The Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences at KUSM-W has a long history of producing psychiatrists and psychologists who serve the city of Wichita, state of Kansas and beyond. Founded in 1973, the department has a psychiatry residency program with a total of 24 residents each year and psychology training programs in child and adolescent psychology and clinical neuropsychology, with a total of five full-time trainees per year.

The psychiatry residency program has graduated over 200 psychiatrists since its inception, roughly half of whom practice in Kansas, helping KUSM-W fulfill its mission of producing doctors for Kansas. The majority of graduates are employed by hospitals, public mental health programs, community mental health centers or other government-run mental health facilities. We estimate that the KUSM-W psychiatry residency program has produced nearly half of the state’s psychiatrists and almost all of those practicing in rural areas including Alisha Coulson, M.D., and Veronica Amey, M.D.

The psychology training program is a member of Wichita Collaborative Psychology Internship Program, the oldest psychology training consortium in the US. Graduates practice across the country, with three on faculty at KUSM-W and dozens more in the surrounding Wichita community. In 2018, our neuropsychology fellowship achieved membership in the Association of Postdoctoral Programs in Clinical Neuropsychology, which recognizes high-quality fellowship programs that promote board certification. Three fellowship graduates are currently neuropsychology faculty at KUSM-W. Other graduates practice as clinical neuropsychologists at VA hospitals, academic medical centers, research institutes and in private practice across the nation.
Ryan Schroeder, Psy.D., traces his interest in psychology to high school, when he felt himself making a difference as a Big Brother to a boy from a low socioeconomic-status family.

“From that point, I really could see the positive movement in him,” Schroeder said.

Schroeder practices at KU School of Medicine-Wichita and serves as an associate professor in the Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences. He's an experienced clinician and prolific researcher, and he has embraced administrative duties associated with the clinic, too.

He earned a psychology degree from South Dakota State University, honing in on neuropsychology as a specialty thanks in part to an influential professor and mentor.

Schroeder then earned master's and doctoral degrees in clinical psychology with a concentration in neuropsychology from Argosy University in Minnesota’s Twin Cities. He served a clinical psychology internship at the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System in Little Rock, Arkansas, then completed his post-doctoral clinical neuropsychology fellowship at KUSM-W in 2012.

Most of Schroeder’s professional time is spent conducting outpatient neuropsychological evaluations at KU Wichita as well as inpatient evaluations at several hospitals in the region. He’s not a therapist. Rather, his work is diagnosing a patient’s neuropsychological condition and fashioning a care plan.

“It’s assessing memory change and looking at the effects of brain injury or disease,” he said.

Schroeder teaches an advanced-level psychology course in neuropsychological assessment at Wichita State University and at KUSM-W he helps supervise an intern and two post-doctoral fellows.

He has served as director of the psychiatry residency program’s neuropsychology rotation program since 2014. His work in mentoring younger professionals was recognized by KU School of Medicine, as he won the Executive Dean’s Achievement Award for Mentoring Post-Docs earlier this year.

“I enjoy watching our young learners develop into skilled professionals.”

He is an active committee member and coordinator within multiple national-level neuropsychological organizations, and his work has been noticed. Earlier this year, he became the American Psychological Association’s Early Career Neuropsychologist Representative for the State of Kansas.

Schroeder devotes a significant amount of time to research, which led to him receiving the 2018 Early Career Award from the National Academy of Neuropsychology. The award places him in an elite group recognized at the national level for scholarly contributions to the field of neuropsychology. He’s served as principal or sub-investigator on eight funded research projects, contributed to dozens of journal articles and books and made presentations across the country. His scholarly work is highly cited by other professionals in the field, and his articles have been highlighted by journals and given awards.
Alisha Coulson, M.D., now teaching medical students about psychiatry at the KU Salina campus, remembers well her time in KU School of Medicine-Wichita’s residency program.

She recalls rotations at Via Christi’s St. Joseph and St. Francis campus and the KU clinic.

“I had a wide variety of experiences with KU in Wichita,” she said of the residency she completed in 2015. “We did a month of nights at St. Joe in the psychiatric emergency room. After that rotation, you were prepared for pretty much anything that comes through the door.”

Faculty from the Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences made a lasting impression, such as psychologists Glenn Veenstra, Ph.D., and Don Morgan, Ph.D., and psychiatrists Sheldon Preskorn, M.D., and Matthew Macaluso, D.O. She believes she received training comparable to the top programs in the nation.

Today, in addition to a practice that keeps her busy, she serves as assistant clerkship director for the neuropsychiatry clerkship required for students at KU School of Medicine-Salina. Students at the campus do a four-week rotation with her and colleagues. “They keep me on my toes. You have to be well read.”

Coulson took a nontraditional path to medicine after graduating from Kansas State University with a bachelor of science in biology, and a master of science in pathobiology. The Larned native worked as a student and full-time staff in research laboratories at KSU, involving virology, genetics, molecular microbiology, immunology and cell physiology. She worked in the departments of Diagnostic Medicine/Pathobiology, Plant Pathology, Biology, the Terry C. Johnson Cancer Center, and Anatomy and Physiology from approximately 1996 to 2006.

Eventually, she decided to pursue her longtime dream of medical school. While shadowing physicians, she learned of Ross University School of Medicine and was accepted to the school, then on the Caribbean island of Dominica but since relocated to Barbados, due to Hurricane Maria.

She spent her first two years in Dominica, followed by clinical training at hospitals in New York and New Jersey.

“When I was in medical school, I looked at the residents to see who looked happy,” she said, and liked what she saw in psychiatry. Plus, she liked “working with the most interesting organ ever, the brain.”

“I’m helping train the next generation of doctors. Two or three years later when I see them in residency, I am proud when they’re doing well and proud that I had a very small part in that.”

She and colleagues in her Salina practice, Veridian Behavioral Health, serve 175 to 200 patients a day from a 14-county area. “It just amazes me how people just want to be heard,” said Coulson, who has a focus on geriatric psychiatry. “It amazes me how much better people get on medications in combination with the talk therapy.”
Selia Ybon Whitney, M.D.

Born and raised: Johnson City, Kansas  
Undergraduate education:  
B.A., Pittsburg State University  
Medical education: The University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita  
Prior to medical school: Worked as a medical secretary at Via Christi Hospitals. Also worked as a secretary for an agriculture company, a preschool teacher’s assistant, a waitress, a hostess, a telemarketer and a temp for Koch.  
Dr. Whitney’s vision: To deliver the best quality of care to patients and create a financially sustainable outpatient business model where psychiatrists, social workers and counseling psychologists all work together to help patients.  
Why additional travel funding would benefit residents like Dr. Whitney: To learn from thought leaders in the field and bring new ideas and innovations to Wichita.  
How KU Wichita has helped Dr. Whitney achieve her professional goals: KU School of Medicine-Wichita has a reputation of giving medical students more “hands-on learning” than other medical school programs. Not only did I get a chance to learn more advanced medical procedures, but the exposure to these experiences really boosted confidence in my medical knowledge and how that transitioned into patient care. Now in my third year of residency, I can see how the KU Wichita residency program has also exceeded my expectations. I have learned from exposure to different psychiatrists, fields, perspectives and styles. KU Wichita has a wonderful balance of teaching both psychopharmacology and psychotherapeutic treatment. There is intentional exposure to different styles of maintaining physician well-being emotionally, physically and mentally.  
KU has helped me achieve my professional goals. The ability to attend educational meetings to learn new ideas, different perspectives, cutting edge treatments or new methods of delivering care will continue to help me with my career goals, help keep Wichita current and benefit our physicians, patients and community.