Institute, and Bronson Research Services into a new collaboration at the medical school. The Center strengthens the support for clinical research conducted at Borgess and Bronson and offers new research opportunities for medical school faculty, residents, and students. Directed by Amy Shipley, PhD, assistant dean for research compliance, and Thomas Blok, MD, assistant dean for clinical research, the Center provides comprehensive services for investigators including proposal development, sponsored programs administration, and a human research protection program. Review and study oversight services include protocol management by experienced clinical research coordinators, regulatory document preparation and submission, assistance with Institutional Review Board requirements, budget development and negotiations, grants and contracts expense accounting, subject recruitment and enrollment, as well as training and education for staff. It is expected that the new collaboration will facilitate streamlined operations, eliminate service duplications, and bolster research compliance oversight. Following the development of a human research protection program and the transition to a single Institutional Review Board over the next 9 to 12 months, the Center will seek accreditation from the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs (AAHRPP), which has become the standard for sponsors, organizations, and investigators participating in clinical research.

Recruitment for a basic science research group leader to lead the development of a collaborative research group in translational immunology is underway. It is anticipated that a group of five or six basic science researchers will be recruited over the next 6 to 12 months.

The infrastructure to support research has been enhanced to include the new Department of Biomedical Sciences Division of Epidemiology and Biostatistics under the direction of Craig Beam, PhD. The Division now includes three faculty, two biostatisticians, a scientific writer, and support staff.

WMed’s 33rd Annual Research Day on May 13, 2015, was among the best attended in history. Several hundred attendees spent the day enjoying exceptional oral and poster presentations by medical school faculty, residents, and students. The day-long event, which included a luncheon keynote address from Peter A. Jones, PhD, DSc, research director and chief scientific officer of the Van Andel Research Institute, also featured presentations representing the top scoring abstracts.
Active Citizenship is the WMed name for service learning and community service activities. The medical school is committed to training physicians who have all of the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be successful as a physician and contribute to their community. To enhance student learning through service learning activities, medical students participate in faculty-led, community-based studies with patients and others to learn how to approach a problem by doing a background review, constructing a hypothesis, testing the hypothesis and collecting data, analyzing the data, drawing meaningful conclusions, and communicating the results. This sequence is the scientific method or research, which provides insights for the community organization while the students also learn and gain hands-on experience with research. Students spend approximately four to eight hours each month during the Foundations of Medicine curriculum as part of a team working with one of 11 community organization affiliates whose mission is related to health, well being, and service for residents of Kalamazoo County. This service learning activity fosters team-based skills while building understanding of health advocacy, social determinants of health, population health, and cultural competence. Each team develops a research project that is of benefit to the organization and the citizens they serve.

WMed hosted the US House and Energy Commerce Committee’s bipartisan 21st Century Cures initiative. Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI) held a roundtable session with healthcare leaders and innovators from southwest Michigan and Washington for an exchange of ideas about how to accelerate the pace of new cures and treatments. Director of the National Institutes of Health, Francis Collins, MD, PhD, was in attendance.

WMed’s second-year medical students served as instructors to introduce area elementary students to medicine. The Eastside Arts and Science Experiential Learning (EASEL) program is a 2015 summer pilot offered by the Kalamazoo Center for Youth and Community. EASEL targets youth, grades K-8, who are currently participating in an after school program in the Eastside neighborhood. The educational sessions during the seven-week program are based on life science experiences with a “hands on” focus. For its week two topic “In the Bones: The Human Body,” EASEL participants were educated by WMed medical students on the human heart, lungs, and musculoskeletal system.

WMed students joined Kalamazoo Valley Community College students for the second annual “Cougars Creating Community.” This event sends students into the community for a day of service; the goal of creating a “pay-it-forward” atmosphere in the Kalamazoo area involving students volunteering at several sites and performing random acts of kindness. The day provides a platform to teach teamwork, communication, valuing diversity, and critical thinking.

WMed is a co-sponsor for the YWCA of Kalamazoo’s infant mortality community action initiative. Associate Dean for Community Affairs and Health Equity, Cheryl Dickson, MD, is involved with a grant from the Kellogg Foundation to WMU to address health disparities. She provides significant leadership in this program, including serving as the chair of the Health Alliance, a coalition that convenes health partners from throughout Kalamazoo County.

The medical school’s annual United Way campaign for employees resulted in: $43,496 in donations, which exceeded the goal of $40,000. There were 20 donors at the Leadership level, including eight new donors at this level of $1,000 or more, and 74 donors in total.
WMed hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony and picnic for employees in honor of the new medical school facility on the W.E. Upjohn M.D. Campus, which has its roots in life science research and discovery. The property was the first piece of land Dr. Upjohn purchased in Kalamazoo to start The Upjohn Company. Thanks to the generosity of William Parfet, chairman and CEO of MPI Research in Mattawan, and great-grandson of Dr. Upjohn, WMed is fortunate to have an outstanding, newly renovated and expanded learning environment as the home of the new medical school. A new parking lot on John Street offers an affordable parking option for medical students and overflow parking for WMed events. Renovation in the Linda Richards Building on the Oakland Drive Campus was completed, which enabled WMed to move personnel who had been working in leased space in WMU’s Spindler Hall. The Berglund Library on the Oakland Drive Campus was remodeled.

A committee structure involving more than 90 faculty, staff, and students is planning for the next steps in the medical school’s accreditation journey. The committees completed a comprehensive self-study, are preparing submission documentation, and will host a site visit by a regional accrediting agency in December and a site visit for provisional accreditation by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) in February 2016. The class of 2018 Medical Student Council completed an independent study analysis which provided valuable input into the self-study process. Regularly scheduled forums with medical students are systematic opportunities to gather input about the institutions strengths and opportunities. More than 50 ideas identified by the inaugural class including facility improvement, policy change, and curriculum enhancement have been addressed by medical school leadership and faculty. A new Medical Student Topics tracking form serves as a repository for students and faculty to monitor progress on suggestions and outstanding issues.

WMed is pleased to be featured as one of the 50 Most Beautiful Medical Schools of 2015, a ranking released by Online Masters in Public Health (OMPH). This list includes medical schools that feature amazing architecture, structural prowess and campus integration, among other factors. According to OMPH, hundreds of medical schools around the country were evaluated and the list was narrowed to 50.
At the General Faculty Meeting in May 2015, class of 2018 President, Kevin Cates, presented faculty awards selected by the medical students including: Golden Apple for basic science faculty – Bonny Dickinson, PhD; Golden POMegranate for profession of medicine faculty – Richard Lammers, MD; and, Golden Stethoscope for a clinician who teaches the basic sciences – William Fales, MD.

The faculty elected members to serve on the Faculty Academic Council and the Board of Directors. The charge of the Faculty Academic Council is to foster bidirectional communication between the dean and the faculty and serves as a venue to collaborate with and advise the dean.

The WMed Board of Directors expanded to its full capability with the addition of Joseph D’Ambrosio, MD, DMD, serving as the elected faculty representative. Kathy Young, new CEO of Borgess Health, joined the Board replacing Paul Spaude who retired in late fall 2014.

A new Women in Medicine and Science (WIMS) group is focused on promoting the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women in medicine and science. WIMS meets several times throughout the year and new members are welcome to all events.

At a series of celebrations in late June 2015, medical school faculty, staff, residents, and community colleagues bid farewell to Elizabeth Burns, MD, MA, who retired effective July 1, 2015. Dr. Burns served as a valued member of the medical school’s senior leadership team since 2008. Her most recent role was associate dean for faculty and clinical affairs. She was one of four individuals honored by the YWCA of Kalamazoo as a 2015 YWCA Woman of Achievement.

The Orthopaedic Search Committee completed a successful recruitment of the department chair for orthopaedics. Dr. Keith Kenter will begin his new role in late 2015.

Tom George, MD and Mark Uggeri, DDS, MD are the co-chairs for the Department of Anesthesiology. David Smullen, MD and Brandon Tominna, MD are the co-chairs for the Department of Radiology.

Programs represent academic areas that are emerging in the medical school. Program faculty are involved in the instruction of students, residents, and fellows; and include practicing physicians and other healthcare professionals. Three new programs include: Biomedical Informatics; Medical Engineering; and Medical Ethics, Humanities, and Law.

In September 2014, more than 1500 medical school supporters and friends attended the Grand Opening Ceremony for Kalamazoo’s new medical school. Another 850 friends toured the new downtown facility during the Community Open House that weekend. The medical school, in collaboration with Borgess Health and Bronson Healthcare, hosted a tent at WMU CommUniverCity. A mix of faculty, students, and staff attended CommUniverCity and then attended the WMU season home opener football game. The new medical education facility was a stop during the monthly Art Hop, which also served as a Community Open House, in December 2014 and April 2015.
WMed has voluntarily pursued and achieved designation as an Affirmative Action employer to enhance plans to achieve workplace diversity.

Employees completed the 2014 WMed INSIGHTeX Culture Survey. The survey results were very favorable and specific information is being used to develop actions plans to enhance the organizational culture.

The medical school’s CLEAR video, which provides a visual overview of the medical student curriculum, was recognized at the 2015 Communicator Awards with an Award of Distinction for Best Video, Educational Institutions Category. The Communicator Awards is the leading international creative awards program honoring excellence in marketing and communications.

The CLEAR video was also awarded a 2015 Bronze Telly Award for Best Public Relations Video. The Telly Awards is the premier award honoring the finest film and video productions, groundbreaking web commercials, videos and films, and outstanding local, regional, and cable TV commercials and programs. Winners represent the best work of the most respected advertising agencies, production companies, television stations, cable operators, and corporate video departments in the world. Entrants do not compete against each other, but instead are judged against a high standard of merit established by the Silver Telly Council. This is the second Telly Award that WMed has received; the first Telly Award was presented for the medical school’s Imagine video.