

leadership opportunity

Executive Director

of the



Wisconsin Medical Society
— FOUNDATION —

in Madison, Wisconsin

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The Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation works to advance the health of the people of Wisconsin by supporting medical education and public health initiatives across the state.



Photos courtesy of the Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation.

The Foundation is hiring an Executive Director to lead this essential work.

The Foundation's Executive Director, Elizabeth Ringle, is retiring after 14 years of service to the organization (see [press release](#)).

Peter Gray Executive Search is the Foundation's exclusively retained partner for this executive search.

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about the Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation



Wisconsin Medical Society — FOUNDATION —

MISSION

To advance the health of the people of Wisconsin by supporting medical education and health initiatives.

VISION

A healthy Wisconsin for all. The Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation is working to support medical education, research, and physician championed programs that increase health equity and access.

GOVERNANCE

The Foundation is governed by a board of trustees composed of 23 physician, medical student, resident, and non-physician members and is managed by an executive director, program director and administrative assistant. The Foundation's work is separate from, but complementary to, the Wisconsin Medical Society. Neither the Society nor dues paid by its members support the work of the Foundation. We rely on voluntary donations, corporate sponsorships and revenue from endowment funds.

The full Board meets three times per year (March, July and November) with a joint Executive and Finance Committee meeting in November and other Executive Committee meetings as needed. The Finance Committee meets quarterly, and other Committees meet one or two times per year.

The Foundation's assets total close to \$17 million, with an annual operating budget of around \$980,000 plus student loan principal of around \$2.7 million.

Supporting future physicians and our physician workforce

A strong and diverse physician workforce is central to providing exceptional health care and meeting patient needs, both now and in the future. The Foundation provides close to three –quarters of a million dollars each year in tuition assistance through scholarships, student loans, awards, and leadership opportunities. The connections and sense of community built through Foundation programs serving youth, students, residents and physicians is an important factor encouraging physicians to stay and practice high quality medicine in Wisconsin.

Supporting physician-championed public health programs

Physicians are on the front-line of their communities bearing witness to the health issues facing their patients and their communities. The Foundation looks to physicians for recommendations regarding effective strategies that are evidence-based and scientifically supported to address pressing health needs and to identify important health topics that need further research or investigation. More than 30,000 Wisconsin residents are directly impacted by Foundation investments in public health initiatives and research annually.

Awards – Each year, the Foundation recognizes exceptional medical students and physicians with several awards including the Presidential Scholar Award, Houghton Awards, Superhero of Medicine Award and Kenneth M. Viste, Jr., MD Young Physician Award at Health & Harmony, our annual event held jointly with the Wisconsin Medical Society. The event in 2027 will be held in Eau Claire, WI at the Lismore Hotel on Friday, April 9th followed by the Society's annual meeting and CME held on Saturday, April 10th.

Cyril "Kim" Hetsko, MD Trainee Leadership Fund – This fund was established officially in 2023 to help provide training and mentorship opportunities for medical students and physician trainees who otherwise would not

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be able to participate in AMA meetings due to expense.

Endowment Funds and Estate Gifts – We seek to be the trusted home for physicians and other friends of medicine to establish a fund or leave an estate gift intended to impact health in Wisconsin and/or support the next generation of medical leaders. The Foundation supports more than 40 restricted funds to support research, education, student loans, scholarships, and community health grants.

Fellowships – Our goal is to support research projects stewarded by medical students working with a physician mentor as part of an existing research project or one created by the student and physician. Fellowships provide research and project management experience to students and engage them in their community.

Fundraising – The Foundation received more than \$500,000 per year in support of our mission through direct donations to support our mission and programs. Discrete campaigns are held for each program. Our one public fundraising event each year is Health & Harmony. All donations from that event go directly to support community health grants.

Grants – The Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation grants funds to physician-championed, qualified nonprofit organizations. Funds are to be used toward the Foundation's mission to improve health by increasing health equity and access in Wisconsin. A total of 14 grants were awarded for 2026, including the Superhero of Medicine and Viste Awards. Those grants include: Feed My People Food Bank in Eau Claire, FoodRight in Milwaukee, Horizon High School in Madison, NAMI Fox Valley in Appleton, New Day Advocacy Center in Ashland, NorthLakes Community Clinic in Iron River, Open Arms Free Clinic in Elkhorn, Planned Parenthood Wisconsin, SAMS25 Free Health Clinic in Shawano, Soup or Socks in Marshfield, The Brain Center of Green Bay, United Community Center Milwaukee, UW OB-GYN Dept in Madison, and WAFER in La Crosse. Staff visits each recipient and writes articles about their work. RFPs and the grant application open in August and close in October. The Grant Committee meets in November to make the recommendation and the Board approves those recommendations in December. Awards are paid in January and final reports are received the following February for the Grant Committee to review.

Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion – In 2016 the Foundation moved to state clearly in all programs and in particular grants funded, our overarching goal is to increase health equity in Wisconsin. Through the annual Physician Survey, racism and health equity were identified as a concern of physicians across the state. Annual health outcomes data reveals that race plays a significant role in health equity in Wisconsin. As part of the Foundation's ongoing commitment, a JEDI reading and JEDI statement is included in all Foundation meetings to increase awareness and understanding of JEDI issues. The JEDI Committee has four working groups: Advocacy, Education, Mentorship, and Qualitative Analysis. With the confirmed 2026-2028 JEDI Strategic Plan, the four working groups have been developing S.M.A.R.T. goals related to their foundational objectives and primary pillars.

Operation: Education – A program held at the medical schools in Madison and Milwaukee that gives first- and second-year medical students the chance to meet with physicians representing a variety of specialties and career options for practical advice and career exploration. Also provides a rewarding volunteer opportunity for physicians to promote their specialty. The program was held in person in January at Medical College of Wisconsin Milwaukee at UW School of Medicine and Public Health.

Prescription for a Healthy You – A youth healthy living program created by the Foundation and implemented at select Boys & Girls Clubs encourages youth to consider careers in health care and medicine while reinforcing healthy choices including eating healthy, being active, water for thirst and mindfulness. The Foundation, in partnership with UW School of Medicine and Population Health Community Health Education Partnership (formerly Primary Care Clerkship Program), expanded the program to be a permanent embedded program with the Dane County Boys & Girls Club. For the past several years this has been at the Taft Street Club, however, in prior years it was at the Allied Drive location. Through this model, club members have weekly sessions year-round with medical students and other allied health professionals who serve on a 12-week

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rotation as part of their training. The program is also held at the Wausau Boys & Girls Club with MCW-Central Wisconsin and at various locations around the state with a variety of community partners.

Scholarships – The Foundation provides tuition support for medical students along with other related health careers. A total of 145 scholarship applications were received in 2026. Funding was available to award 82 scholarships for a total of \$293,500, including the two Houghton Awards previously awarded.

Student Loans – The Foundation provides student loans with very favorable terms. Loans are currently set for \$10,000 with fixed interest of 4.5%, with approval at the December Board meeting, there will also be four annually renewable loans for \$15,000 at 4.5% for incoming first year students. Loans have no fees, do not accrue interest while enrolled, do not capitalize until repayment begins, and have generous deferral options. Foundation staff stay in touch with student loan recipients throughout the lifecycle of their loan until it is fully repaid.

White Coat Campaign – Through annual donations from physicians, each first-year medical student attending school in Wisconsin is provided with their first white coat and a note of welcome and encouragement from a physician.

Wisconsin Science Festival – The Foundation teams up with the UW Doctors Ought to Care medical student group to host a booth at the Madison location of the Wisconsin Science Festival, a statewide celebration of science. Student and physician volunteers welcome more than 1,100 students to see, touch and learn about human organs and encouraged children to visualize themselves pursuing careers in health and medicine.

Learn More: Please visit our website at <https://foundation.wismed.org/> to learn more about the Foundation and to read current and past annual reports and news stories.



The Foundation's annual [White Coat Campaign](#) provides a white coat and personal message to every first-year medical student who attends school in Wisconsin, enabling practicing and retired physicians to make a difference in the lives of medical students.

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job description



Wisconsin Medical Society — FOUNDATION —

TITLE: Executive Director

REPORTS TO: Board of Trustees

PRIMARY BOARD LIAISON: Board Chair

STATUS: Full-time, Exempt

SUPERVISES: Program Director, Administrative Assistant, and other staff as assigned

POSITION SUMMARY

The Executive Director is the chief executive of the Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation and provides strategic, philanthropic, organizational, and external leadership in advancing the Foundation's mission and long-term vitality. Working in partnership with the Board of Trustees, the Executive Director leads the Foundation's strategic direction; develops and diversifies philanthropic resources; strengthens relationships across Wisconsin's medical, philanthropic, and community sectors; and leads staff in translating strategy into meaningful results. The Executive Director serves as the Foundation's principal ambassador and maintains a strong, collaborative relationship with the Wisconsin Medical Society and affiliated WisMed organizations while preserving the Foundation's independent governance and charitable purpose.

ESSENTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Leadership

- Partner with the Board to establish and advance the Foundation's strategic direction, priorities, and measures of success.
- Translate Board-approved strategy into organizational priorities, plans, & resource requirements.
- Assess emerging needs and opportunities affecting health, medical education, the physician workforce, and philanthropy in Wisconsin.
- Evaluate programs and initiatives for mission alignment, impact, sustainability, and appropriate use of resources.
- Strengthen the Foundation's identity, visibility, and distinctive role within Wisconsin's health and philanthropic landscape.

Philanthropy and Resource Development

- Lead development and implementation of a comprehensive strategy to grow and diversify philanthropic support.
- Cultivate, solicit, and steward significant donors and prospects, including physicians, individuals, health systems, businesses, foundations, and other institutional partners.
- Expand major giving, planned and legacy giving, grants, sponsorships, and sources of support.
- Engage Trustees and other volunteer leaders as ambassadors, relationship-builders, and philanthropic partners.
- Ensure effective donor stewardship and appropriate administration of charitable gifts.

External Relations and Partnerships

- Serve as a visible and credible ambassador for the Foundation throughout Wisconsin.
- Build productive relationships with physicians, medical students, health systems, medical schools, community organizations, philanthropic institutions, businesses, and other partners.
- Identify opportunities to connect medical expertise, philanthropic resources, and community needs.
- Strengthen physician and student engagement with the Foundation as donors, volunteers, mentors, ambassadors, and partners.

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- Provide strategic leadership for communications that demonstrate impact and increase awareness, participation, and support.

Board and Governance Partnership

- Serve as the principal staff partner to the Board and support Trustees in fulfilling their governance, fiduciary, and strategic responsibilities.
- Work with the Board Chair to develop effective agendas and provide timely information, analysis, and recommendations for Board decision-making.
- Support strong Board and committee practices, Trustee orientation and development, and succession planning.
- Partner with the Board to recruit and engage Trustees whose experience, relationships, and perspectives advance the Foundation's mission and strategic priorities.
- Maintain appropriate distinctions between governance and management responsibilities.

WisMed Relationships

- Maintain a collaborative and productive relationship with Wisconsin Medical Society leadership and affiliated WisMed organizations.
- Identify opportunities for complementary initiatives, partnerships, and shared relationships that advance the Foundation's mission.
- Clearly represent the Foundation's distinct governance responsibilities, charitable purpose, resources, and interests.
- Navigate overlapping organizational relationships and priorities with diplomacy, transparency, and sound judgment.

Organizational and Financial Leadership

- Recruit, lead, develop, and retain a capable, collaborative staff team; establish clear expectations and delegate effectively.
- Develop and recommend annual budgets aligned with strategic priorities and available resources.
- Maintain executive accountability for financial performance, internal controls, charitable assets, restricted funds, and organizational sustainability.
- Provide the Board with timely financial information, forecasts, and analysis.
- Ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations, Foundation policies, donor restrictions, and requirements associated with tax-exempt status.
- Identify and manage significant organizational, financial, operational, and reputational risks.

QUALIFICATIONS

Required

- Progressive leadership experience in a nonprofit, foundation, association, health-related, educational, philanthropic, or similarly mission-driven organization.
- Demonstrated success developing relationships that generate philanthropic support, partnerships, or other organizational resources.
- Experience working effectively with a governing Board and knowledge of nonprofit governance.
- Strong strategic thinking and demonstrated ability to translate strategy into priorities and results.
- Financial acumen sufficient to oversee budgets, financial performance, and stewardship of organizational resources.
- Demonstrated ability to lead, develop, and delegate effectively to staff.
- Exceptional interpersonal, written, verbal, and public communication skills.
- Sound judgment, integrity, and demonstrated ability to navigate complex relationships and competing interests.

Preferred

- Significant fundraising and development experience, including direct donor cultivation and solicitation.

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- Experience in health care, medicine, medical education, public health, philanthropy, or an affiliated association/foundation environment.
- Experience with major, institutional, or planned giving.
- Experience building partnerships across organizations or sectors.
- Familiarity with grantmaking, scholarships, or other philanthropic programs.

EDUCATION

Bachelor's degree or an equivalent combination of education and substantial relevant professional experience. Advanced education or relevant professional credentials are valued but not required.

LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

The successful Executive Director will be mission-driven, strategic, trustworthy, collaborative, and externally oriented. The individual will be an accomplished relationship-builder and communicator; a thoughtful partner to the Board; an effective fundraiser; a responsible financial steward; and a supportive leader who delegates effectively, develops others, and is comfortable making decisions. Curiosity, adaptability, diplomacy, and a genuine commitment to improving health in Wisconsin are essential.

These characteristics closely reflect the convergence in the staff and Board discovery materials around mission commitment, trust, collaboration, communication, strategic thinking, fundraising, Board management, fiscal responsibility, staff support, adaptability, and external engagement.

WORKING CONDITIONS

This position requires regular statewide engagement and travel, with periodic evening and weekend commitments associated with Board meetings, donor engagement, programs, and events. Reasonable accommodations will be provided consistent with applicable law.



The Foundation encourages Wisconsin children to consider medicine and related health careers through [community grants](#), its [Prescription for a Healthy You](#) program, and its participation in the [Wisconsin Science Festival](#).

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job location: Madison, Wisconsin

The Foundation is based at the Wisconsin Medical Society's administrative office, [located](#) in Fitchburg, just south of Madison, in south central Wisconsin.

The Wisconsin Medical Society accommodates remote work and alternative scheduling based on organizational and position needs. Due to the collaborative team leadership nature of the work, this is a mostly onsite position with significant responsibilities that cannot be fulfilled remotely. The Foundation's Executive Director is expected to reside in the greater Madison area; to work mostly onsite at the Wisconsin Medical Society office; and to have regular statewide engagement and travel, with periodic evening and weekend commitments.

The Foundation is conducting a national search, and is prepared to offer financial assistance for relocation.

TO MADISON BY CAR:

From Milwaukee: 79 miles, 1½ hours

From Dubuque: 91 miles, 1¾ hours

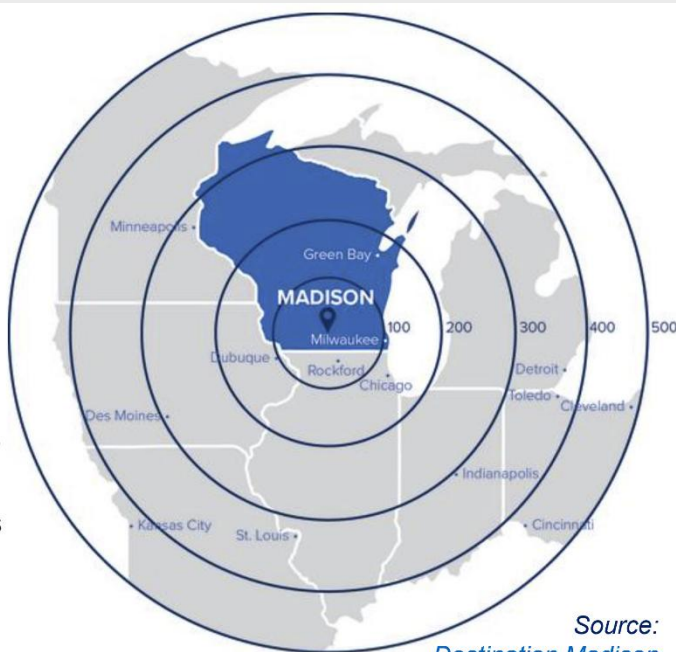
From Chicago: 147 miles, 2½ hours

From Green Bay: 140 miles, 2½ hours

From Minneapolis: 273 miles, 4½ hours

From Des Moines: 292 miles, 4¾ hours

From St. Louis: 359 miles, 5½ hours



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about Madison, Wisconsin

Madison, Wisconsin is a vibrant city of over 280,000 residents. Its Dane County metro area is home to nearly 600,000 residents. It is the state's fastest growing metro, and its second largest metro, after Milwaukee.

Madison is the capital of Wisconsin, a world-class [research & technology university](#) city, and a thriving creative-class hub.



Source: *Focal Flame Photography*

Nestled on a chain of scenic lakes, the Madison region has been home to the [Ho-Chunk nation](#) for over 11,000 years. Its Ho-Chunk name is [Dejope](#), meaning “Four Lakes.” The region also has the world’s largest concentration of [Indian effigy mounds](#). There are dozens on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus alone.

Madison is consistently named one of the [best places to live](#) in US nationwide rankings and surveys. Madison earns accolades for its [green & healthy](#) lifestyle, its [gender parity at work](#), its [educational attainment](#), its [equitable, family-friendly neighborhoods](#), its [sports](#), its great [beer](#) scene, and even its [happiness](#). (See Madison [fun facts](#) and [things to do](#))

Madison has the strongest local economy and job market in its region, if not nationwide. Wisconsin’s unemployment rate consistently trends below the US average. Dane County (metro Madison) is consistently the lowest-unemployment county in Wisconsin, with [2.9% unemployment in July 2026](#). (Compare to unemployment rates of [3.4% statewide](#) and [4.1% nationwide](#)). National and global companies headquartered in metro Madison include [Epic Systems](#), [American Family Insurance](#), [Exact Sciences](#), [Lands End](#), [TruStage](#), [Promega](#), [ETC](#), and [Sub-Zero](#).

Madison has a vibrant nonprofit sector. Locals like to say Madison has the most nonprofits per capita of any US city. (Don’t tell them [this report](#) ranks Madison #2!)

Despite a median home price of \$579,528, Madison offers a lower [cost of living](#) than many desirable metros.

Madison’s racial and ethnic [demographics](#): 70% non-Hispanic White, 9% Hispanic, 8% Asian, 7% Black, 6% other.

Business and civic organizations active in Madison include the [Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce](#), [Downtown Madison Inc.](#), the [Madison Black Chamber of Commerce](#), the [Wisconsin Latino Chamber of Commerce](#), the [Hmong Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce](#), and the [Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce](#).

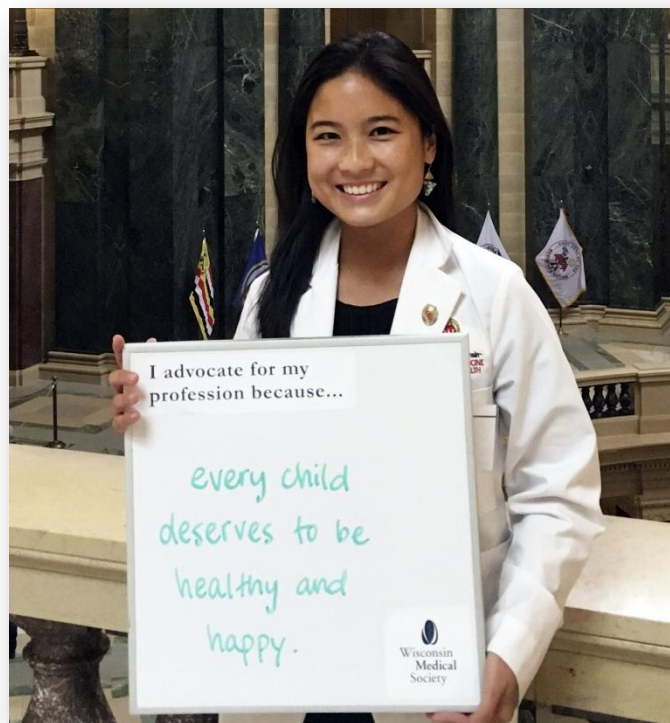
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salary and benefits

The Foundation's Executive Director position has a **salary range of \$120,000 - \$140,000**.

Foundation employees are covered under the Wisconsin Medical Society's excellent [employee benefits plan](#), which includes:

- Medical, dental, and vision insurance with generous employer premium contributions.
- HSA and/or FSA offerings based on choice of health plan option elections.
- Employer-paid life and disability insurance.
- Wellness expense reimbursement of up to \$500 per year.
- Retirement plan with 4% employer match that is 100% vested upon hire.
- Generous paid time off and holiday schedule.
- Professional development support.



The Wisconsin Medical Society organizes [Doctor Day](#), the annual physicians' advocacy event at the Wisconsin State Capitol.

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interested?

Please [apply](#) confidentially: bit.ly/wmsf-apply

Deadline: rolling. The position is open until filled. It was announced on **September 10, 2026**. Rather than setting an application deadline, we are considering applications and holding interviews on a rolling basis, with first-round interviews starting in early July. For best consideration, please apply promptly; and please complete all questions in the application, including the cover letter/personal statement. Our goal is to fill this position by **January 2027**.



Each year the Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation recognizes an outstanding Wisconsin physician with the [Superhero of Medicine award](#). The 2025 awardee was Christopher Eberlein, MD, co-founder of [Alliance to HEAL](#).

The Foundation has exclusively retained [Peter Gray Executive Search](#) to conduct the search for its new Executive Director. Peter Gray Executive Search is a social impact executive search firm in Madison, Wisconsin.

The Foundation and Peter Gray Executive Search are equal opportunity employers, committed to attracting candidates representing a diverse range of backgrounds. The Foundation strongly believes it benefits from the perspectives and talents of a diverse staff.

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about peter gray executive search



Peter Gray (he/him) is a recovering Wall Street recruiter who now recruits social impact leaders and fights bias in hiring.

As founder and CEO of [Peter Gray Executive Search](#), he guides nonprofit organizations and social impact employers through [leadership succession](#) and other [strategic hiring](#).

Peter began his career in executive search at Korn Ferry in New York City. Before that, he was a management consultant at CSC Index, the firm that pioneered business process reengineering.

Peter gives back as a member, adviser, and supporter of several nonprofit and civic organizations. A former Boys & Girls Club kid, he serves on the board of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Dane County, Wisconsin. Through his own [fundraising](#) and his [leadership of fundraising campaigns](#), he has helped raise over \$10 million for the Boys & Girls Clubs.

Awards include the In Business Madison Executive Choice award, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Dane County's Volunteer of the Decade and Mentor of the Year awards, the Aviva Youmunity Award, and the Wisconsin Bicycle Federation's Advocate of the Year award. Current and past committees include Madison Rotary, Downtown Madison Inc., United Way of Dane County, Foundation for Madison's Public Schools, Madison Public Market, and the Madison Area Diversity Roundtable.

Peter holds a BA from Harvard University, and an MBA from Columbia Business School.

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