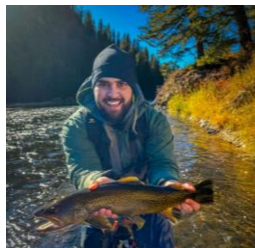


Residents

St. Mary's Regional Hospital Family Medicine Residency

Third Year Residents (Class of 2027)



Connor Diaz, MD

I grew up in Fort Collins, CO, where my childhood was filled with forest hikes, river adventures, and soccer games. I studied biology, Spanish, and neuropsychology at Creighton University in Omaha, NE, and later discovered my passion for family medicine at the University of Missouri School of Medicine.

During my rotations, I was drawn to the continuity and holistic care that family medicine offers. When my parents moved to Buena Vista, CO, I realized I wanted to serve rural, mountainous communities—places where doctors are few and resourcefulness is essential. That goal led me to St. Mary's Family Medicine Residency, where I believe I'll gain the full-spectrum training needed to thrive in these settings. My dog, Hatch, and I are thrilled to return to Colorado and join the SMFMR family.

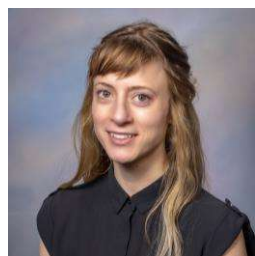
Outside of medicine, you'll find me fly fishing in the Gunnison Gorge, mountain biking the Lunch Loops, hiking through McInnis and Dominguez-Escalante Canyons, paddle boarding on the Colorado River, or skiing at Powderhorn.



Brock Englestead, DO

I was born and raised in Cedar City, Utah, which is where I fell in love with the mountains and my beautiful wife. I enjoy hiking, fishing, sports, and any excuse to be outside.

My time in small communities gave me a passion for rural medicine. I want to provide healthcare access to communities in need. My wife and kids are the greatest part of my world. I chose family medicine to help families improve their quality of life. My goal is to help the community live healthier and happier lives.



Sophia Jaeckel DO

I was born and raised around the Denver area, receiving my undergraduate degree in neuroscience at the University of Colorado. I obtained my osteopathic medical degree from Kansas City University. I am passionate about: integrating the often-fragmented elements of our health and lives, rural health care, exploring the rivers and mountains of the Western Slope, and fresh air.

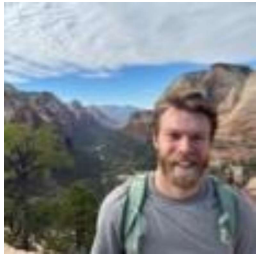


Joshua Law, MD

I was born in Missouri, was a toddler in Denver, and I really did my growing up in Alabama and Mississippi. Despite having lived in multiple states, Colorado is the place that I most love, and I have been working to return to the state for many years now.

I did my undergraduate at the University of Mississippi where I studied religion and biology. Afterwards, I taught middle school science in Brooklyn and Denver. I then moved to Cambridge, England to pursue a degree in the history and philosophy of medicine. I attended medical school at East Tennessee State University.

I love dogs, cats, and the outdoors. I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to live, work, and learn in Grand Junction.



William Mullen MD

I was born in Greeley, Colorado, but grew up in South Louisiana in a big Cajun family, where I played football and tennis. I went on to study medical humanities at Baylor University, where volunteering as an EMT sparked my passion for patient-centered care and inspired me to pursue medicine. During college, I also competed in rock climbing and developed a deep love for the outdoors through climbing trips across the country.

I attended LSU Health Shreveport for medical school, where I gained a strong appreciation for rural family medicine while caring for patients in North Louisiana. During a fourth-year rotation at St. Mary's, I immediately felt at home and knew it was where I wanted to train.

Outside of medicine, I enjoy hiking with my dog, Ziggy, climbing, mountain biking, hunting, fishing, reading, playing tennis, and cooking. My medical interests include full-spectrum care, emergency medicine, and wilderness medicine. My wife Mary and I are thrilled to make Grand Junction our new home and explore everything the Western Slope has to offer.



Lukas Ommen, MD

I was born in Lander, WY, but moved to Buena Vista, CO, when I was two. Growing up in this small mountain town, surrounded by my mom's family, I learned the value of community and the strong relationships that come with rural living. My mom, a Family Nurse Practitioner, worked at the local clinic, and her example sparked my early interest in medicine and science.

I earned my biology degree from Colorado State University and went on to the University of Colorado School of Medicine, where I joined the rural program. That experience deepened my commitment to providing primary care in underserved areas. I've always loved the Western Slope—visiting for outdoor adventures and sports camps—and I'm excited to continue my training in Grand Junction.

My medical interests include full-spectrum care, sports medicine, and wilderness medicine. Outside of medicine, I enjoy hiking, backpacking, photography, hunting, fishing, basketball, and soccer, especially with my wife and our dog.



Mikayla Pulliam, MD

I was born and raised in Los Alamos, New Mexico. For my undergraduate studies, I attended New Mexico State University in Southern New Mexico. I attended medical school at the University of New Mexico (UNM) School of Medicine.

From the start of medical school, I always knew I wanted to go into family medicine. At UNM, my passion within family medicine grew to include women's health and addiction medicine. I also hope to make a positive impact by increasing access to primary care in rural communities. I believe the education at St. Mary's will train me to be an excellent family medicine physician.

Outside of the hospital, I enjoy spending as much of my free time in the outdoors – biking, running, skiing, or hiking – and I am excited to live in Grand Junction to enjoy incredible access to the outdoors.



Jaquelyn Speed, DO

I was born and raised in San Antonio, Texas, and attended St. Mary's University for my undergraduate studies. After earning my degree in Psychology, I spent several years managing a business before deciding to return to school to follow my dreams. I went on to attend the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine, where I earned my medical degree and also completed a Master of Public Health.

My interests in medicine include full-spectrum care, women's health and obstetrics, and serving underserved communities. I'm incredibly excited to be joining the St. Mary's Family Medicine Residency family.

Outside of medicine, I love spending time with my family, traveling and exploring new places, gardening, cooking, and being outdoors as much as possible. I'm also a huge animal lover and share my home with two dogs and a kitty.



Emma Talbott, DO

I was born and raised here in the Grand Valley and grew up learning to love all the amazing outdoor activities this area has to offer. After attending college at the University of Colorado at Boulder, I spent some years traveling and working on my dad's ranch, and then I was accepted to A.T. Still University, College of Osteopathic Medicine in Kirksville, Missouri.

I chose family medicine because I love the variety that the specialty offers, and I love that family medicine docs have the privilege of having long-term relationships with their patients. My interests include osteopathic manipulative medicine and lifestyle and preventative medicine. In my free time I love to craft, garden, fish, travel, and mostly have adventures with my wonderful husband and the cutest dogs in the world: my German Shepherd and two mini weenie dogs!

Second Year Residents (Class of 2028)



Trevor D. Anderson, DO

Inspired by my hometown family doctor in Nephi, Utah, I pursued medicine at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine after studying Biology at Utah State University. My main career goal is to provide comprehensive, patient-centered care and build strong relationships with those I serve. When I'm not working, I enjoy leading a balanced life: you'll almost always find me with a book in hand, spending time with my wife and our dog, gardening, meditating, or enjoying outdoor activities like fishing and hiking. My family and I are very excited to make Grand Junction our home with its incredible outdoor access and the community-oriented spirit that makes it an awesome place to live and grow.



McKenna Bocancea, DO

I am a Western Slope native and elated to return to my roots as a resident physician at St. Mary's, serving the community that helped raise me. After graduating from Western Colorado University with a degree in biology, I moved to Las Vegas, Nevada to complete medical school at Touro University Nevada College of Osteopathic Medicine. Growing up in Montrose, I saw first-hand the value of lasting relationships alongside the breadth of knowledge needed in a rural community. I always knew I wanted to be a family medicine physician and serve rural areas while providing comprehensive, equitable, and compassionate care. In addition to rural medicine, I am passionate about women's health, dermatology, lifestyle and preventative medicine. I am confident St. Mary's residency program will equip me with the skills and knowledge to be an exceptional physician. In my free time, I love spending time outdoors with my husband and our golden retriever.



Ethan Castro, DO

Hi there, I'm Ethan. I was born and raised in North Texas, where I spent time on the lake fishing and enjoying water sports. I also enjoy taking my motorcycle out for a ride to decompress, collecting gemstones, crystals, watching movies with my dog and cat, and spending time with my son. Growing up, I took road trips to Colorado for fly fishing and fell in love with the freestone rivers and mountain breeze. After completing my Master's at CU Boulder, I went on to medical school at the Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine.

During my clinical years in San Diego, I found a passion for obstetrics and integrative medicine. I then spent a couple of years in the U.S. Army at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, before returning to Colorado to join St. Mary's.

I love Grand Junction not just for its natural beauty, but for the way the community embodies resilience and resourcefulness. Everyone at St. Mary's has been incredibly welcoming, and I'm excited to be part of the team!



Sulafa Elhassan, MD

I was born, raised, and earned my MD in Omdurman, Sudan, and later practiced medicine in both Sudan and Saudi Arabia. Collectively, these experiences shaped my passion for family medicine, especially the continuity of care and long-term patient relationships it fosters. I am particularly dedicated to managing chronic diseases, addressing infectious conditions, and supporting maternal health—areas where I know I can make a meaningful difference. In 2015, I moved to Denver, Colorado, to be with my family, and I immediately fell in love with the state's welcoming community and natural beauty. When I visited Grand Junction in February 2025, I fell in love with it, especially the mountains and the peaceful flow of the Colorado River. Outside of medicine, I enjoy cooking Mediterranean meals, cheering on my kids at soccer games, and mentoring others. As I prepare to begin my residency, Grand Junction feels like the ideal place to grow as a doctor, a mother, and a community member.



Julianne McGough, DO

Hi everyone! My name is Julianne, and I am so thrilled to have matched at St. Mary's Family Medicine Residency. I am originally from Casper, WY, but have been in the front range the last 10 years. A little about me, I enjoy skiing, cooking, hiking, and doing all those things with Jack, my amazing husband! It is wonderful being in Junction near to great hiking and skiing, as well as joining an intimate community focused on giving back and growing! Career wise, I hope to practice full spectrum family medicine and seek to help patients identify their health and life goals and work with them to make those a reality!



Dylan Mechling, MD

I was born and raised in Glenwood Springs, CO and have always loved the Western Slope's natural beauty, outdoor activities, and close-knit communities. Some of my best childhood memories are from summer weekends on Grand Mesa. During my high school summers, I worked construction across the region, including in Grand Junction, which actually played a role in me deciding to pursue medicine! I studied Chemical and Biological Engineering at CU Boulder and was lucky to stay in-state for medical school at the University of Colorado. During med school, I fell in love with family medicine for its focus on long-term relationships and full-spectrum care. With my goal to practice on the Western Slope, Saint Mary's quickly became my dream residency. Outside of medicine, you'll usually find me outdoors—hiking in the Colorado National Monument, camping up on Grand Mesa, or skiing at Powderhorn.



Katie Metzler, DO

I was born and raised just outside Denver, Colorado, where growing up “mountain adjacent” sparked a lifelong love for the outdoors. I studied Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology at the University of Colorado Boulder while working full-time as an EMT in the emergency department. These experiences deepened my interest in the intersection of science and human connection, naturally leading me to primary care. I earned my DO from Rocky Vista University and am thrilled to be entering the field of Family Medicine. My medical passions include full-spectrum primary care, women’s health, family planning, adolescent medicine, behavioral health, addiction medicine, and community health and education. Outside of medicine, I love spending time with my husband Tanner and our two dogs, Murphy and Stevie. I enjoy crafting, creating, and being outdoors—whether trail running, biking, or simply soaking up the sun. As a lifelong Front Range native, I’m so excited to begin my career on the Western Slope and to serve the vibrant communities of Grand Junction.



Jamie Pfahl, MD

In 2008, I relocated to Colorado from rural western New York to complete my undergrad degrees in Integrative Physiology and Russian Studies at University of Colorado Boulder. Before starting medical school at the University of Colorado, I spent nearly a decade working in public health and bike advocacy across the state. Through the School of Medicine's Rural Program, I was lucky enough to spend my clerkship year at Valley View Hospital in Glenwood Springs, which further cemented my love of Colorado's western slope.

As an avid trail runner, bike enthusiast, intermittent rock climber, and mediocre skier, I am thrilled to live in a place that has great access to so many wonderful opportunities for outdoor recreation. When I'm not working or adventuring, you can find me cuddling my geriatric kitty, doodling, or making jewelry - especially out of upcycled bike components! I'm excited to get involved in the local bike scene to bring my passion for and experience in health equity and healthcare quality improvement to the Grand Valley.



Jeremiah Shipman, MD

I was born and raised in Kansas, growing up in a world where the 300-foot elevation of the Flint Hills were an impressive amount of height. I have family across the Front Range and frequently visited Colorado while growing up.

I attended Kansas State University for undergrad (go Cats!) and the University of Kansas in Kansas City for medical school, where my rural family medicine experiences solidified family medicine as my future (and now current) career. I loved my interview with Grand Junction, remembering the town fondly from a stop at the Applebee’s on a road trip in 2019.

If I am not in the hospital I am backpacking, being a cat dad to Hershey, DMing some sort of tabletop role playing game, or being an amateur tiki bartender.

First Year Residents (Class of 2029)



Tommy Barrett, MD

I was born and raised in Orlando, Florida, where I spent much of my time outdoors on the lake or at the beach and developed a love for the mountains during trips to my grandparents' cabin in Steamboat Springs. I studied biomedical engineering at the University of Florida and, after graduating, explored medicine through volunteering at a free clinic and working as an EMT, which solidified my desire to pursue a career in medicine.

I returned to the University of Florida for medical school, where my rural family medicine rotation and volunteer work at the student-run free clinic system, shaped my passion for primary care in rural and underserved communities. I was drawn to St. Mary's for the supportive culture, strong training, and the opportunity to live in an outdoor haven. Outside of work, my wife, Monique, and I enjoy biking, skiing, climbing, and hiking with our golden retriever, Clyde.



Maria Burks, DO

I was born and raised in Dayton, OH. I earned my B.S. in Psychology and attended Ohio University—Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine for medical school.

Moving out west has always been a dream of mine since I visited Arizona and Utah in my early 20s. I fell in love with the landscape and the variety of cultures. I also saw the real need for good medical providers.

I have been involved with many volunteer organizations and positions since my early teens, and all of them focused on connecting people with resources and knowledge to help them better their lives, in whatever way that person believed right for them. This is something that I will carry over into being a Family Medicine physician. I believe in educating patients and connecting them with resources that allow them to make educated decisions about what is best for them and help them overcome barriers to meet those goals.

In a non-professional setting, I enjoy traveling, exploring (especially excited to explore my new home and the magnificent areas around), trying new foods, playing with my cat, reading/listening to audiobooks, hanging out at a local café or public library, doing crafts and home improvement projects, planting flowers, and occasionally playing a video game or two.



Ridge Droskin, DO

I was born and raised in Grand Junction, and I am excited to return home to train at St. Mary's. I graduated from CMU and attended medical school outside of Denver at Rocky Vista University. In my free time, I enjoy playing basketball and hockey, watching sports, going to the lake, skiing, and spending time with my wife and daughter. I chose family medicine because I can combine my interest in full spectrum care with opportunities to pursue sports medicine. I am excited to return to a community that means a lot to me and look forward to working with the people who make Grand Junction a great place to live.



Andrew Luker, MD

Hi there! I called Grand Junction home for the first 18 years of my life, exploring the joys of the mountains and rivers with my family and friends and ultimately, graduating from GJHS. I then went to Calvin University for undergrad followed by Creighton University in Phoenix, AZ, for medical school. My wife and I along with our 1 year old daughter are so excited to call Grand Junction home again and get back to spending time with friends and family, fishing, floating rivers, and hiking.

My life has been profoundly changed by the love of Jesus Christ and because of that I would love to open a clinic that offers primary care to uninsured patients in the valley.



Michael Montross, DO

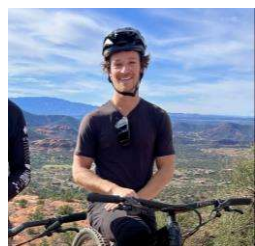
Hello! My name is Michael and I grew up in Portland, Oregon for the first 12 years of my life, and later moved to Wisconsin where I did my undergraduate degree in electrical engineering. I completed medical school at Midwestern University in Glendale, Arizona, and chose family medicine as my specialty because of the breadth of the field and the meaningful relationships that you get to develop with your patients. I'm beyond excited to train at St. Mary's as it will prepare me for my future goals of providing full-spectrum care in a smaller town, while being in a beautiful area with great access to nature. I am very excited to be able to do what I love outdoors in Colorado like hiking, trail running, cliff jumping, and paddle boarding without being seared medium rare like in Arizona



Cami Olson, DO

Growing up in Mesa, Arizona I learned to love and respect the sun and to never leave my water bottle at home. You can usually find me outside running, biking, swimming, hiking, playing tennis or pickleball, frequently with my husband, and always with my water bottle. Outside of adventuring, celebrating random National Days (Jan 27 is National Peanut Butter Day) is my favorite way to shake things up.

I studied Biophysics and Spanish at Brigham Young University in Utah and then went to medical school at TCOM in Fort Worth, Texas. During rotations, I enjoyed every field of practice. I especially thrived talking to patients and forming connections with them. I chose family medicine for the longitudinal relationships with patients and full-spectrum care. I am so excited to join the team at St. Mary's!



Cooper Sclar, DO

I grew up in Evergreen, Colorado and completed my undergrad at CU Boulder before earning my master's degree and attending medical school at Rocky Vista University. I am drawn to family medicine because of the opportunity to build meaningful, long-term relationships, with particular interests in rural care, pediatrics, and sports medicine.

I am excited about St. Mary's because of the strong sense of community and the chance to train in a setting that truly supports full-spectrum care. Grand Junction is a natural fit for me, with incredible access to mountain biking, trail running, snowboarding, hockey and everything outdoors! Outside of medicine, I enjoy spending time with my family & friends, getting outside whenever possible, and staying active. I try to bring a positive, easygoing attitude to both my team and my patients.



Tyler Scott, DO

I was born in California and raised in Arizona and Texas. I completed both my undergraduate and graduate studies in mechanical engineering at Texas A&M and worked for four years as a mechanical engineer before returning to medical school at Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine. I chose family medicine because of its broad scope, focus on prevention and the long-term relationships it affords; I have particular interests in lifestyle medicine, osteopathic manipulative medicine, and full-spectrum primary care. I'm excited to return to the Mountain West after many years away, and outside of medicine you'll find me hiking, camping, snowboarding, spending time with my wife and two kids, or picking up the latest Facebook Marketplace find.



Ned Soud, MD

I grew up in Baghdad, Iraq, where I trained and practiced as an anesthesiologist in Iraq and Jordan, including MD and humanitarian work with the International Red Cross. After coming to the United States as a refugee, I rebuilt my medical career while working as a Care Navigator at Denver Health, helping patients overcome barriers to care and navigate complex healthcare systems. I later expanded my work into public health, trauma services, patient education, and direct patient care through completing the Colorado Works for International Physicians (COWIP) program at Denver Health, gaining extensive hands-on experience in inpatient medicine, primary care, pediatrics, emergency medicine, and obstetrics.

My experience as a Care Navigator taught me that some of the most meaningful moments in medicine happen when patients feel heard, supported, and empowered. That is why Family Medicine feels like home to me. Having faced many challenges in my own journey, I understand the importance of compassion, resilience, and building trusting relationships with patients and families. Outside of medicine, I enjoy coaching competitive youth soccer, teaching healthcare professionals, exploring Colorado's mountains, gardening, cooking, and spending time with my family. I am grateful for the opportunity to continue serving my community while growing as a family physician.

Behavioral Health Trainees



Claire Hughes, 2nd Year Professional Counselor intern

I was born and raised in Grand Junction, Colorado. I graduated from the University of Colorado at Boulder with degrees in Spanish and Psychology. I spent time living and teaching abroad (in Spain), working at nonprofits (in Seattle and Denver), and eventually, life brought me back home to gorgeous Grand Junction. I have a Master's degree in Education with a specialization in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), and I am currently a student at Adam's State University, preparing to become a Licensed Professional Counselor. In my free time, you can find me trail running, cheering my head off at my kids' sporting events, doing art projects, or enjoying the great outdoors with my husband, three kids, and our dog, Chip.



Tristan Kladzyk, 1st Year MSW Intern

Hi, my name is Tristan Kladzyk. I am currently pursuing my Master of Social Work degree at Colorado Mesa University. For many years, I have worked in a variety of Montessori roles, supporting children, families, educators, and adult learners. Through these experiences, I developed a strong interest in child development, family relationships, and the factors that support overall well-being.

My interest in behavioral health grew from seeing the important connection between emotional health, family systems, and a person's ability to thrive. I am excited to learn more about integrated behavioral health through my practicum experience at St. Mary's Family Medicine.

Outside of work and school, I enjoy reading, hiking, camping, and exploring Colorado with my family and our dog. My husband and I have boy/girl twins who will be starting their freshman year at CU Boulder this fall, making this a year of new beginnings for all of us! I am grateful for the opportunity to join the St. Mary's team and look forward to learning from such a collaborative group of professionals.



Rachel Livingston, Doctoral Fellow

I was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri. I earned my undergraduate degree in Art History and spent about ten years working in finance before returning to school to pursue a master's degree in Marriage & Family Therapy. I am currently a Ph.D. candidate in Medical Family Therapy at Saint Louis University and hope to defend my dissertation next summer. My interest in the field grew out of my own experience in couples therapy and seeing the positive impact it can have on people's lives and relationships. I am especially drawn to working with individuals and families navigating grief, serious illness, and end-of-life concerns. Through my training in hospice and healthcare settings, I have developed a strong appreciation for the role behavioral health professionals can play in supporting patients, families, and care teams through some of life's most challenging experiences.

When I'm not working, I enjoy spending time with my family, reading, working out, singing, getting coffee with friends, and rewatching "The Sopranos" or "Mad Men" for the millionth time. As a life-long city dweller, I'm excited to spend more time outdoors in the highest, driest, and quietest place I've ever lived!



Ryan McKissen, 2nd Year MSW Intern

I was born and raised in Grand Junction. After finishing high school, I went to college at Northern State University in Aberdeen, South Dakota where I graduated with a degree in education. I developed a passion for teaching reading. For the past ten years, I have been a third grade teacher with the Mesa County School District where I spent an abundant amount of time working with kids and their families.

Recently, I have developed an interest in family therapy and behavioral interventions for students. I aspire to be an asset to the community in new ways outside of the classroom. In my free time, I like to read, hike, be outdoors, play with my dogs, and spend time with family.



Vanessa “V” Galdamez Arreola, Post-Masters Intern

I was born and raised under the sparkling lights of fabulous Las Vegas, Nevada. I eventually traded the glitz and glamour of Sin City for the red rocks at Southern Utah University, where I completed my Bachelor of Science in psychology and family services, followed by a Master of Science in couple, marriage, and family therapy from Texas Tech University. My passion for integrated healthcare grew through both personal and professional experience, learning how life’s most difficult challenges can become meaningful strengths in clinical work. I have worked in human services and behavioral health settings since I was a teen, and I’m excited to serve the Grand Junction community alongside the amazing team at St. Mary’s as I work toward full licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist. Outside of my work, I love traveling the world, snuggling my cats, doing word searches, and spending time in nature.