



# 2020 Rooted in the North.

Northern Ontario School of Medicine  
15 Years of creating a healthier North.



Northern Ontario  
School of Medicine  
École de médecine  
du Nord de l'Ontario  
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## First-Year Reflections as Dean, President and CEO

# Dean's Welcome

What a transformative, challenging and adventurous year it has been. Indeed, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) is No Ordinary School of Medicine. As only the second Dean in the School's history, I am grateful to the people of Northern Ontario for the warm welcome and thankful for the enriching conversations about our shared values and aspirations. I have had the pleasure of travelling to many Northern Ontario communities this year and as much as they are each different from one another, the people are truly remarkable.

While meeting so many people connected to NOSM, the opportunity to discuss the School's future strategic directions seemed appropriate. In November 2019, we began gathering data and feedback to inform NOSM's next strategic plan. I am happy to report that based on the data gathered from nearly 2,000 stakeholders including learners, staff, faculty, partner organizations, and community members from across Northern Ontario, we are now proceeding to develop the implementation framework and the validation of the plan for a final approval by the Board and launch in September 2020.

Delivering health-care services is a

challenge in any environment, but it is one that becomes particularly daunting in a setting like Northern Ontario. With its vast geographic size, sparsely distributed population, and numerous—often isolated—small communities, Northern Ontario continues to struggle to attract its fair share of physicians. In a region as large as this, we also know the importance of relying on one another for support. That inter-connectedness magnifies our risks and exposes our health inequities even more, and this year the COVID-19 pandemic is putting a greater strain on the already fragile health human resources in our region.

NOSM is focused on building workforce capacity and introducing innovative models of care that will lead to more equitable access to care for Northern Ontarians. Some exciting new roles have been created. To focus on supporting northern physicians and workforce strategy, we now have an Associate Dean, Continuing Education and Professional Development and an Assistant Dean, Physician Workforce Strategy. We've also recently added an Associate Dean, Equity and Inclusion. These positions round out the decanal leadership team at NOSM and I'm thrilled to take on the

many challenges that await with an exceptional team of faculty, staff and partners across Northern Ontario.

In this report, you will see many of NOSM's successes highlighted, none more impressive in my mind than how our medical school has responded to the COVID-19 crisis this year. Finding innovative solutions in providing academic and business continuity has been challenging, no questions. But the NOSM community, including faculty, learners, alumni, and staff are working together in impressive ways to support one another in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now, more than ever, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine is focused on being your medical school; the one created by, in, and for Northern Ontario.

I hope you enjoy this report and find it illuminating. As we head into my second year as your Dean, I hope you will join us at NOSM to meeting our challenges, setting new heights in achieving the best, and striving to become the destination medical school in Canada.

*Dr. Sarita Verma*

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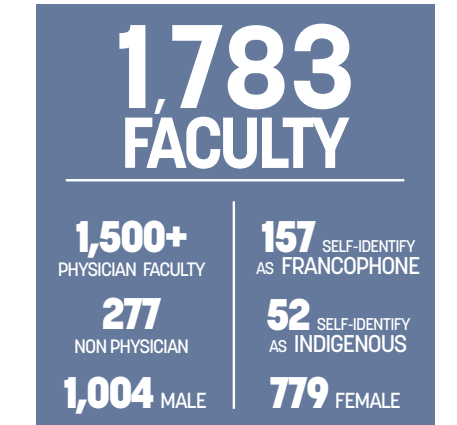
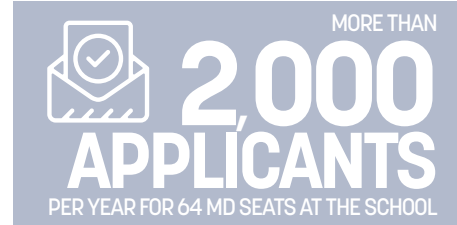
# Rooted in the North

Fifteen years ago, NOSM was established with an explicit socially accountable mandate; a commitment to respond to the diversity of the region, address the health needs of all Northern Ontarians and improve access to quality health care through education and research. There is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach to creating equity in health care for our region. As much as the strategy to have a medical school in Northern Ontario is working, there is still much work to be done. We are forging ahead with a new strategic

plan that will allow us to better understand the differing, unique needs of each individual community, and help address those needs in our approach to expansion.

Thank you to the many individuals across the North whose contributions laid the critical groundwork for our path forward. NOSM's success is due in large part to your passion, dedication and resilience. These qualities are part of our NOSM culture and continue to inspire us into the future. NOSM is No Ordinary School of Medicine and must renew its commitment to social accountability by having an ongoing, sustainable impact in Northern Ontario.

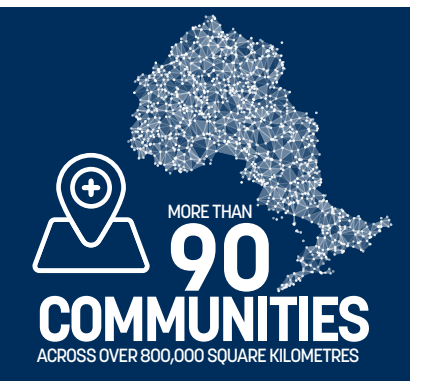
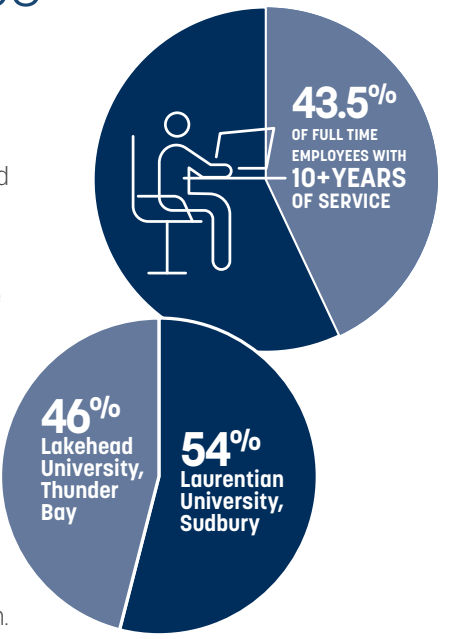
Our mission is one of great challenges that NOSM aspires to meet. As we have seen throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, challenges also set the pace for new innovation, shedding light on opportunities we had only before imagined. NOSM must promote innovation, discovery, and academic and clinical excellence while building a culture of diversity, inclusion, integrity, and empowerment. NOSM intends to be daring and bold as we look at the challenges of the current pandemic and the transformation of health education and research to meet the needs of society.



# NOSM at a Glance

The dedication and advocacy of the NOSM community has led to many achievements and milestones for the School. We are internationally recognized for our distinctive model of distributed, community-engaged learning. With the vast expanse of Northern Ontario as the School's campus, learning and working in these diverse communities is no small feat. Education takes place where long-standing community health challenges inform clinical learning. Learners from all NOSM programs experience firsthand the realities of rural and remote health care in the North.

We're proud to be an employer of choice in Northern Ontario. Our staff tell us they see themselves reflected in our vision and values. More than 60 per cent of NOSM employees have been with the School for more than five years. That is true dedication from this incredibly talented group of individuals.



Overall spending in 2019 was estimated to support **817 - 898** full-time equivalent jobs in the region.

# Respect the Difference

Across the medical sector, there has been a wider call for improved collegiality and to address issues of mistreatment and disrespect towards one another. At NOSM, we're disrupting these long-standing issues. In June 2020, we will spark a much needed movement to influence wider change in the culture of medicine and medical education. Our goal is to make a lasting difference by living and propelling a culture of kindness and respect.

NOSM was established with a set of core values—three of which are respect, inclusiveness and social accountability. The Respect the Difference movement encourages the entire NOSM community to voluntarily become change makers. The campaign, rooted in the science of our individual genetics, reminds us that 99% of human DNA is the same. With that much in common genetically, how we choose to respond to the differences is our choice.



Learn more about  
**#RespectTheDifference**  
on NOSM's social media  
or at [culture.nosm.ca](http://culture.nosm.ca).

# Research

Research at NOSM is guided by collaboration, bringing investigators and academic expertise together to explore and create opportunities specifically to better the health of the peoples and communities of Northern Ontario. The NOSM Research Office provides assistance to NOSM community members involved in research endeavors, equipping them with tools and guidance to answer questions of relevance to the North. The community of Northern researchers continues to organize, coordinate efforts, collaborate and grow, with the greater goal to improve the health status of all people in Northern, rural and remote communities.

In March 2020, NOSM launched a Masters of Medical Studies program, offering foundational research skills for physicians who want to develop a robust approach to answering relevant health-care questions. The program will focus on developing the necessary skills to acquire grant funding, obtain ethics approval, develop a research

question and appropriate methodology, complete the research study, and present results.

Recently, the Northern Ontario Academic Medicine Association (NOAMA) Board put forward a call for proposals for a rapid research funding opportunity relating to COVID-19 as it impacts Northern Ontario's public health challenges. The funding will contribute to efforts to accelerate the development, testing and implementation of medical and social countermeasures to mitigate the rapid spread of the COVID-19 and its negative consequences on people and communities.

**130** ACTIVE FACULTY  
**RESEARCH GRANTS**

**96** CLINICAL SCIENCES  
**10** HUMAN SCIENCES  
**24** MEDICAL SCIENCES  
TOTAL FUNDING

**\$13,864,355**

SINCE 2005, NOSM FACULTY MEMBERS HAVE PUBLISHED



MORE THAN **3,117**  
**SCHOLARLY ARTICLES**



**50** LOCAL  
**EDUCATION GROUPS IN**  
**NORTHERN ONTARIO**

NOAMA has awarded  
**\$14.4 million** to NOSM  
clinical faculty to  
conduct 280  
varying health  
research projects  
in Northern  
Ontario.

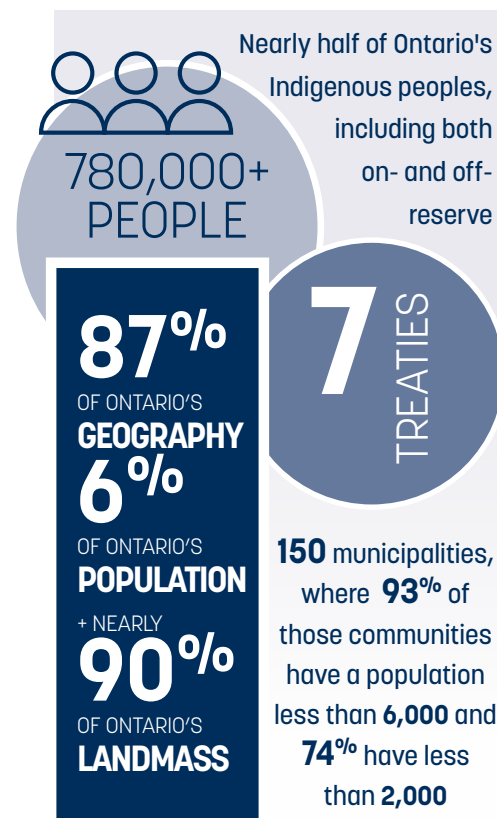


# Community

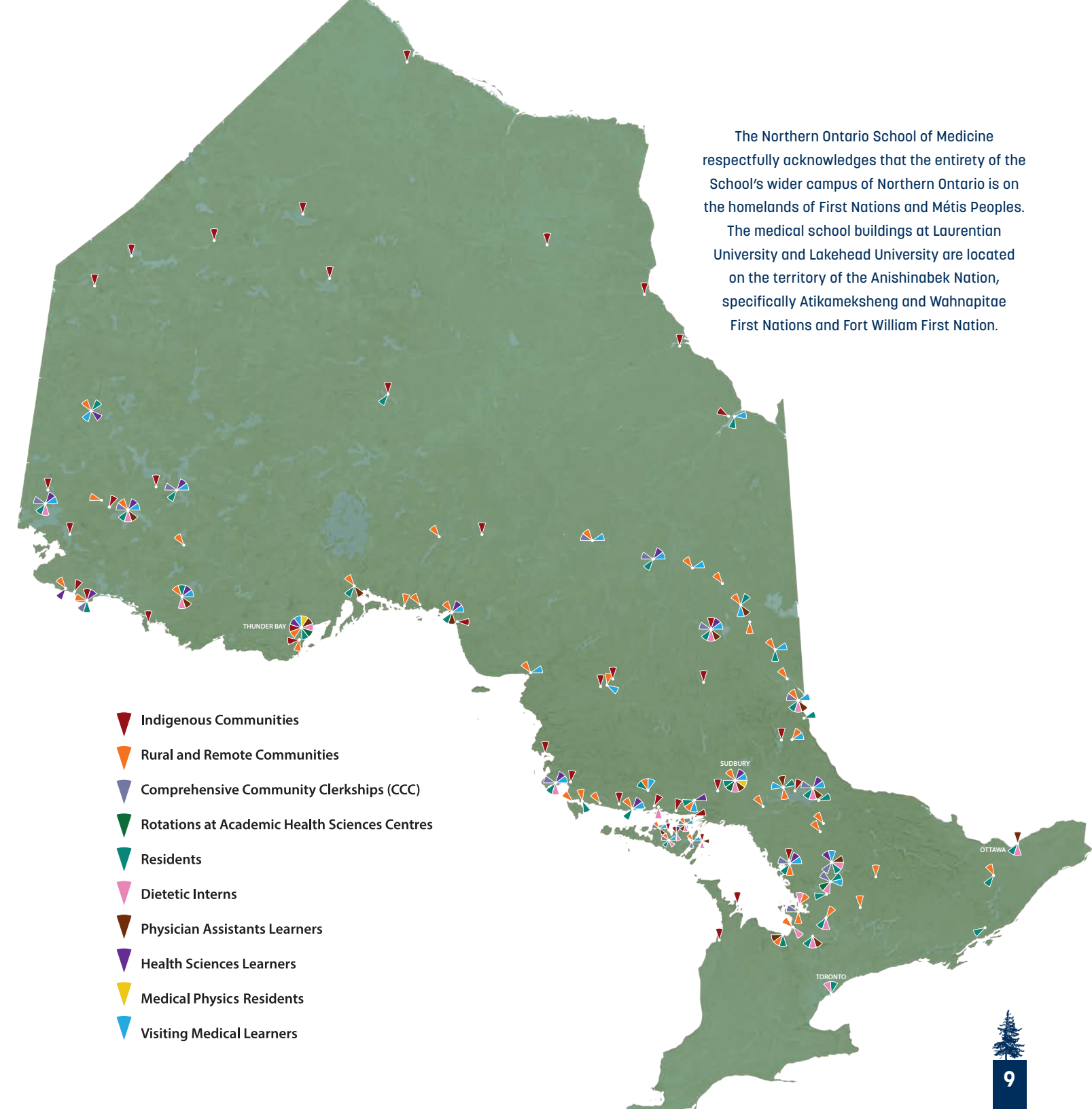
Community is an easy word to say, but much harder to define. The Northern Ontario community. The NOSM community. The Northern community. The word community connects us with one another. It describes a common experience of being Northern Ontarians; so common that we never really take time to define it. The connectedness ties us together across this vast expanse. Community is our relationships with our colleagues—faculty, researchers, learners, and staff. Being a part of the Northern Ontario community gives us a sense of belonging, understanding and caring for one another. Collectively, we have seen incredible progress with shared history, experiences and purpose.

Being part of the Northern Ontario community means we also have collectively experienced a shortage of health-care professionals, and a drastic shortage of Indigenous (and Indigenous-trained) health-care professionals. According to a 2017 report from Health Quality Ontario: “Ontario’s northern regions lag behind provincial averages in quality of health and health care. Northern Ontarians are more likely to have worse health, poorer access to health care, and die earlier than people in other parts of Ontario.” Northern Ontario has higher rates of suicide, diabetes, complex chronic

diseases, obesity, and are more likely to report having multiple chronic conditions. Mental health and addictions in the North are also some of its greatest challenges. The youth suicide rate of Indigenous people is six times higher than non-Indigenous youth in Canada. Northeastern and Northwestern Ontario have the first- and second-highest rates of opioid-related deaths in the province.



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population



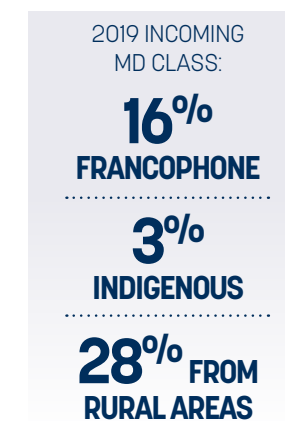
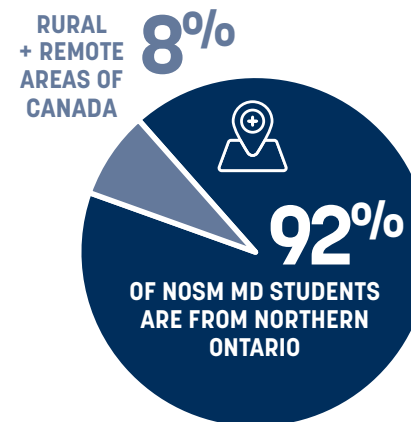
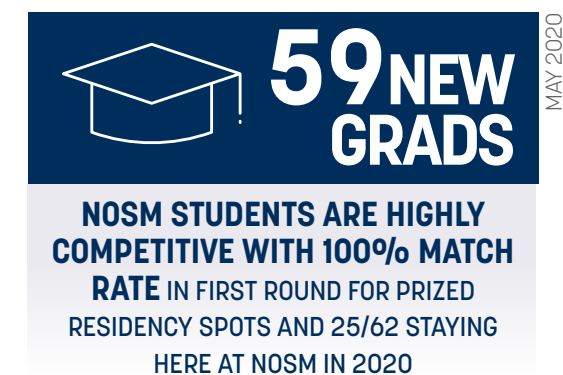
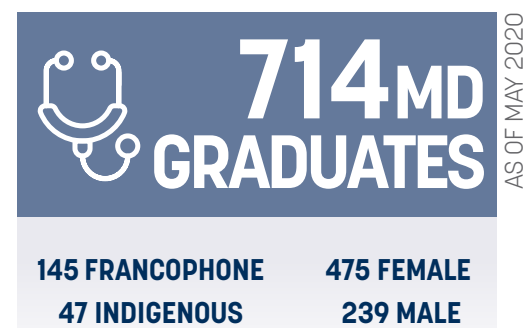
## Education

NOSM is the first Canadian medical school established with an explicit social accountability mandate. Included in this mandate is the provision of training to increase the number of—and access to—physicians, registered dietitians, medical physicists, physician assistants, audiologists, occupational therapists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, and speech-language pathologists. These NOSM alumni are highly skilled and thrive in a wide scope of practice environments and we are tremendously proud of their accomplishments! They are taking on leadership roles as faculty, and we're seeing graduates come full-circle. It's particularly exciting to see their unique approaches to care in Northern Ontario and beyond.

Many Northern health-care professionals are also NOSM faculty members. Despite their demanding schedules on the frontlines of clinical care—and now of protecting their communities during the COVID-19 crisis—they are also educating the next generation of health-care professionals. Their role as teacher is woven into their daily work. Northern Ontario's rural generalist physicians work to meet the needs of the whole of the population by delivering babies, taking care of emergency rooms including trauma, doing surgical assists, providing palliative care, supporting addictions

recovery, and managing long-term care facilities. Their strength is in their ability to provide care across a diverse scope of practice. These “specialists in generalism” are the backbone of Northern and rural health care, and key to NOSM's distributed teaching faculty.

In March 2020, in an effort to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19, NOSM took immediate action by shifting its entire learning and work environment online. Though in-person clinical learning opportunities were impacted for some programs, we have not missed a day of education during this enormous upheaval. This quick transition to learning and working from home is a tribute to the entire NOSM community from our education leaders, to faculty members and staff, including information technologists, curriculum designers and coordinators. NOSM's education programs were already well established to facilitate an online, distributed learning model. And, for the first time in the history of the School, virtual interviews took place for half of our MD program applicants, fundamentally changing the way the School admits new medical students.





**171** REGISTERED  
DIETICIANS SINCE 2007

**182** NOSM  
RESIDENTS AS OF JUNE 2019



SINCE 2008,

**686** RESIDENTS  
HAVE COMPLETED NOSM'S  
POSTGRADUATE  
PROGRAMS.

### NORTHERN CONSTELLATIONS

IS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL HEALTH  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE  
IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

**343** PARTICIPANTS  
(IN 2018)

THE 2020 CONFERENCE CONVERTED TO THE  
FIRST VIRTUAL PROGRAM DUE TO COVID-19

**161** PARTICIPANTS  
(MAY 2020)



### RESIDENCY PROGRAMS

8 ROYAL COLLEGE SPECIALTIES  
FAMILY MEDICINE +  
PGY3 ENHANCED SKILLS PROGRAMS  
INCLUDING REMOTE FIRST NATIONS STREAM



### CRITICAL CARE VIRTUAL SIMULATION PROGRAM

(RELATED TO COVID-19)

9 OF 11 RURAL HOSPITALS OUTSIDE OF THUNDER BAY  
+ 49 PHYSICIAN AND 54 HEALTH-CARE PROFESSIONAL PARTICIPANTS



### OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO SAFE OPIOID PRESCRIBING ONLINE PROGRAM

NUMBER OF REGISTRATIONS: **126**  
COMPLETED THE ONLINE MODULE: **43**

*Available in English & French  
Participants from 24 communities*

**189**

CLINICAL  
PLACEMENTS FOR  
REHABILITATION  
LEARNERS FROM  
5 PARTNER  
UNIVERSITIES



**86**  
FAMILY MEDICINE  
RESIDENTS

AS OF JUNE 2019

### NOSM'S FACULTY ACROSS THE NORTH IN THE LAST ACADEMIC YEAR...

**12** DIETETIC INTERNS

**2** MEDICAL PHYSICS RESIDENTS

**25** PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT LEARNERS

**346** VISITING LEARNERS

**133** HEALTH SCIENCES LEARNERS IN

AUDIOLOGY, SPEECH-LANGUAGE

PATHOLOGY, PHYSIOTHERAPY, AND

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

# Awards & Accolades

There are many outstanding faculty, learners and staff at NOSM who make a difference in their community and help bring recognition to NOSM. Miigwetch, merci and thank you for your ongoing work and commitment.

**Dr. Alex Anawati** was recognized with a 40 Under Forty Award from Northern Ontario Business.

**Dr. Rony Atoui** was awarded the NOSM Award of Education and Scholarship in the Clinical Scholar category.

**Dr. Tara Baldisera** received an Award of Excellence from the Foundation for Advancing Family Medicine at the Family Medicine Forum (FMF) hosted by the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC). Dr. Baldisera was recognized for advancing interprofessional concussion management and research and her contributions to evidence-based resources for health-care providers.

**Dr. Crystal Boulianne** received the Family Medicine Resident Award for the Study of Communities Impacted by Health Disparities at FMF hosted by the CFPC.

**Dr. Erin Cameron** was awarded the NOSM Award of Education and Scholarship in the Scholar category.

**Dr. Claudette Chase** is the recent recipient of the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada's (SRPC) Rural Long Service Award.

**Dr. Michael Davison** received a 2020 Top Resident Research Abstract Award from the Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians (CAEP).

**Dr. Jonathan DellaVedova** was recognized with the Resident Doctors of Canada (RDOC) Puddester Award for Resident Wellness Award in the Staff Physician Category.

**Dr. Stacy Desilets** is a recipient of the SRPC Fellowship of Rural and Remote Medicine and a Canadian Association for Medical Education (CAME) Certificate of Merit Award.

**Dr. Lloyd Douglas** received the Dr. Ian Bowman Award for Leadership in Social Accountability, presented on behalf of the Medical Council of Canada (MCC).

**Dr. Joshawa Elliott** was recognized by the Canadian Federation of Medical Students (CFMS) Student Mistreatment Task Force as a Culture Changer.

**Dr. Samuel Fineblit** received the Research Day Award Recipient.

**Dr. Melanie Fortune** received the College of Family Physicians of Canada Resident Research Award for Scholarly Achievement for her project with Dr. Tom Lu titled Developing a process for a stable antibiogram for the Timmins and District Hospital.

**Pamela Haight** was recognized with a 40 Under Forty Award from Northern Ontario Business.

**Dr. Peter Istvan** was recognized with the 2019 Order of Parry Sound for his work as a local community leader and advocate.

**Jilayne Jolicoeur** received the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) 150th Anniversary Award.

**Dr. Roy Kirkpatrick** received the Physician Clinical Teachers' Association (PCTA) Leadership Award.

**Dr. Michael Kirlew** is a recipient of the SRPC Fellowship of Rural and Remote Medicine.

**Dr. J. J. René Laflèche** is the recipient of multiple SRPC awards this year, including: Rural Long Service Award, Fellowship of Rural and Remote Medicine, and Lifetime Membership Award.

**Dr. Vincent Le** was awarded the NOSM Award of Education and Scholarship in the Learner Scholarly Activity category.

**Dr. Liisa Levasseur** was awarded the NOSM Award of Education and Scholarship in the Clinical Teacher category.

**Dr. Tom Lu** received the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) Resident Research Award for Scholarly Achievement for his project with **Dr. Melanie Fortune** titled Developing a process for a stable antibiogram for the Timmins and District Hospital.

**Dr. Grace Ma** was recognized with a 40 Under Forty Award from Northern Ontario Business.

**Dr. Bryan MacLeod** is the recipient of this year's Professional Association of Residents of Ontario (PARO) Excellence in Clinical Teaching Award.

**Josée Malette** received the Professional Association of Residents of Ontario (PARO) Citizenship Award for medical students.

**Dr. Scott Middlemiss** was awarded the Dr. David Boyle Outstanding Service Award in June 2019. This award is presented to the resident, voted by their peers and the NOSM Anesthesia Residency Program Committee, who has contributed most to the residency program.

**Dr. Alexander Moise** has been appointed as a member of the Genes, Cells and Molecules Evaluations Group for the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) for a three-year term. He will contribute to the national peer review process that ensures the efficacy, health and vitality of Canada's research community.

**Dr. Sean Moore** received the SRPC's new Rural Mentorship Award.

**Dr. Christopher Mushquash** received a Champions of Mental Health award from the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health.

**Athina Nelson** received an Ontario Medical Foundation (OMF) Elective Bursary for medical students to gain a broad range of clinical experience through their elective programs.

**Dr. Sarah Newbery** has joined the Canadian Medical Association Journal's (CMAJ) new editorial advisory board.

**Dr. Eli Nix** received the 2019 Professional Association of Residents of Ontario Resident Teaching Award.

**Dr. Anjali Oberai** is a recipient of the SRPC Fellowship of Rural and Remote Medicine.

**Dr. Mary Olsten** was awarded the NOSM Award of Education and Scholarship in the Academic Leader category.

**Dr. Eliseo Orrantia** was recognized with an Innovation Fund award for his research on rural physician team effectiveness from the Innovation Fund Provincial Oversight Committee (IFPOC).



**Dr. Ryan Patchett-Marble** received The Northern, Rural, Remote Family Practice Marco Terwiel Award at FMF hosted by the CFPC.

**Pierre Plamondon** received an OMF Elective Bursary for medical students to gain a broad range of clinical experience through their elective programs.

**Dr. Meagan Schenk** received a Family Medicine Resident Leadership Award on behalf of NOSM from the Foundation for Advancing Family Medicine at FMF hosted by the CFPC.

**Dr. Richard Senior** was awarded the NOSM Award of Education and Scholarship in the Teacher - Learner Nominated category.

**Niharika Shahi** was awarded the NOSM Award of Education and Scholarship in the Learner Advocate-Leader category.

**Dr. Amardeep Singh** received a full tuition scholarship for the 16th Annual International Pediatric Symposium (IPOS).

**Dr. Mark Spiller** was awarded the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) Council Award.

**Dr. Cory Veldman** received a 2019 Janus Continuing Professional Development Grant (\$5,000).

**Dr. Barbara Zelek** is a recipient of the SRPC Fellowship of Rural and Remote Medicine.

In addition, the **Northern Ontario School of Medicine** received the Charles Boelen International Social Accountability Award from the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC).

## FACULTY PROMOTIONS 2020

### Associate Professor

**Dr. Sanjay Azad, Dr. Marion Briggs, Dr. Richard Kvas, Dr. Paul Miron, Dr. Valentina Peeva, Mr. Christopher Winn**

### Assistant Professor

**Ms. Britton Sprules**



## Looking Ahead

This year, the entire NOSM community found themselves up against

unprecedented challenges and

changes. NOSM's response

to the pandemic was rapid

and dynamic. Students

navigated uncertainty

and postponed clinical

electives, deferred

community experiences,

or delayed clerkships.

Many found themselves

serving in new roles,

helping with caregiving

in their own homes and

communities. While our

student emergency fund

helped ease the stress of

these uncertainties, the School

implemented creative solutions. We are

very proud of how our NOSM community

mobilised, rose to the challenge and united to

make it happen.

The world today stands at the threshold of a new technological age as exciting as any in our past. Great changes in how we live, how we work, how we teach and learn will reshape our school and transform our society in the years ahead. We are at

a stage of a revolution and transformation of the medical school. NOSM stands poised in a position to lead. We are

at the forefront of scientific invention because NOSM is nimble and has great people and because we stimulate

an environment for creativity. Our challenge as a school

and my determination as its Dean is not just to lead this

transformation but to ensure that every part of our school

- staff, faculty and students succeed. But success is not

automatic, nor achieved alone. It will take all of us - in

partnership to make this happen. With a new Dean, President

and CEO, decanal team, and with the support and advocacy

of our alumni, partners, supporters and friends, the pathway

looks very bright.

We continue to take these challenges in stride, innovating

where we are able, and seeking new supports to help us

through. As we grow with intention and a strong sense of

purpose, we hope you will choose to support NOSM. Help us

support the future sustainability of our health-care system

and better access to health care for all in Northern Ontario.

We need it now more than ever! Thank you for your ongoing

support.

A healthier Northern Ontario is a dream we all share. To

learn how you can lend your support to this cause, contact

**[advancement@nosm.ca](mailto:advancement@nosm.ca)** or visit **[nosm.ca/donate](https://nosm.ca/donate)**.







THANK YOU  
— MERCI —  
MIIGWETCH



Northern Ontario  
School of Medicine  
École de médecine  
du Nord de l'Ontario  
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