

# Celebrating 50 years of medical excellence at McMaster University



**“There is no curriculum; there are no examinations; there are no lectures. What kind of an educational institution could this possibly be?”**

- Dr. John Evans, founding dean, relating the initial reaction of McMaster’s Senate to the proposed educational approach at the new medical school in the 1960s.

The tale is well-known at McMaster: Frustrated by traditional forms of medical training, the founders of McMaster’s medical school developed a radical new approach that emphasized small group problem-based learning. Dubbed the “McMaster Approach”, the three-year program had no discipline-specific courses, peer and tutorial leader evaluations replaced exams, and students were not required to have a background in science. Since the first 20 students began 50 years ago, the school has become consistently ranked within the top 50 medical schools in the world and garnered international renown for both its educational innovations and high-impact research. This timeline highlights and celebrates some of the school’s many achievements and milestones.

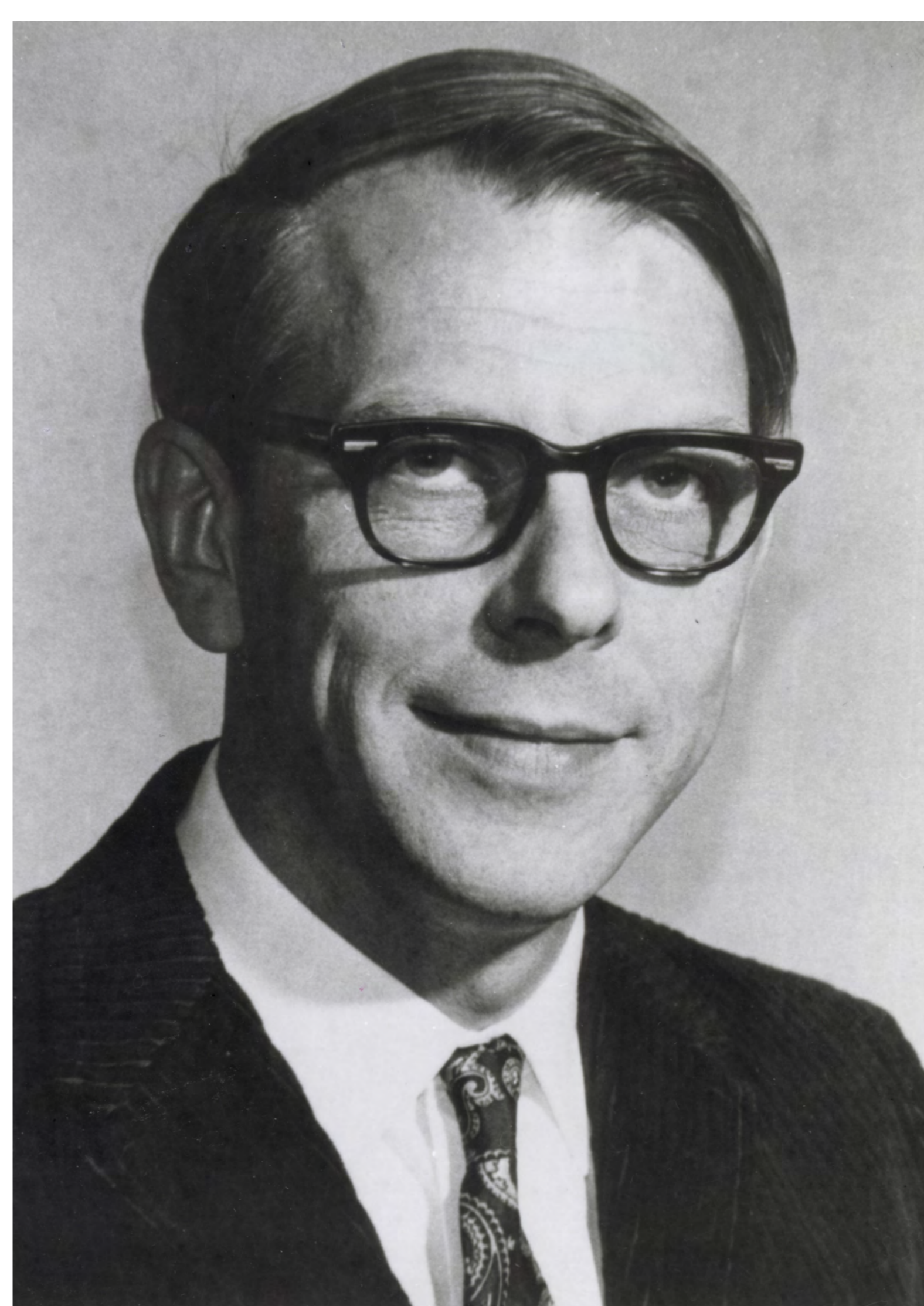
Founders of McMaster’s Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine and their time at the school:



Photo credit: Tom Bochsler  
Image from The William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections, McMaster University Library

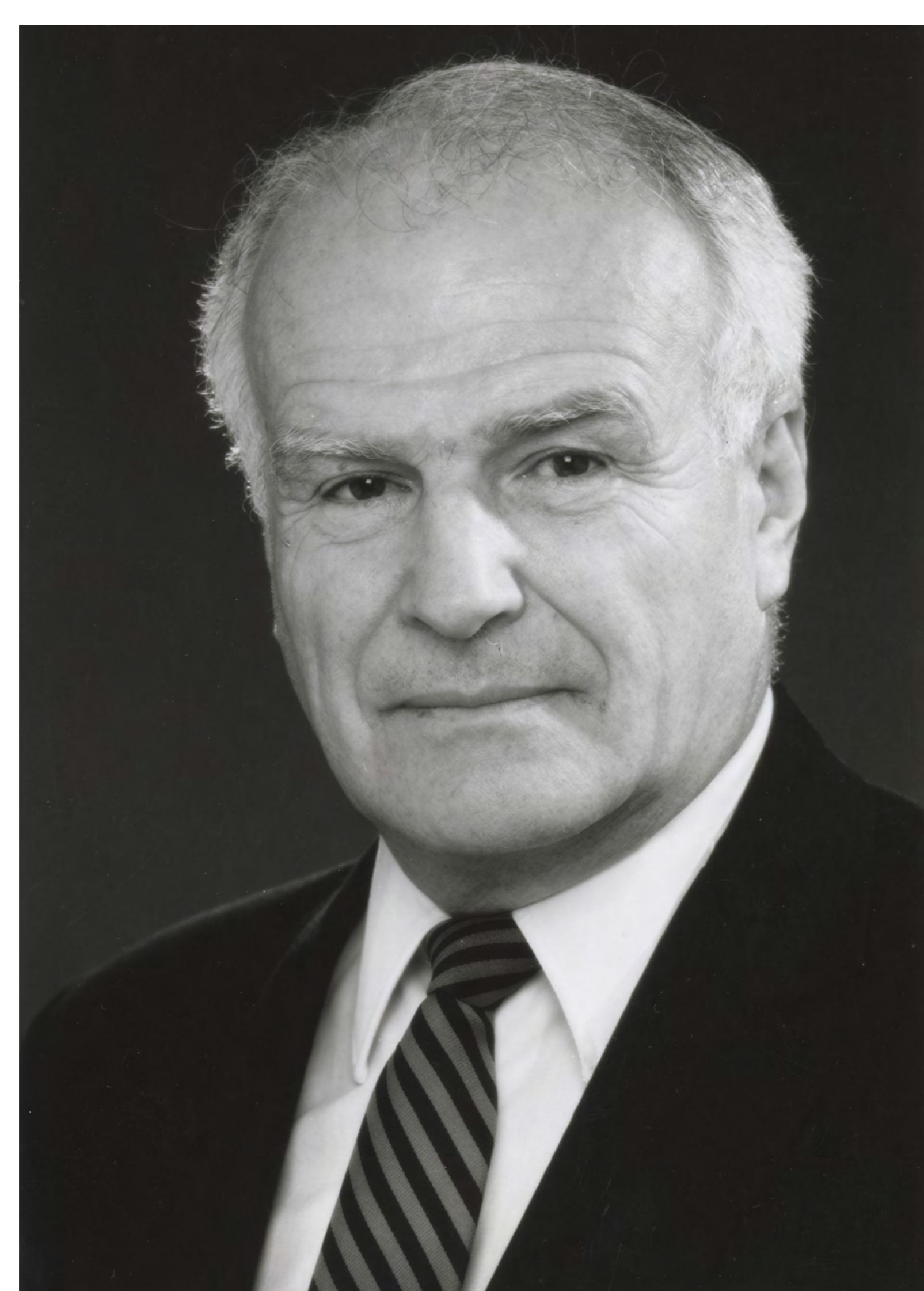
**John Evans, MD**

Founding dean  
1965-1972



**James Anderson, MD**

Founding chair, anatomy  
1966-1988



**J. Fraser Mustard, MD**

Founding chair, pathology  
1966-1982



**William “Bill” Spaulding, MD**

Founding associate dean, health sciences  
1965-1987



**William “Bill” Walsh, MD**

Founding assistant dean, medicine  
1965-1990





# 1969



## SUMMER 1969

The first preliminary course for in-coming students lacking a background in biological sciences is offered (course dropped in 1974).

## 1971

Development of the Northern Ontario Medical Program begins.



McMaster team visits northern Ontario, February 4, 1972.

## MAY 26, 1972

First class of 19 MDs graduate.

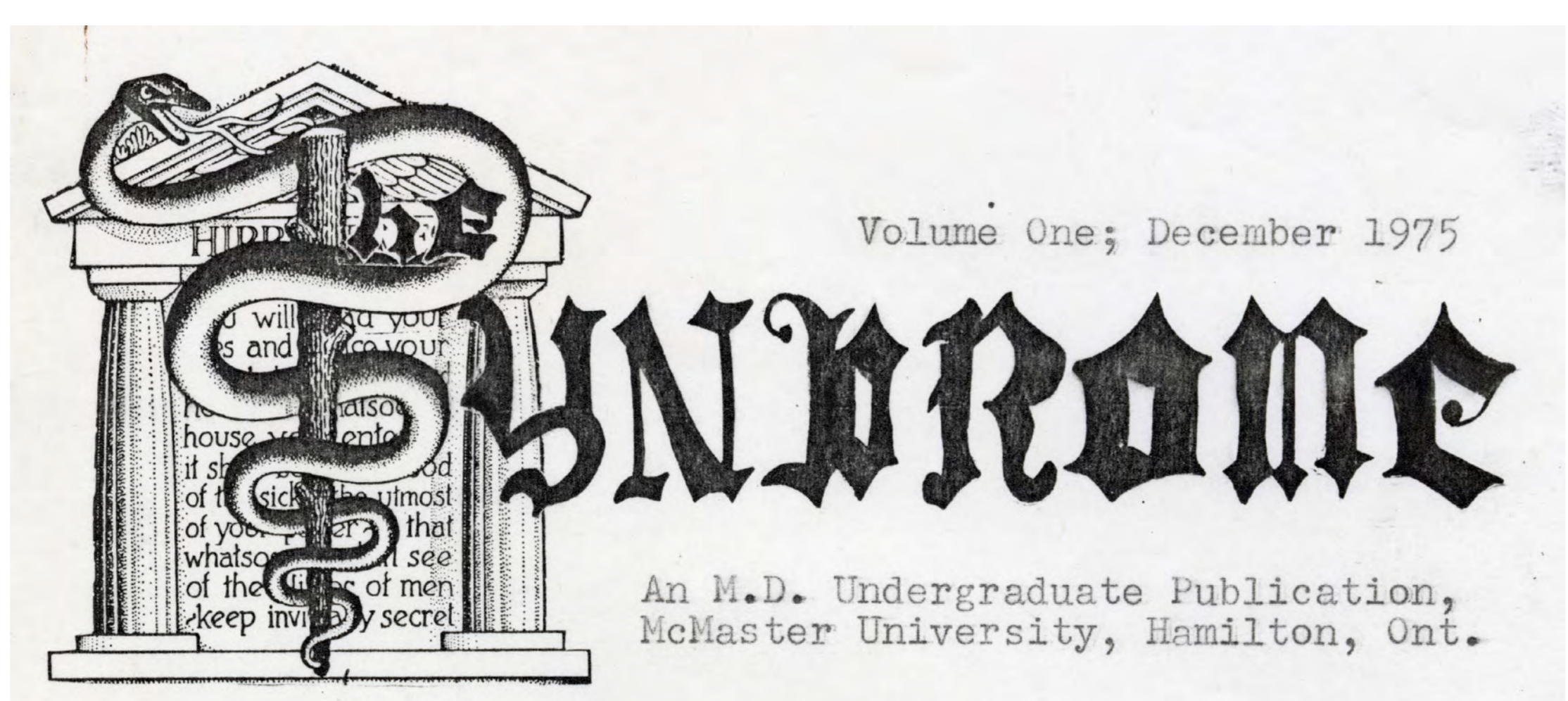


## 1974

Faculty of Health Sciences is established (incorporating the former Faculty of Medicine and School of Nursing).

## DECEMBER 1975

Syndrome, the MD undergraduate student newsletter, begins publication (ceased in 1985).



## 1979

Lynn Johnston was one of the school's three original medical artists. Later, she begins drawing her iconic *For Better or For Worse* comic strip.



Lynn's depiction of the school's storage and rapid retrieval system, around 1970.

## JANUARY 1969

The School of Medicine's Education Committee continues with its work started in 1966 to develop a revolutionary curriculum focused on problem-based learning (PBL).

## SEPTEMBER 2, 1969

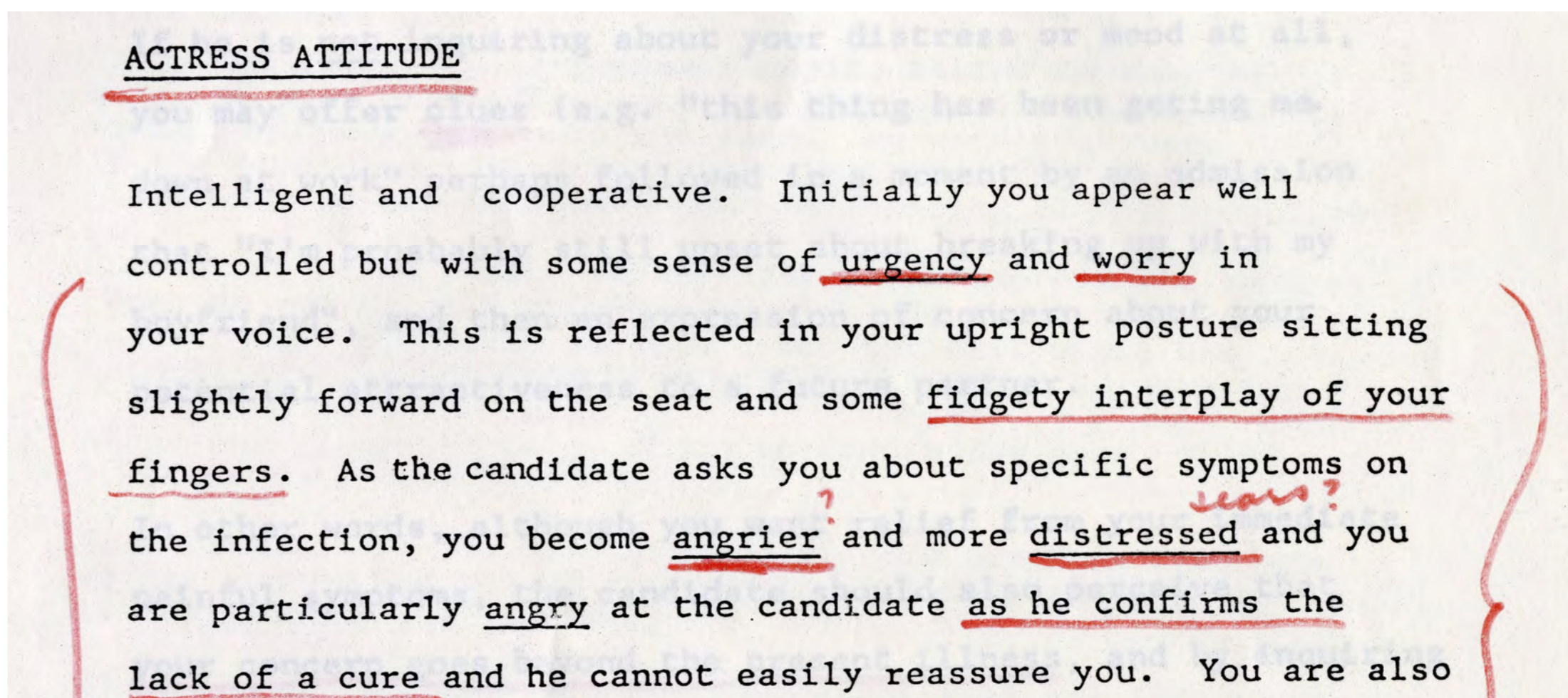
Semester begins for the first class of 20 students.



A student from the first class studies in the school's temporary facility in Chedoke's laundry building, 1969.

## 1971

Standardized patient program is formalized.



An excerpt from the instructions given to simulated patient, Kimmy Coons Eddy, for her role portraying a young woman with Herpes II infection, 1983.

## MAY 27, 1972

Health Sciences Centre (HSC) opens (AKA McMaster University Medical Centre) following years of local controversy over its location.



Crowds enter HSC on its opening day.

## 1976

McMaster Medical Student Council is established.

# 1979



# 1980



## SEPTEMBER 1983

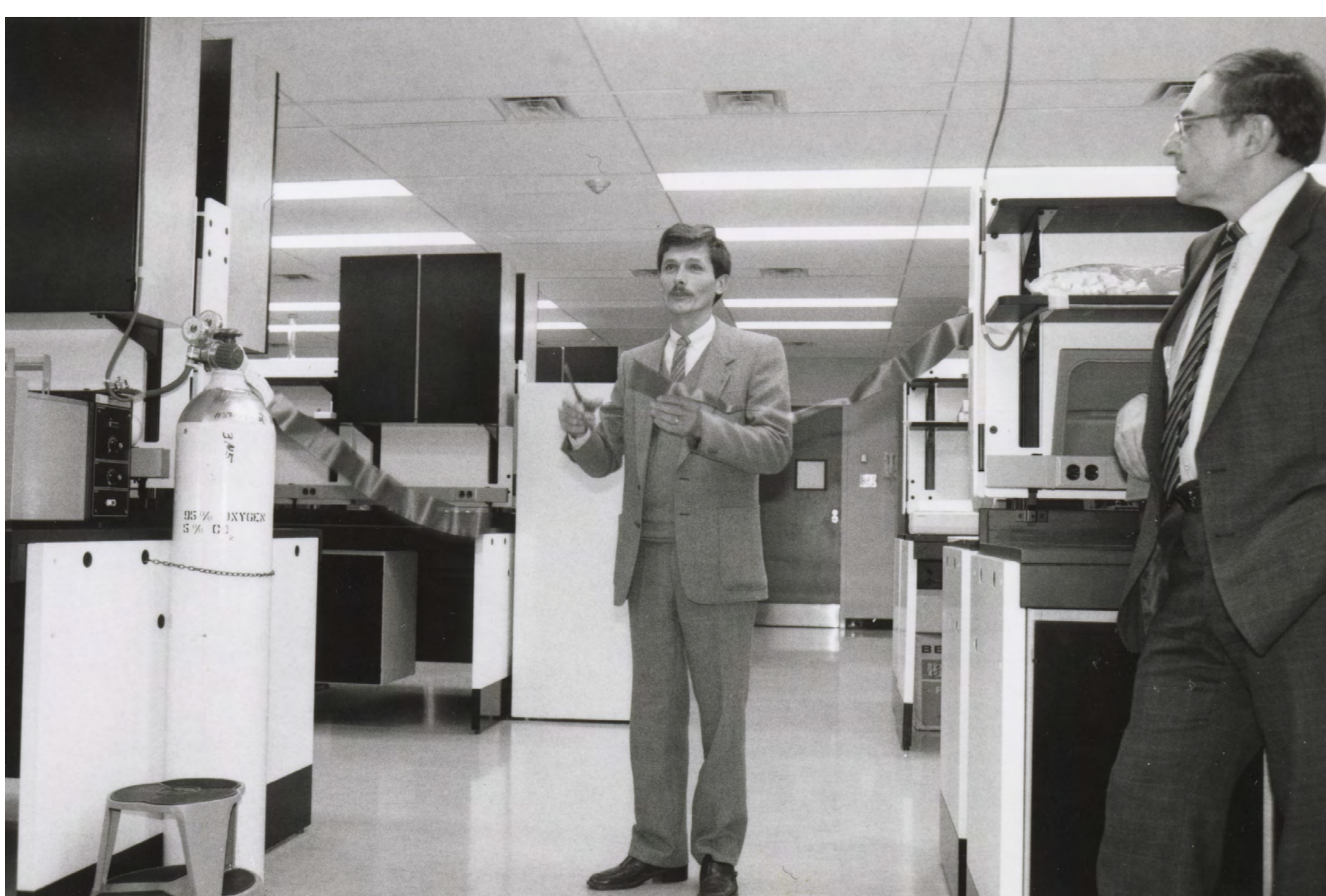
Changes implemented to the MD program that include revised general objectives and re-arranged curriculum units in pre-clerkship part of program (change from "phases" to "units").

## OCTOBER 1984

Network (the Faculty of Health Sciences alumni magazine) begins publication.

## DECEMBER 10, 1984

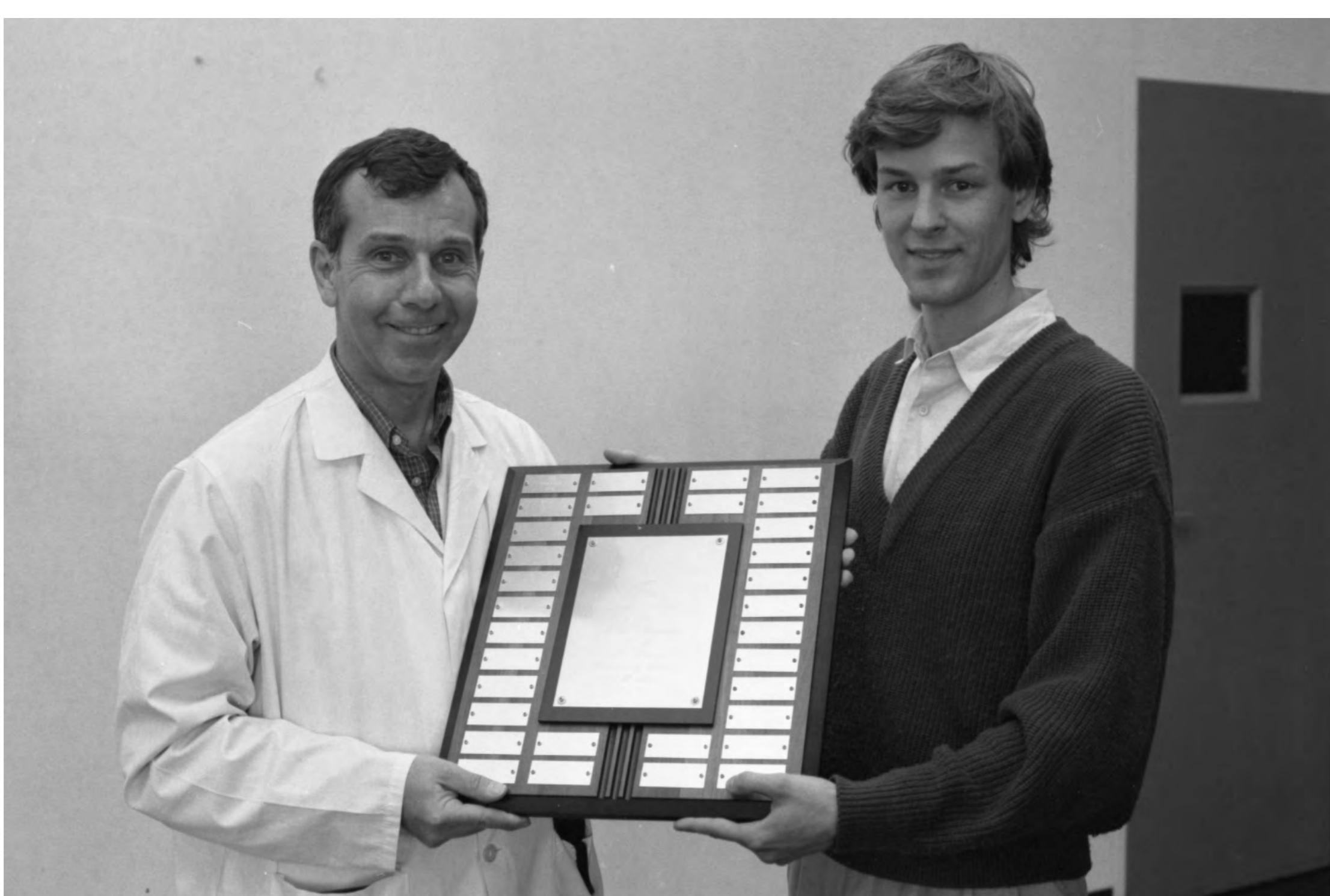
Opening of the Intestinal Disease Research Unit (IDRU) in the Health Sciences Centre.



Henry Janssen, Hamilton president of the Canadian Foundation for Ileitis and Colitis, cuts the red ribbon at the opening of the IDRU while McMaster president Alvin Lee looks on.

## MAY 1986

McMaster Medical Students' Council presents first Award for Teaching Excellence to Dr. Donald Rosenthal, professor of medicine.



Dr. Rosenthal (left) and Richard Heinzl (past president, McMaster Medical Students' Council) admire the permanent plaque later created listing recipients of the annual teaching excellence award, 1987.

## 1988

The Ontario Ministry of Health provides \$2.9 million for the purchase of a new PET scanner and cyclotron.

## MAY 1989

Department of Biomedical Sciences opens (evolved out of the former departments of anatomy and neuroscience).



Dr. Alan McComas, first chair of the Department of Biomedical Sciences, demonstrates the study of muscle fatigue during the department's open house.

## SEPTEMBER 1980

McMaster's medical school has a long history of leading Canadian medical schools in admitting the highest proportion of women. The class of '83 was the first at McMaster to have more women (55) than men (45).



Class of '83 entering class poster (cropped), 1980.

## FEBRUARY 11, 1985

Dr. Roberta Bondar, McMaster alumna (MD '77) and former assistant professor of medicine, is honoured in a series of events in Hamilton as she enters astronaut training to become the first Canadian woman to go into space.



Dr. Bondar (right) discussing the NASA space shuttle with McMaster president Alvin Lee at her McMaster farewell party, February 1, 1984.

## APRIL 1987

Establishment of the Educational Centre for Aging and Health (ECAH).



Participants at an ECAH event, 1987.

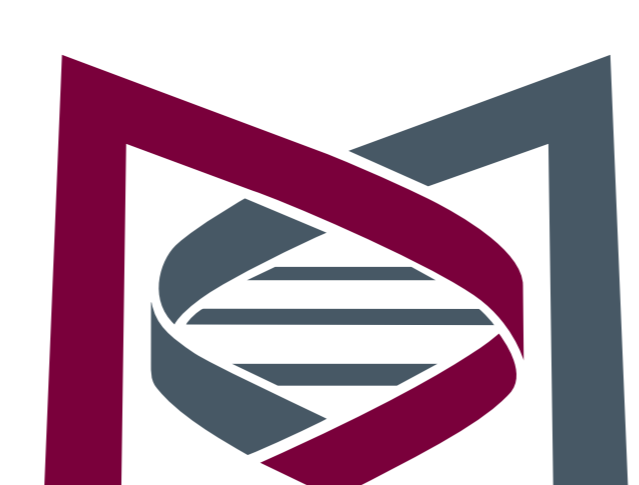
## 1988

The Faculty of Health Sciences gets its first FAX machine.

## SEPTEMBER 1989

The ECAH and the Brownstone Nursing Home of Hamilton partner to establish the first teaching nursing home in Canada.

# 1989



Michael G. DeGroote  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



# 1990



## NOVEMBER 13, 1990

Computerized library catalogue for entire McMaster campus, McMaster Online Resource Retrieval Information System (MORRIS), goes live.



Toni Finelli, Health Sciences Library acquisitions and serials assistant, demonstrates MORRIS to a student, November 1990.

## MARCH 1991

Professor Dr. Gordon Guyatt coins the phrase "evidence-based medicine" in an editorial in *ACP Journal Club*.



Staff members from McMaster's department of clinical epidemiology and biostatistics (CE&B) on the steps of the Faculty Club, around 1968. Founded in 1967, CE&B was the first of its kind in Canada. Its founding chair, Dr. David Sackett (third from left), is widely known today as the father of evidence-based medicine.

## DECEMBER 1995

McMaster receives top ranking as Canada's most innovative medical/doctoral university for the third straight year in Maclean's survey.

## JUNE 13, 1996

First Faculty of Health Sciences website is launched.

## NOVEMBER 1997

Dr. Salim Yusuf receives the school's first endowed research chair from the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

## NOVEMBER 7, 1999

McMaster MD alumni hold first Run for Colorectal Cancer Awareness.



Participants in the second annual run, November 2000.

## MAY 1990

McMaster University and the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth sign agreement making the municipality's Wentworth and Macassa Lodges the first teaching homes for the aged in Canada.



Dr. John Bienenstock (left), vice-president of McMaster's Faculty of Health Sciences, and Hamilton city councillor David Christopherson sign the affiliation agreement while Ann Sloat, Hamilton-Wentworth acting regional chair, looks on.

## JANUARY 1991

The Women's Health Office is officially established in McMaster's Faculty of Health Sciences – A first in any Canadian medical school.



Dr. May Cohen, founding chair of the Women's Health Office, around 1990.

## FALL 1991

Dr. Jennifer Blake is the first MD graduate ('77) to become chair of the MD undergraduate program.



Dr. Blake (centre) with MD students, around 1997.

## OCTOBER 1999

Launch of the Centre for Minimal Access Surgery – a multi-disciplinary centre to study, develop and provide training in new techniques in minimally invasive surgery and diagnostics.

# 1999





# 2000



## OCTOBER 29, 2004

Robert E. Fitzhenry Vector Laboratory opens (Canada's first university lab certified to provide vectors for clinical trials in patients).

## 2004

The Farncombe family of Oakville gives \$3.5 million to establish both an endowed chair in inflammatory bowel disease and Canada's only university-based gnotobiotic (germ free) laboratory.

## SEPTEMBER 22, 2005

The Michael G. DeGroot Centre for Learning and Discovery (MDCL) opens.



Exterior of MDCL, around 2013.

## AUGUST 2007

First 15 MD students start at the Waterloo Regional Campus.

## 2007

PIPER (Program for Interprofessional Practice Education and Research) is established. Unique to McMaster, PIPER allows students from different programs to learn together.



Physiotherapy student Kristina Chavez (left) and medical student Alexander Kaplan participate in an anatomy class, around 2011.

## 2008

Wynn and Bill Benson (MD '73) donate 12 etched glass panels for the Health Sciences Library's Jan and Mein Heersink Reading Pavilion.



Susan Denburg (from left), Ilene Busch-Vishniac, Wynn Bensen, Bill Bensen and John Kelton at the dedication of the etched glass panels, 2008.

## 2002

The Multiple Mini Interview (MMI) is created at McMaster as part of the medical school's application process. MMI is now used in nearly all Canadian medical schools and beyond.

## DECEMBER 17, 2003

Michael G. DeGroot makes a \$105 million donation to McMaster's medical program, the largest single cash gift in Canadian history. In tribute, the school is named the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine.



Dr. John Kelton, dean and vice-president of the Faculty of Health Sciences, adjusts the first lab coat with a Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine insignia on Michael G. DeGroot, as McMaster University president Dr. Peter George applauds during standing ovation.

## 2005

The McMaster Community and Rural Education Program (Mac-CARE) is launched.

## SEPTEMBER 21, 2006

Department of Oncology is established.

## AUGUST 2007

MD/PhD combined program is launched.



Derek Chu investigates the causes of anaphylaxis and peanut allergy as part of his MD/PhD studies at McMaster, around 2010.

## AUGUST 2008

First 15 MD students start at the Niagara Regional Campus (NRC).



Dr. Karl Stobbe, founding assistant dean of the NRC, is surrounded by the campus' first MD students, the Class of 2011.

# 2009





# 2010



## OCTOBER 14, 2010

Official opening of the Farncombe Family Digestive Health Research Institute.



Patrick Deane, president and vice-chancellor of McMaster University, addresses the official opening of the Farncombe Family Digestive Health Research Institute.

## FEBRUARY 6, 2012

The Boris family announce a gift of \$30 million (\$24 million for the Boris Family Centre in Human Stem Cell Therapies and \$6 million for the Boris Clinic).

## MAY 2014

Michael G. DeGroot announces an additional \$50 million gift to McMaster's medical school.

## 2014

Eos Films, a U.K. company, begins filming faculty and students for an international documentary about the best medical training for doctors.



Dr. Rob Whyte, assistant dean, talks to new medical students while being filmed by Eos producer Sasha Djurkovic, 2015.

## 2015

MD students launch MacHealth DNA (MacHealth Delivering Neighbourhood Advocacy) to deliver care and health advocacy to Hamilton's marginalized populations.



Avi Sarker and Kevin Singh, founders of MacHealth DNA.

## OCTOBER 2017

The Michael G. DeGroot Centre for Medicinal Cannabis Research is established.

## JANUARY 24, 2018

The Waterloo Regional Campus launches new Elder Care Education Program to build better relationships between future physicians and older adults.

## SEPTEMBER 2019

The medical school has gained 85 endowed chairs and professorships over the past 20 years.



Bayer Inc. Canada President and CEO Alok Kanti congratulates professor Dr. Alfonso Iorio on his new role as the Bayer Chair for Clinical Epidemiology Research and Bleeding Disorders at McMaster University, 2018.

## MAY 15, 2015

Official opening of the David Braley Health Sciences Centre in downtown Hamilton. It co-locates, for the first time in Canada, a medical school's department of family medicine with the City's Public Health Services.



Cutting the ribbon at the official opening are (from left): Elizabeth Richardson, Hamilton medical officer of health; David Price, chair, department of family medicine; Fred Eisenberger, mayor of Hamilton; Patrick Deane, McMaster University president; Rona Ambrose, minister of health for Canada; David Braley; Indira Naidoo-Harris, Halton MPP; and John Kelton, dean and vice-president, Faculty of Health Sciences.

## 2016

Opening of the McMaster Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences.

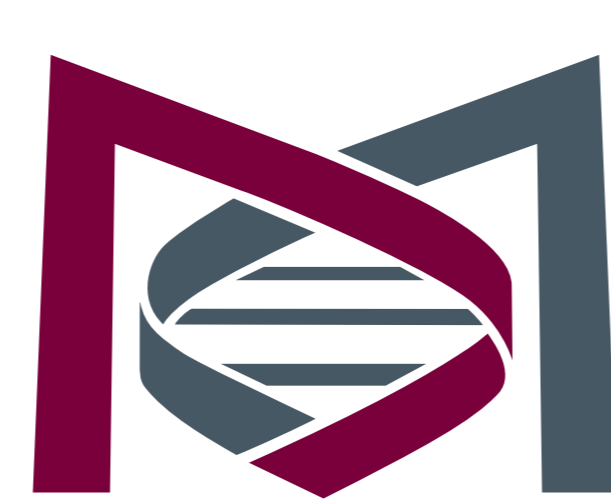
## 2016

The Post Graduate Medical Education Program forms an office to support the implementation of the Competency by Design curriculum changes required by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, and the roll-out of the Triple C competency-based curriculum of the College of Family Physicians of Canada.



Work of anesthesia resident, Mark Czuczman (right), in the Centre for Simulation-Based Learning is overseen by Michael Parrish, associate clinical professor of the Department of Anesthesia, as part of the Competency by Design program.

# 2019



Michael G. DeGroot  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE